



Accounting Jobs: Earning a Rewarding Accounting Job in the 21st Century

With such a wide array of accounting positions to choose from, it's hard to know where to begin looking for more information. The article below is a great start and is sure to help everyone interested in accounting gain a better grasp of the subject.



The accounting industry revolution resulting in automation, outsourcing and the implementation of complex accounting rules is creating a strong demand for accountants and auditors through 2016. The number of accounting positions is

expected to grow at a healthy 18 percent, making this field **faster growing** than other business fields. Candidates with both a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and bachelor's degree will be in highest demand.

Education and Certification Requirements

Most accounting positions require a minimum of a bachelor's degree in accounting or another business field. If the applicant has a degree outside of accounting, some positions have a minimum number of college credit hours in accounting requirement. Most positions request that the applicant have a master's degree or a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) license. **Accounting internships** are especially important as well in getting the accounting job you want.

If the accountant is required to submit any official reports, such as to the Securities and Exchange Commission, the current law requires that the accountant be a CPA. If the accounting report is eventually filed publicly, the position needs to be staffed with a CPA regardless if the position is filled by a temporary employee or from an agency. Each state has an individual accounting license board. However, all of the states that provide licenses require that the candidate pass the uniform CPA exam administered through the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Most states have educational and work experience requirements for the CPA license as well.

Once certified, almost every licensing state requires that the CPA attend and complete continuing education in accounting to maintain the license. Each state has different requirements, making it important to check with the location you plan on working.

Job Responsibilities

Job responsibilities for accountants differ widely based on position types and the various types of accounting firms. There are eight major accounting job categories. Each one has a slightly different need. However, almost all of them require the same basic education and certification requirements. The areas are Finance, Payroll, Treasury, Audit and Assurance, Internal Audit, Billing, Credit/Collections, and Tax. The accounting manager who works in any of the eight areas is responsible for all areas relating to financial reporting. The accounting manager is the person who is responsible for ensuring the company is compliant with the current procedures and practices as mandated by regulations and generally accepted accounting principles.

If the company is required to submit public reports, then the accounting manager is required to ensure that the reports are filed in a timely manner and that each month, quarter and each year is properly closed out.



To ensure that all accounting processes continue to flow properly, the accounting manager also works with the general ledger group to ensure that all transactions are recorded or properly accrued at the right time and all deadlines are met. If

unusual charges or one-time events cause issues with account reporting, the accounting manager works with all departments as well as with other accounting departments in the company to properly characterize the transaction, as well as determine what types of public reporting are required by law.

Because the legal requirements are very stringent for publicly traded companies, the accounting manager must fully understand the implications of any legal changes that might affect quarterly or annual reporting. The accounting manager also must be able to work closely with internal and external auditors to ensure that the year-end close procedure timelines are met.



Accounting Job Advice

Skills

The accounting manager must have strong analytical skills as well as excellent communication skills. The accounting manager may be required to report to all levels of the company regarding performance. If the accounting manager is the controller, then the accounting manager may be required to give public statements as well as host quarterly conference calls to report any material events that could impact the value of a publicly traded company.

The accounting manager should be familiar with financial projection methods, as well as software and databases that may help in determining future income, expenses and cash flow. The accountant should feel comfortable in explaining the technical issues in a way that internal management as well as the external investing community understands the impact of the analysis.

Because deadlines are rigid, the accounting manager needs to have excellent project management skills, as well as time management abilities.

Job Outlook

With the growth of the economy, as well as the increase in complexity of accounting and reporting requirements for publicly traded companies, and governmental agencies, the expectation is that all types of accounting jobs will grow 18 percent from 2006 to 2016. This rate of growth is faster than the average growth of other business positions. What this means is that over 226,000 new positions will be available during the decade, requiring a large number of qualified accountants and accounting personnel to enter the work force.

The Sarbanes-Oxley act of 2002 has created a huge expansion in corporate auditing to ensure that no fraudulent or improper entries are made to the general ledger. Because the Chief Executive Officer is being held personally responsible for

any errors or fraud, the need for accountants with CPAs and professional accounting personnel will continue to grow. People specializing in auditing and accounting processes and procedure checks will be in especially high demand.

Career Path

Most accounting managers start as junior internal auditors, cost accountants, or trainees for other accounting roles. Generally, the top positions in a corporation for accountants have the title of Controller, Vice President of Finance, Treasurer, or Chief Financial Officer. Because the skill set in accounting transfers easily across industries, as well as across specialties, accountants have great job flexibility. Auditors may move to public accounting, or to finance.

Salary Range

Because of the broad range of positions in accounting as well as the size of companies that require accountants, the [salary range](#) is equally broad. Accountants with one year of experience, such as entry level accountants, may earn between \$31,500 and \$48,250, while directors of internal auditing may earn between \$68,000 and \$208,000.

For [government accounting jobs](#) within the United States Federal, State or Local governments, salaries may be lower. A starting salary for a junior auditor may be under \$29,000. Accountants who have managerial responsibility average between \$78,000 and \$83,000 per year.

Conclusion

With the Sarbanes-Oxley act, as well as other new reporting requirements for publicly traded companies, and banking organizations, the need for accountants will continue to grow faster than the rest of the market. For candidates with an accounting degree as well as a CPA license, the outlook is very positive.

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