



TOP 5 SIGNS YOU NEED A FRACTIONAL CRO

HOW TO KNOW WHEN IT'S TIME TO
ELEVATE YOUR SALES & REVENUE
STRATEGY

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What is a Fractional CRO?

A Fractional Chief Revenue Officer (CRO) is an experienced revenue leader who owns the full revenue engine—sales, marketing, partnerships, and (often) customer success—on a part-time, executive level basis. Unlike a VP of Sales (sales-first) or a consultant (advice-first), a Fractional CRO aligns strategy and day-to-day execution, builds the operating rhythm, and is accountable for outcomes.

Where a Fractional CRO fits

- Scope: Strategy + execution across acquisition → conversion → expansion → retention
- Ownership: Pipeline health, forecast accuracy, win rates, CAC/LTV, sales velocity
- Engagement model: Part-time retainer (e.g., 1–3 days/week) with clear OKRs and a 30/60/90 plan
- When it's ideal: You need executive leadership now, but don't yet require, or can't justify, the cost/commitment of a full-time CRO

What they deliver (tangible)

- Unified go-to-market (GTM) strategy and clear KPIs
- Standardized sales process and CRM you'll actually use
- Forecast discipline and weekly operating rhythm
- Enablement: playbooks, coaching, and hiring profiles
- Marketing & Sales alignment that ties campaigns to pipeline and revenue

Sign #1: Stalled Revenue Growth

Symptoms

- Flat or declining bookings/ARR despite increased activity
- “We’re doing more, but getting less” sentiment
- No clear view of pipeline by stage, source, and segment

Likely root causes

- No scalable sales process; heavy dependence on a few sellers
- GTM fragmentation (sales, marketing, CS working on different priorities)
- Weak ICP/segmentation; messaging isn’t crisp enough to convert

Quick diagnostic (ask yourself)

- Do we have a documented sales process with entry/exit criteria for each stage?
- Can I see pipeline coverage ($\geq 3 \times$ target) by segment and by owner?
- Do we know our sales velocity ($\text{opps} \times \text{win rate} \times \text{ASP} \div \text{sales cycle}$)?

KPIs

- New ARR/Bookings growth, pipeline coverage ratio, win rate, sales velocity
- Lead-to-opportunity conversion by source, average deal size, time-to-first-value

What a Fractional CRO would do (REV-UP™)

- Review: Audit pipeline by stage, source, segment; map current process and deal slippage
- Elevate: Identify quick wins (e.g., tighten qualification, improve next-step discipline)
- Value: Set 3–5 GTM KPIs; establish weekly pipeline and forecast cadence
- Unlock: Implement stage definitions, exit criteria, and a standardized mutual action plan
- Perform: Inspect laggards/leaders weekly; iterate on the playbook; coach to metrics

Example quick wins

- Add stage exit criteria + templates (discovery, recap, mutual plan)
- Create a weekly “deal desk” to unblock stuck opportunities
- Re-focus marketing on 1–2 ICP segments with historical highest win rate

Sign #2: Sales & Marketing Misalignment

Symptoms

- “Marketing sends bad leads” vs. “Sales doesn’t follow up” loop
- No shared funnel definitions or hand-off SLA; attribution is murky
- Campaigns look good on paper but don’t move pipeline

Likely root causes

- Marketing targets too broadly; Sales chases one-offs
- No agreed definitions for MQL/SQL/SAO and no service levels
- Content and campaigns aren’t anchored to sales stages or objections

Quick diagnostic

- Do we have agreed MQL/SQL/SAO definitions and a documented handoff SLA?
- Can we tie each campaign to opportunities created and revenue influenced?
- Is there a weekly RevOps meeting where Sales + Marketing review one funnel?

KPIs

- MQL→SQL→SAO conversion, speed-to-lead, campaign-to-pipeline, pipeline source mix
- Cost per opportunity (CPO), opportunity win rate by source

What a Fractional CRO would do (REV-UP™)

- Review: Map the entire funnel and lead flows; evaluate source quality and follow-up
- Elevate: Stand up a speed-to-lead SLA and a 1–2 ICP campaign blitz
- Value: Define shared KPIs and a single source of truth report
- Unlock: Align content to stages (discovery decks, ROI calculators, case studies)
- Perform: Weekly revenue council to adjust spend by source and ROI

Example quick wins

- Implement round-robin + instant alerts for inbound; enforce <15-minute responses
- Create a shared “campaign → opportunity” report in CRM, reviewed weekly
- Replace generic ebooks with objection-busting assets tied to stages

Sign #3: Unclear Forecasts & Inconsistent Pipeline

Symptoms

- Leadership lacks confidence in the forecast; “surprises” at month-end
- Reps self-stage deals; inconsistent definitions and inspection
- Pipeline is lumpy—great one month, thin the next

Likely root causes

- Forecasting based on “gut feel,” not stage-based probabilities or history
- No standardized qualification (MEDDIC/BANT/SPICED)
- Insufficient top-of-funnel consistency (coverage <3×)

Quick diagnostic

- Are stage definitions and probability weights standardized and enforced?
- Do managers run weekly 1:1s that inspect deal health and next steps?
- Can we show a rolling 90-day forecast variance chart?

KPIs

- Forecast accuracy ($\pm\%$), stage progression rates, aging by stage, pipeline coverage
- Qualified pipeline added per rep per month, slipped deals %

What a Fractional CRO would do (REV-UP™)

- Review: Audit pipeline quality, stage aging, and historic forecast variance
- Elevate: Normalize stage definitions and probability; implement manager inspection rhythm
- Value: Publish a forecast methodology and a shared dashboard
- Unlock: Enable reps on qualification framework; build mutual close plans
- Perform: Track forecast accuracy week-over-week and coach to gaps

Example quick wins

- Introduce a short “Next Step” checklist required for stage advancement
- Create an “At-Risk” view: deals over stage-aging threshold + missing next step
- Stand up a 30-minute weekly forecast call with a simple, consistent agenda

Sign #4: High Sales Team Turnover or Low Performance

Symptoms

- Churn among reps; uneven ramp; top performers carry the number
- Inconsistent messaging and discovery quality; low coaching frequency
- Hiring misses—great interviews, low in-role success

Likely root causes

- No enablement program; unclear expectations; insufficient coaching
- Compensation misaligned to desired behaviors
- Hiring profile not tied to ICP, deal complexity, or motion (inbound/outbound)

Quick diagnostic

- Do we have a documented hiring profile, scorecard, and structured interview?
- Is there a 30/60/90 ramp plan with clear leading indicators (activity → pipeline)?
- Do managers coach weekly with call reviews and action items?

KPIs

- Time-to-first-deal, time-to-ramp, attainment distribution, call review cadence
- Activity quality metrics (talk-to-listen ratio, question depth), offer acceptance rate

What a Fractional CRO would do (REV-UP™)

- Review: Assess org design, role clarity, comp, and enablement
- Elevate: Deploy a 30/60/90 ramp plan and weekly coaching cadence
- Value: Define leading indicators for ramp and performance
- Unlock: Build playbooks (discovery, objection handling, competitive)
- Perform: Quarterly talent review; update hiring profile and comp as needed

Example quick wins

- Launch weekly 45-minute call-coaching sessions with scorecards
- Install a single source “What Good Looks Like” call library
- Align comp with ICP focus and profitable products (pay for the right wins)

Sign #5: Leadership Stretched Too Thin

Symptoms

- Founder/CEO juggling sales, marketing, partnerships, and ops
- Projects stall; decisions pile up; context-switching kills momentum
- Strategic initiatives keep slipping because “the day job” wins

Likely root causes

- No single executive owns revenue end-to-end
- Meetings without an operating rhythm or clear decisions
- Everyone is busy; few are aligned on the few things that move the needle

Quick diagnostic

- Who owns revenue KPIs end-to-end? Is there a weekly operating rhythm?
- Do we have 3–5 quarterly revenue priorities with owners and dates?
- Do we review progress weekly and say “no” to low-impact work?

KPIs

- Focus metrics: number of active priorities, % on-time delivery, meeting cadence health
- Revenue program throughput (initiatives started vs. completed vs. results)

What a Fractional CRO would do (REV-UP™)

- Review: Map ownership, decision cadence, and in-flight initiatives
- Elevate: Set 3–5 revenue priorities; kill or park low-impact projects
- Value: Define OKRs and the weekly/monthly operating rhythm
- Unlock: Assign owners, budgets, and cross-functional working groups
- Perform: Inspect progress weekly; unblock decisively; communicate wins

Example quick wins

- Create a one-page Revenue Scorecard; review it every Monday
- Replace status meetings with decision meetings (clear owner → next action)
- Introduce a “stop doing” list to reclaim capacity

How a Fractional CRO Typically Engages (30/60/90 Snapshot)

- **Days 0–30 (Review & Elevate):**
 - Org/process/tech audit; pipeline & forecast clean-up; quick-win plays; baseline KPIs; operating rhythm started.
- **Days 31–60 (Value & Unlock):**
 - KPI targets set; sales process & stage criteria enforced; enablement launched; campaign alignment; dashboard live.
- **Days 61–90 (Perform):**
 - Forecast discipline; coaching cadence; hiring profile/ramp plan in place; iterate plays based on data; quarterly plan locked.

Deliverables you should expect

- GTM strategy doc & revenue scorecard
- Sales process map + stage definitions + qualification framework
- CRM dashboards & forecast methodology
- Enablement: playbooks, call library, 30/60/90 ramp
- Operating rhythm: weekly forecast/pipeline, monthly QBR, revenue council

Is It Time for a Fractional CRO?

If **two or more** of these signs ring true—stalled growth, misalignment, foggy forecasts, talent issues, or founder overload—bringing in a **Fractional CRO** can align teams, install discipline, and accelerate results **without the cost/commitment of a full-time executive**.

Ready to see how REV-UP™ can transform your business?

Book your free 1-hour consultation with Sky Lantern at skylantern.pro.

