



INTERIM MANAGEMENT

Leadership in Times of Crisis

EIP

EXECUTIVE
INTERIM PARTNERS

WHEN FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION

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Leadership in Times of Crisis

The interim management market in Germany is experiencing dynamic growth and increasing professionalization. Amid profound economic upheaval – marked by geopolitical uncertainties such as potential trade conflicts under a resurgent Donald Trump, global supply chain risks, and industry-specific crises in the automotive sector, construction, or mechanical and plant engineering – more and more companies are relying on experienced temporary executives.

Interim managers offer rapidly available, high-level operational expertise during transformation, restructuring, and crisis situations. They have become an integral part of modern corporate governance and play a crucial role in addressing structural challenges.

1. DEFINITION: INTERIM MANAGEMENT AND INTERIM MANAGER

Interim Management refers to the temporary deployment of external, experienced executives with operational responsibility for bridging vacancies, implementing change projects, or managing special corporate situations.

"Interim Management is the professional deployment of experienced temporary executives to solve management tasks with clear goals and result accountability."

Source: Dachgesellschaft Deutsches Interim Management (DDIM)

Interim Manager are seasoned executives who temporarily assume management responsibilities at the first or second leadership level – often with operational responsibility and decision-making authority. They are typically engaged for six to twelve months, especially in special situations such as restructuring, transformation, digitization, or bridging resource shortages. Their work is goal- and result-oriented, either in line functions or independent project leadership roles.

2. INTERIM MANAGEMENT MARKET IN GERMANY

According to a market study by DDIM e.V., the interim management market in Germany reached approximately €2.7 billion in 2024, continuing long-term growth driven by demand for highly qualified temporary experts and executives.

The number of interim managers in Germany remains stable at around 12,000.

Key growth drivers include a shortage of skilled workers and increasing demand for expert knowledge in transformation, digitization, and change management. Since 2024, restructuring has emerged as another significant growth driver.

The most in-demand interim management assignments in 2024 were:

- Change management (15.5% of requests),
- Restructuring and turnaround (14.1%),
- Process optimization (12.7%),
- Project management (11.3%).

Requests for restructuring and turnaround have doubled since 2022, reflecting the current crisis landscape.

In terms of industry demand, mechanical engineering remains the leading sector at 12.8%, closely followed by automotive suppliers at 12.5%.

Demand in these sectors is driven by innovation pressure, cost efficiency, and the shift to sustainable production processes.

German companies are seeking more on-site presence for 2025. While 34% of interim managers worked entirely on-site in 2024, DDIM forecasts that this figure will rise to over 50% in 2025 – despite differing preferences among many managers.

The German interim management market is considered one of the largest and most professional in Europe. The UK market is similarly strong, very established, and characterized by higher daily rates. France and Switzerland show dynamic growth, while Italy and Austria are smaller but growing markets. In the U.S., interim management is known as “fractional leadership” – less standardized but with significant volume and potential.

3. INTERIM MANAGER PROFILE REQUIREMENTS

An interim manager must combine extensive technical expertise, long-standing leadership experience, high adaptability, and strong social skills. The ability to operate in complex, uncertain, and often high-pressure environments and to effectively drive change is essential.

While specific requirements vary by company and project, an interim manager should always be able to quickly step into new roles and immediately add value. The following professional and personal qualities are critical:

Professional Requirements

- Extensive leadership experience: Proven success in senior roles, ideally at the C-level or second management tier.
- Industry-specific knowledge: Deep understanding of the relevant industry (e.g., automotive, mechanical engineering, IT).
- Project and change management skills: Experience with restructuring, transformation, digitization, etc.
- Quick comprehension & execution strength: Ability to quickly integrate into new structures and take on operational responsibility.
- Result orientation: Clear goal setting and measurable achievement.
- Commercial and strategic understanding: Ability to quickly grasp and implement economic relationships.
- Flexibility in location and duration: Willingness for temporary assignments domestically and abroad.

Personal Requirements

- Assertiveness & decisiveness: Confident presence in challenging situations, especially during crises or change.
- Strong communication skills: Clear, audience-appropriate communication and excellent stakeholder management.
- Trustworthiness: Ability to gain and maintain trust and support among all stakeholders.
- Team integration & social competence: Ability to integrate into teams and build trust despite a temporary role.
- Independence & neutrality: Objectivity regarding internal power dynamics and interests.
- Resilience & stress resistance: Confident handling of pressure, time constraints, and complex situations.
- Willingness to learn & openness: Commitment to continuous development and adapting to new contexts.
- Integrity and confidentiality: Adherence to high ethical standards and safeguarding confidentiality.

CONCLUSION

Interim management has established itself in Germany as a strategic tool for bridging leadership gaps and implementing complex transformation projects. With a market volume of around €2.7 billion and about 12,000 active interim managers, Germany is one of the leading markets in Europe. High demand continues in areas like change management, restructuring, and digitization – particularly in industries such as mechanical engineering and automotive.

Interim managers must possess not only deep technical expertise and long-standing leadership experience but also strong interpersonal skills, flexibility, and the ability to deliver rapid impact – always with clear accountability for results.

ABOUT EXECUTIVE INTERIM PARTNERS



EXECUTIVE INTERIM PARTNERS GMBH (EIP) was founded in 2005 in Munich. It is a leading and owner-managed partnership of experienced C-level interim managers for special situations.

EIP partners support companies especially during:

- Restructurings and turnarounds
- Transformations
- Exit preparation and company sales
- Leadership crises or leadership gaps
- Acquisitions and integrations
- Digitization

The EIP team has long-standing experience in executive and operational leadership roles as managers, entrepreneurs, and investors.

All EIP partners have proven track records as board members, managing directors, or supervisory board members in strategic reorientation, performance improvements, and operational and financial restructuring of SMEs and corporate groups, both domestically and internationally.

About 80% of EIP's mandates stem from official executive roles such as:

- Chief Restructuring Officer (CRO)
- Chief Transformation Officer (CTO)
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- Chief Operating Officer (COO)
- Chief Digital Officer (CDO)
- Chief Sales Officer (CSO)

Clients include private equity firms, family-owned SMEs, and corporate entities. EIP managers are active in the DACH region, throughout Europe (e.g., France, Sweden, Denmark, Czech Republic), and in global markets (e.g., USA, Canada, South Africa, China, South Korea).

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Harald H. Meyer is a partner of Executive Interim Partners and has been working successfully for more than 20 years as an executive interim manager at the first management level (CxO) as managing director, board member and supervisory board member.

The focus of his work is on the restructuring and reorganization of medium-sized and group companies as well as SMEs, in which he has successfully managed a large number of restructuring tasks as CRO / restructuring manager, CEO, COO and project manager.

His core competencies lie in the areas of turnaround/restructuring, strategic and organizational realignment, business model optimization, post-merger integration, carve-out projects, process optimization and the sustainable optimization of all corporate functions: Administration, Finance, Controlling, Production, Supply Chain, R&D, Sales / Marketing, In- and Outsourcing, Downsizing Setup / Relocation / Closure of operations/parts. Mr. Meyer also has extensive experience in M&A and the purchase/sale of companies/divisions (buy side/sell side), due diligence and the corresponding contract negotiations/drafting

Mr. Meyer studied business administration at the University of Göttingen and graduated with a degree in business administration and the best grade in his subject combination. After graduating, he completed an 18-month trainee program in a major German corporation, where he gained his first professional experience. This was followed by 5 years as a product manager in international marketing for well-known branded goods companies in the consumer goods industry.

Mr. Meyer then switched to management consulting and was thus able to gain a wide range of experience in international strategy, reengineering and restructuring projects for medium-sized companies and corporations as a project manager and consulting managing director; he has achieved lasting success in this area.

In addition to his work as an interim manager, Mr. Meyer is also an honorary board member of the umbrella organization Deutsches Interim Management DDIM e.V..



Michael Hengstmann is a founding partner and managing partner of Executive Interim Partners and a board member of Management Capital Holding AG, an investment company that provides equity capital for medium-sized companies.

Mr. Hengstmann has worked as an interim manager for various medium-sized companies and subsidiaries of corporations in Germany and abroad and has successfully implemented restructurings, turnarounds, strategic realignments and sales offensives as Chief Restructuring Officer, Chief Executive Officer/Chairman of the Management Board, Chief Financial Officer or Chief Operating Officer.

Prior to that, Mr. Hengstmann was Partner and Managing Director at AlixPartners, the leading international restructuring expert, and supported various companies in restructuring situations as an interim manager and consultant. Prior to that, he was a Partner and Managing Director at One Equity Partners, the former private equity fund of JP Morgan.

Mr. Hengstmann began his professional career in his family's own medium-sized company before working as a project manager at Arthur Andersen and later as a partner and managing director at LEK Consulting, supporting medium-sized companies, international groups and private equity companies in M&A transactions on the buy and sell side and as a consultant and interim manager.

In addition, Mr. Hengstmann advises and supports various companies in Germany and abroad as a member or chairman of the supervisory board.

He graduated with a Master of Science in Management from the Hult International Business School in Cambridge/USA with honors and studied business administration at the University of Duisburg.



EIP

EXECUTIVE/
INTERIM PARTNERS

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MICHAEL HENGSTMANN

Managing Partner
hengstmann@eip.de

HARALD H. MEYER

Partner
meyer@eip.de

OFFICE ADDRESS

Residenzstraße 27
Preysing Palais
80333 Munich
Tel: +49 89 552 7979 20

COMPANY ADDRESS

Herzog-Sigmund-Straße 13
82031 Grünwald

www.eip.de

Executive Interim Partners GmbH
Munich, HRB 155322

Business Partner: Michael Hengstmann, Ullrich Weirauch