



Right Pear are specialists in Accountancy & Finance recruitment.

Based in Bristol, and largely focused on the South West, we combine 19 years' experience working with start-ups, scale-ups and other SMEs across the region.

We've placed finance professionals at all levels and across a wide variety of sectors, whether privately-owned or backed by investors.

This guide provides insights on the 2026 accountancy & finance senior candidate market, tailored towards Owners, Founders, CEOs, MDs and Boards thinking about making a Finance leadership hire, but not quite sure where (or when) to start.

Job Titles – What's The Difference?

Sometimes it's hard to know what you need and when you need it, as well as the job title to match. Below is a break down of the basis:

CFO

A highly-strategic, externally-focused Finance leader who goes well beyond the day-to-day running of the finance function. Forget management accounts and VAT returns, this is all about scalability, M&A, investor / bank relationships and gearing your business to be exit-ready.

Finance Director

Experienced and commercially-minded, but still very much internally focused. Responsible for overseeing budgeting, forecasting, reporting, systems and team management. While most FDs can play a strategic role, they tend to remain more operational in nature.

Head of Finance

You're not quite ready for a Finance Director, but you know you need capability. A Head of Finance is a great way to bridge the gap between a limited / struggling finance function, with the demands of increasing commercial and operational pressures.

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Financial Controller

You've got a handle on the numbers, and feel comfortable setting the financial strategy for the business. What you need is someone to competently manage finance. Running budgets and forecasts, liaising with internal stakeholders, owning the month end, managing compliance. They may have a couple of direct reports, but tend to work quite lean.

Finance Manager

You need someone to handle the basics. Commercial or operational insights aren't required, nor are robust cash management exercises. This seat will have a closer handle on the transactional finance operations of your business, while still being able to run the month end close.

What About Salary?

While of course there are nuances, generally speaking in the South West you're looking at the following range for someone full-time and permanent:

CFO

£120,000 – £150,000.

Salary can vary depending on bonuses, LTIP and equity

Finance Director

£85,000 – £120,000

Bonus to be expected (10%–30%)

Head of Finance

£75,000 – £85,000

Bonus might be expected (5%–20%)

Financial Controller

£65,000 – £75,000

Finance Manager

£45,000 – £65,000

What if I don't need someone full time?

The good news is, how you bring someone into the business is flexible, and can even aid you in your understanding and shaping of the role in the long term.

Part time

You know you need to make the hire, and you want them to be part of the fabric of your business permanently. You're possibly unsure that a full time option is best right now, but you definitely need the skill set. Conversation can be left open about extending hours in the future.

Interim / Contract

Very useful if you need to move quickly. Experienced and needs little hand-holding. Can help provide clarity on what the future of your finance leadership should look like. Usually paid on a day-by-day rate. Comes at a premium but worth their weight in gold.

Fractional

An ever growing CFO / FD market. You need the resource, but don't have the budget. A Fractional hire works like a part time hire, but a Fractional professional will outsource themselves to multiple businesses. They only do the heavy lifting. Usually contribute to your business 1-2 days per week.

Thanks for reading!

Hopefully this has provided some useful information as you navigate your way through your senior finance appointment.

If you'd like to discuss anything within this document further, or you'd like to understand anything else within the accountancy & finance market, the Right Pear team are always on hand.



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