

## PANCHATSHARAM ELUMALAI

NAVIGATING FINANCIAL LANDSCAPES  
WITH FUTURISTIC GROWTH STRATEGIES

A seasoned professional in this domain, Panchatsharam Elumalai, CFO at Staple Ai has a comprehensive background in finance and a track record of fostering growth across various industries. Panchatsharam holds a bachelor's degree in Corporate Finance and has completed the CA-IPC course in India. Additionally, he has acquired an M&A certification from NTU, Singapore.

Panchatsharam's career commenced in the healthcare sector, where he played an integral role in the successful IPO listing of Devaki Hospital on BSE/NSE in Chennai, India. Transitioning to regional senior roles within multinational corporations based in Singapore, Panchatsharam showcased his expertise in fundraising, ERP implementations, office establishment for regional expansion, and crafting robust financial strategies across diverse industry verticals.

For the past 15 years, Panchatsharam has carved a significant path in the startup ecosystem and SMEs, serving as a trusted advisor to numerous founders. He has facilitated successful fundraising for various entities, offering comprehensive support during their growth and regional expansion.

Among his notable achievements, Panchatsharam played a key role in the successful acquisition of Pacific Avionics, Singapore by Rockwell Collins. Beyond that, he has actively supported several hard tech startups, securing over USD 100 million in Pre-Series A, Series A and B funding. This includes his recent contribution to the USD 10 million Series A-2 fundraising for Transcelestial Technologies, Singapore, a pioneering wireless laser communication and space-focused hard tech company. These ventures showcase Panchatsharam's unwavering commitment to startups and his skillful navigation of the dynamic entrepreneurial landscape.

In his current role as CFO at Staple Ai, Panchatsharam brings a wealth of experience and a strategic vision, driving the company's financial strategies while contributing significantly to its growth and success. Additionally, he has been offering consulting services to several startup companies through his own firm, which specializes in CFO consultancy services. Let's get to know more from him.



**Panchatsharam Elumalai**  
CFO  
Staple Ai

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**You've accumulated more than two decades of experience. Could you elaborate on your journey to success and share the principles that have guided you along the way?**

Throughout my career, I've been fortunate to engage in a wide array of projects, granting me invaluable exposure across various domains such as research and development, project management, manufacturing processes and cost analysis, resource allocation, fundraising, M&A, investments, regional expansion and organizational restructuring. This diverse breadth of experiences has provided me with a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies within the business landscape.

My personal recipe for success revolves around maintaining a dynamic equilibrium between financial expertise and a deep understanding of business operations. This strategic fusion has been pivotal in not just navigating but thriving within fiercely competitive business arenas. The capacity to adapt, absorb new knowledge, and apply tailored solutions to address specific challenges has remained central to my professional journey, fostering consistent success and continuous personal and professional growth.

**As the Chief Financial Officer of Staple. io , how do you plan to apply your long professional experience in this domain to add more stars to the organization's profile?**

My focus involves identifying funding opportunities, whether through venture capital, debt financing, or strategic partnerships. My aim is to work closely with the leadership team, understanding cost, growth, and demand drivers, and overcoming challenges to deliver on these KPIs. Additionally, I'll evaluate potential mergers and acquisitions to broaden Staple.io's market reach while fostering robust investor relations to ensure stakeholders are well-informed and confident in the company's progress. Strategic Decision-Making and Value Creation: I aim to create data-driven pricing models that highlight Staple.io's value proposition while staying competitive. Identifying areas for operational improvement and ensuring financial sustainability and profitability is a priority. Establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) and tracking their progress across departments will enable data-driven decisions. Enhancing Credibility: I'll institute robust financial reporting systems, ensuring transparency with stakeholders to enhance trust and confidence in Staple.io's financial health.

**Tell us about your leadership approach. What are the guidelines or methodologies you follow to lead your team?**

My leadership approach is rooted in principles that drive growth, value creation, and the cultivation of high-performing teams. I adopt a collaborative stance, seeing

myself as a business partner collaborating with various team leads to understand their needs and propose cost-effective solutions fostering growth. Active involvement in strategic planning, market trend analysis, and identifying funding opportunities shapes a proactive growth trajectory. Metrics and data-driven decisions, facilitated by key performance indicators (KPIs), guide improvements and goal tracking.

I prioritize building high-performing teams by attracting adaptable financial talent through focused recruitment and continuous training. Encouraging open communication, empowerment, and decision-making within set parameters fosters a dynamic working environment. My leadership adheres to established frameworks. The Balanced Scorecard aligns financial goals with operational objectives for a comprehensive view of performance. Activity-Based Costing aids in identifying true cost drivers for better pricing and resource allocation. Evaluating investments through NPV and IRR ensures optimal shareholder value while managing risks. Lastly, Value-Based Management focuses on creating shareholder value through strategic long-term financial decisions. These principles collectively drive my leadership approach toward sustained growth and team excellence.

**What is the motivation that fuels your daily routines?**

The driving force behind my daily routines stems from several sources of motivation within my role as a CFO in a startup environment. Working in startups feels like walking a financial tightrope, with the CFO positioned as the one balancing on the wire. Making split-second decisions on resource allocation, capex investments, cash flow management, and controlling burn rates creates intense pressure but also delivers an unparalleled adrenaline rush when risky moves pay off or averted financial crises save the company. The camaraderie, trust, and friendships formed within the team through shared struggles and late-night passion-fueled sessions instill a profound sense of belonging and purpose.

My passion for the startup's mission goes beyond numbers; I'm deeply invested in the company's larger purpose. This emotional connection intensifies my drive, ensuring that resources are directed towards fulfilling the company's goals, ultimately propelling me to excel in my role. Additionally, I have been offering consulting services to several startup companies through my own firm, which specializes in CFO consulting services."

**What advice would you give to the upcoming financial leaders in the industry?**

Aspiring financial leaders should prioritize mastering fundamentals, understanding business operations, and aligning financial strategies with broader objectives. They must convert financial data into compelling narratives, challenge norms with prudence, and uphold unwavering ethical standards for successful industry leadership. **C**