

First 90 Days: Strategic Financial Roadmap

Overview: We follow a structured 90-day approach to financial leadership, ensuring a smooth transition while building trust and clarity from day one. In these initial months, building strong relationships often outweighs immediate technical fixes, so our plan emphasizes strategic alignment with your mission and leadership at every step. Below is our four-phase roadmap for how we'll work together in the first 90 days (with typical timelines and key outcomes):

Phase 1: Immersion & Assessment (Weeks 1–3)

Leadership Alignment: We kick off with in-depth conversations with your key leaders and team to understand your mission, programs, and pain points. A successful CFO engagement starts by meeting the people behind the numbers – CEO/Executive Director, department heads, finance staff – to gain insight into priorities and bottlenecks. This ensures we're fully immersed in your organization's culture and goals from the start.

Financial Deep Dive: Next, we conduct a thorough review of your financial systems, reports, and controls. This “deep dive” assessment covers your accounting software, internal controls, budgeting processes, and key financial documents (contracts, grants, audits, etc.). We're essentially acting as financial detectives, examining how money flows and where issues might hide. The goal is to map out your current financial landscape with fresh eyes.

Baseline Evaluation: During this phase, we also ensure no critical issues are looming. We verify liquidity (cash flow health) and check for any compliance or accounting red flags that need immediate attention. By the end of Phase 1, you'll have a clear initial assessment of where your organization stands financially, and we'll have the context needed to serve you best. (Touchpoint: Expect a kickoff workshop and weekly check-in calls during this phase to keep everyone informed.)

Phase 2: Financial Diagnosis & Quick Wins (Weeks 4–6)

Identify Gaps & Opportunities: With information gathered, we analyze the data to pinpoint key challenges and opportunities. This diagnosis phase distills the findings – for example, uncovering inefficiencies in processes, spotting reporting inconsistencies, or noting risks like cash shortfalls. Any serious issues (e.g. cash flow crunch or audit concerns) are prioritized for prompt resolution so they don't derail progress.

Quick Wins for Immediate Impact: Rather than waiting until everything is perfect, we seize early opportunities to add value. A strong CFO will seek “quick wins” in the first 90 days to demonstrate progress and build trust across the organization. This might include

cleaning up account ledgers, streamlining billing or donation tracking cycles, fixing a nagging bookkeeping error, or implementing a simple cash flow forecast . These early improvements not only strengthen your financial footing but also show your team tangible results within the first month.

Preliminary Findings Review: We share a concise briefing of our findings and quick wins with you and your leadership team. This open communication builds transparency and ensures we're aligned on priorities going forward. By involving leadership in the diagnosis, we foster buy-in and prepare the ground for strategic planning. (Touchpoint: Expect a 30-day review meeting to go over key findings, quick wins accomplished, and agree on focus areas for the next phase.)

Phase 3: Strategic Roadmap & Alignment (Weeks 7–8)

Solution Mapping: With a clear grasp of the challenges and goals, we shift into strategic planning. We develop a tailored financial roadmap that addresses the identified needs and sets a course for the future . This roadmap is outcome-focused – it outlines actionable solutions such as process improvements, policy updates, technology integrations, and financial targets (e.g. reserve levels, debt reduction, or funding diversification) – all aligned with your ministry's mission and vision.

Leadership Strategy Sessions: We don't create the plan in a vacuum. We facilitate planning discussions with your senior leadership (and board, if appropriate) to ensure the financial strategy supports your organizational vision . Together, we define clear short-term and long-term financial goals (e.g. “achieve a 3-month operating reserve” or “improve program cost transparency”), and we establish key performance indicators to track progress. The emphasis here is on aligning finances with your strategy – whether that means sustainable growth, greater community impact, or improved stewardship of resources.

Consensus & Buy-In: By involving leadership in solution mapping, we secure consensus on the path forward. At the end of Phase 3, you will have a concrete 90-day financial action plan (the “roadmap”) in hand, and everyone will understand the “why” behind it. This phase cements leadership buy-in and sets the stage for action . (Touchpoint: Expect a collaborative strategy workshop around day 60 to finalize the roadmap and ensure all leaders are on the same page.)

Phase 4: Early Implementation & Momentum (Weeks 9–12)

Implement Priority Improvements: In the final month of the 90-day plan, we hit the ground running on the highest-impact initiatives from the roadmap. We begin upgrading or introducing financial systems and processes to strengthen your infrastructure. For example, we might deploy better reporting tools or automation for repetitive tasks, tighten internal controls, or reconfigure your chart of accounts for clearer tracking . The focus is

on setting up “quick win” systems that provide real-time insights and eliminate inefficiencies, creating a foundation for sound financial management .

Training & Capacity Building: As new processes and tools roll out, we provide hands-on training for your staff and leadership to ensure continuity . Everyone who handles finances learns the improved procedures – from how to run new reports to adhering to internal controls. We establish clear roles and communication rhythms so that financial management becomes a well-integrated team effort . This investment in your people builds confidence and self-sufficiency within your organization.

Monitoring & Hand-off: We also set up regular financial review cycles (e.g. weekly cash updates, monthly budget vs. actual reviews) and communication norms so that by day 90 you have a sustainable cadence going forward. The idea is to “teach you to fish” – we put structures in place and guide your team, so that after 90 days you’re not reliant on us for every task but empowered with better tools and knowledge.

90-Day Outcomes: By the end of the first 90 days, you can expect to see a noticeable transformation in your finance function. You’ll come out of this onboarding period with clean books, clear systems, and a financial infrastructure that’s audit-ready and built to last . In other words, the groundwork is laid for long-term success: your financial reporting will be timely and meaningful, your internal controls and policies will be strengthened, and your leadership will have newfound clarity and confidence to make strategic decisions. (Touchpoint: Expect a 90-day wrap-up meeting to review outcomes, ensure satisfaction, and outline next steps or ongoing support needs.)

Each phase of this 90-day plan is designed to deliver value while fostering trust. We focus on strategic impact, leadership alignment, and transparency throughout the process. By pacing the work over three months, we avoid overload and build momentum steadily. The result is a strong partnership grounded in clarity and confidence – without any jargon or guesswork – so you can lead your organization’s mission with financial peace of mind.