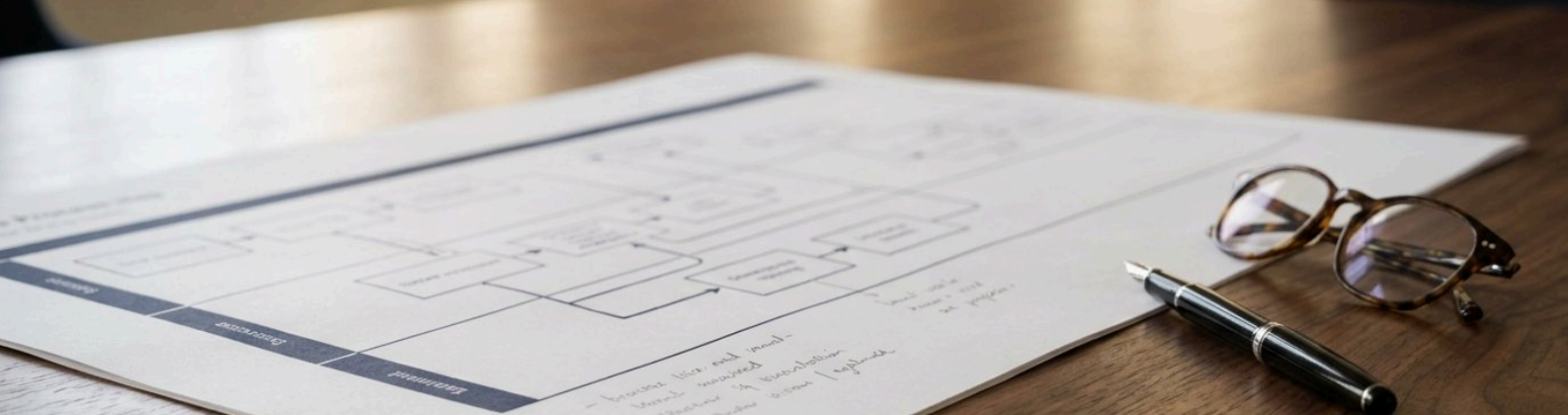




**Michele Di Lorenzo**

STRATEGIC ADVISOR & FRACTIONAL COO



EXECUTIVE BRIEF

# Business growth is a strategic choice. Profitability is an operating architecture.

Strategic management consulting and hands-on presence as a Fractional COO  
for growing SMEs and startups.

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Process redesign and shorter execution times

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Definition of organization, roles and delegation

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Design of governance and decision-making mechanisms

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Cost control and margin oversight

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**14 days**

Diagnostic Sprint

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**1-2 days/week**

Fractional COO

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**90 days**

Three-phase roadmap

## THE STARTING POINT

## Three structural frictions

Growth in clients, headcount and complexity puts pressure on an operating structure designed for a smaller company. The result is organizational friction, longer decision cycles and a progressive erosion of margins.

### Decisions concentrated at the top

Without formal delegation every decision converges on the owner: teams wait, and leadership is absorbed by daily operations at the expense of strategic direction.

**Effect:** slower decisions and limited team autonomy

### An organization built up in layers

Roles defined in response to urgencies, overlapping responsibilities and unclear reporting lines: the formal org chart does not match how the company actually works.

**Effect:** overhead growing faster than revenue

### Misaligned processes and departments

Sales, operations and administration work without shared objectives and metrics: handovers generate delays, errors and rework.

**Effect:** delays, margin erosion and client dissatisfaction

## TYPICAL SCENARIOS

## When growth calls for a new operating model

Four moments in which experienced, flexible operational leadership unlocks growth and protects business value.

### 01

#### Fast growth, inadequate structure

Revenue grows at double-digit rates while headcount expands without defined procedures and roles: rework, delays and costs increase, and profitability declines.

**Intervention:** redesign of core processes, efficiency recovery, new organizational structure and Target Operating Model.

### 02

#### Delegation from owner to management

The owner is absorbed by daily operations and needs to free up time for strategy, business development and institutional relations, without slowing the company down.

**Intervention:** governance, responsibility matrices (RACI), development and coaching of the management team.

### 03

#### Towards an investor or a sale

Capital increase, entry of an institutional investor or generational handover: the company must show a solid organization, with processes and decision-making that do not depend on the owners.

**Intervention:** documented governance, a redesigned organization and a KPI dashboard for the Board.

### 04

#### Access to credit and banking relationships

New financing for an investment, renewal of credit lines or refinancing. The European guidelines on loan origination (EBA/GL/2020/06) ask banks to look beyond the financial statements, including at the organizational structure of medium-sized and large enterprises and at key-person dependency in micro and small ones. In my view, the strength of the organization is part of what makes the figures for the years ahead credible.

**Intervention:** documented organizational structure, traceable delegation and decision flows, KPI dashboard and a consistent plan to present to the lender.

## SERVICES

## Six levers for orderly growth

Available individually or combined in a Fractional COO engagement. The starting point is strategy; the end point is an autonomous organization, able to operate without my oversight.

## THE CORE OF THE ENGAGEMENT

### Processes and operational efficiency

Process mapping, removal of unnecessary steps and bottlenecks, standard operating procedures and, once the process has been redesigned, an independent assessment of what is worth digitalising and what is not.

- Shorter cycle times
- Fewer errors, waste and rework

### Governance and delegation

Decision rules, delegation levels, committees and meetings that actually add value. The founder steps out of daily operations without losing control, and the company gains the documented structure that lenders and investors can assess.

- Responsibility matrices (RACI)
- Effective meetings and committees

### Organization and roles

Design of an organizational structure consistent with strategy: org chart, roles and job descriptions, reporting lines, team sizing and development path for the management team.

- Clear org chart and roles
- Structure sized for growth

### KPIs and management control

A few indicators that matter, up-to-date dashboards and a clear review rhythm, so decisions rest on facts rather than impressions.

- Dashboard for the Board
- Performance by department and project

## SUPPORTING LEVERS

### Strategy and execution

Translating vision into priorities, measurable objectives and an operating plan. Management alignment and a regular review rhythm to stay on course.

- Strategic and operating plan
- Shared objectives and priorities

### Costs and efficiency

Review of overhead and suppliers, elimination of waste and non-value-adding spend, alignment of costs with the new operating model.

- Operating cost reduction
- Supplier renegotiation

## THE END POINT

## Your Target Operating Model

The levers converge into a documented operating model (processes, organization, governance and KPIs), supported by coaching for management and practical training for the teams, so the company retains operational autonomy once the engagement ends.

### Processes

Clear flows, standard procedures and handovers.

### Organization

Org chart, roles and responsibilities consistent with strategy.

### Governance

Decision rules, delegation and meetings that work.

### KPI

Dashboard and review rhythm to decide on data.

## THE ECONOMIC RETURN

## Better processes are not a cost: they are margin

An effective operating model produces economic benefits as a direct consequence: lower costs for the same volume of work and freed-up capacity to support growth without a proportional increase in structure.

## 1 · EFFECTIVENESS

### Leaner processes, clear roles

Fewer steps and shorter waiting times, with decisions assigned to the right level.

## 2 · EFFICIENCY

### Less waste and fewer errors

Rework, duplication, overtime and firefighting all decrease.

## 3 · COSTS AND CAPACITY

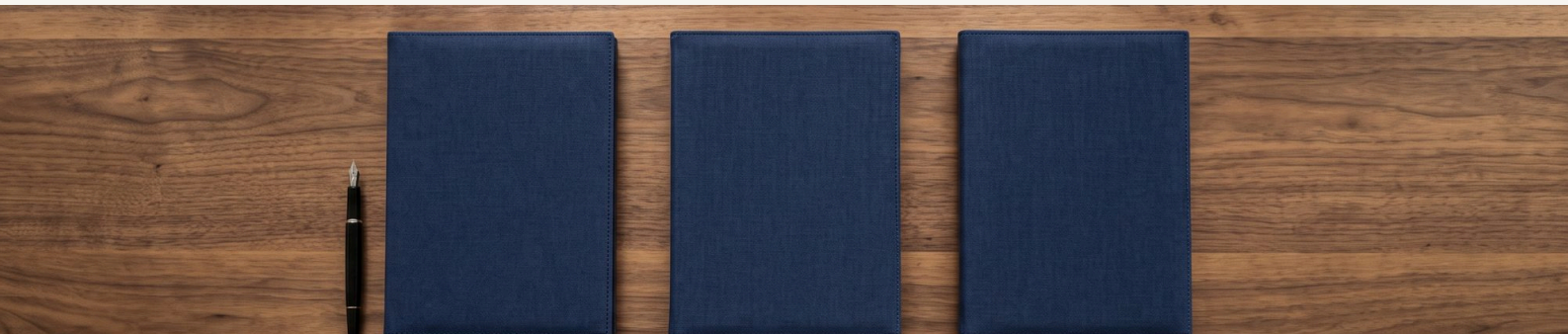
### Lower costs, time freed up

Operating costs fall and the same headcount can handle more clients, orders and projects.

## 4 · RESULT

### More margin, sustainable growth

Revenue grows without a proportional increase in structure: the difference turns into profitability.



## METHOD

## The 90-day roadmap

Three measurable phases, from a fragmented operating structure to an autonomous organization.

### 1–14

## PHASE 1

#### Diagnostic Sprint

Interviews with leadership and managers, mapping of processes, organization and decision-making, analysis of overhead costs and identification of the three highest-impact priorities.

**Deliverable:** diagnostic report and roadmap agreed with the leadership.

### 15–45

## PHASE 2

#### Redesign

Redesign of critical processes and of the organizational structure: roles, responsibilities and delegation rules. Field testing of new procedures and first actions on costs.

**Deliverable:** tested processes, new org chart, responsibility matrix (RACI) and first results.

### 46–90

## PHASE 3

#### Stabilization and handover

Release of the Target Operating Model, launch of governance and of the KPI dashboard. Coaching for management on delegation and decisions, training for teams on procedures and tools.

**Deliverable:** documented operating model, Board dashboard, autonomous teams.

## OFFERING

## Ways to work together

Four options, from regular strategic sessions with the leadership to an operational presence in the company.

### Advisor to the owners

Ongoing support for the owner and partners: a monthly meeting on KPIs, priorities and plan progress, in an advisory capacity.

### Fractional COO

1–2 days a week alongside the CEO, directly overseeing the agreed objectives.

### Diagnostic Sprint

In 14 days: critical issues, priorities and a 90-day roadmap.

### Targeted projects

Processes, organization and roles, governance and delegation, KPIs and management control.

### Advisor to the owners, step by step

An outside perspective, with continuity, at the owners' table.

**Who it is for:** owners and partners of family- or founder-led SMEs who want a structured sounding board on the decisions that matter: growth, organization, generational handover, entry of investors.

#### HOW IT WORKS

**Start.** A review of figures, organization and plan. If there is no baseline yet, we begin with the Diagnostic Sprint.

**Every month.** A meeting with the owners, built around a few KPIs and the status of priorities, in person or remotely.

**Every quarter.** A check of processes, organization and governance against the Target Operating Model, and the corrective actions to take.

**Between meetings.** Discussion on request for decisions that cannot wait.

**What you get:** meetings with a clear agenda, documented decisions, KPIs reviewed regularly and a timely warning when processes or structure can no longer support growth.

The role is advisory: decisions remain with the owners and management.

## NO HIRING REQUIRED

## Fractional COO: part-time operational leadership

1–2 days a week embedded in the organization, alongside the CEO: I lead the transformation across the six levers with direct oversight of the agreed operational objectives.

No hiring, severance or recruitment costs

Flexible monthly fee

Executive expertise available immediately

## COMPARISON

## Three ways to bring operational expertise into the company

Role, cost, flexibility and start-up time compared, to identify the model best suited to your growth stage.

| CRITERION            | TRADITIONAL CONSULTING                                                                                            | FULL-TIME EMPLOYED COO                                                                  | FRACTIONAL COO                                                                                       |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Role</b>          | Diagnosis and recommendations: execution, and the risk that the plan is never implemented, remain with the client | Ongoing management, often absorbed by routine matters                                   | From diagnosis to hands-on execution, with direct oversight of agreed objectives through to handover |
| <b>Cost</b>          | Medium-high, with a fixed project budget agreed upfront                                                           | High and fixed: executive salary, social contributions, severance and recruitment costs | Monthly fee proportional to the days on site                                                         |
| <b>Flexibility</b>   | Limited to the project scope                                                                                      | Permanent contract, high exit costs                                                     | Adjustable commitment, 30 days' notice to terminate                                                  |
| <b>Start-up time</b> | Weeks between scoping, proposal and first outputs                                                                 | Months between recruitment, onboarding and full effectiveness                           | Operational within days; clear action priorities in 14 days                                          |

## TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

**B2B contract**

Professional services with monthly invoicing. No employment relationship, severance or exit costs.

**Flexible and adjustable**

Commitment adapted to the project phases, with 30 days' notice to terminate.

**After the 90 days**

Full autonomy or a light presence: one day a week as Fractional COO, or the Advisor to the owners formula, with a monthly meeting on KPIs and priorities.

## HOW I WORK

## Four commitments I make to every client

**On the ground, not only on slides**

I work inside the company, together with the people who run the processes every day.

**Measurable objectives**

Every phase has concrete results and indicators agreed upfront and reviewed together.

**Team autonomy**

I transfer method and tools to the management team, with the goal of making my presence unnecessary.

**Confidentiality and independence**

No commercial agreements, commissions or fees from suppliers or software vendors: I recommend only what the company actually needs.

## PROFILE

# Management consulting method, growing-company pace



## Michele Di Lorenzo

Strategic Advisor & Fractional COO

### EXPERIENCE

Over 10 years in management consulting for major banking and insurance groups  
Protiviti · Deloitte (2015–2026)

### AREAS

Processes · Organization · Governance ·  
Management control

### LANGUAGES AND MARKETS

Italiano · English · Français  
Based in Milan, working in Italy and abroad

### WHO I WORK WITH

Growing SMEs and startups — industrial, commercial and services — up to 250 employees, family- or founder-led

### EDUCATION

Master in European Business (MEB), ESCP Business School, 2007–2008  
One-year management programme, now offered as the MBA in International Management

I have worked in management consulting for over ten years. At Protiviti, as a Senior Manager in Business Performance Improvement, I worked on operational efficiency, process redesign and organizational models. At Deloitte, in Risk Advisory, on governance, control systems and organization. I worked for major banking and insurance groups: complex, regulated organizations where processes, controls and accountability must work without exception.

I began my career in international financial environments across Milan, Paris and Manchester: an experience that taught me to read a company through the eyes of banks and investors as well.

Today I bring that rigour to growing SMEs and startups in industry, trade and services, without the bureaucracy of large organizations: right-sized tools, fast decisions and hands-on work alongside founders and their management teams, with measurable objectives.

### METHODS AND TOOLS

Target Operating Model

AS-IS / TO-BE process mapping

Organizational design

Responsibility matrices (RACI)

Internal control systems

KPIs and management dashboards

Change management

### NEXT STEP

## Book a 30-minute intro call

A preliminary conversation, with no obligation, to identify where processes and organization are stuck and to assess whether an engagement makes sense. I reply within 1 business day.

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