



The New Face of Accounting Positions

Accounting careers are the backbone of an American company. Accountants provide solid financial numbers, outlooks, budgets, and other critical information that enables a company to determine if new hires are feasible, building expansions are necessary, and whether or not a company is successful or if its numbers are in the red. An accounting background can mean a life of few or no worries about unemployment. Still, it's not a given, and an accountant must be worth his salt and must offer proof of his capabilities. This is typically showcased at an entry level. Workloads are then given based on an accountant's proven track record within the company. Before you wonder why you bothered with a degree if you're still facing entry-level work, consider this: typically, a degreed employee is promoted three times faster than those with no degrees. Accountants' rates of promotion are even higher. Employers view those in their finance departments as the ones who hold the keys to the kingdom, in a sense. They take a small leap of faith to ensure the employee takes the company's finances as seriously as its stockholders do, and once that's determined—sometimes in as little as three months—from then, the accountant is awarded through promotions and increased salaries. Keep in mind, though, a rapid rise within the company means positions where you are responsible for greater scrutiny, overseeing tax audits and remaining current with the laws governing American companies.

According to the government's Bureau of Labor Statistics site, the four major fields within Accounting include public, management, government accounting, and internal auditing. Each of these fields is discussed below.

Public Accountants: The most versatile of the specialties. Range of responsibilities includes auditing, accounting, and consulting for both non-profits and for-profits structures. This area ensures statements, tax filings, and other financial documents are prepared properly. Many CPAs work for themselves or for accounting firms.

Management Accountants: Usually part of an executive management team, the management accountant is privy to board meetings and other closed-door meetings to determine costs associated with introducing new product lines and are sometimes the final say in how financial decisions for the company are made. They also prepare financial reports and are held responsible for the final numbers these reports reflect.

Government Accountants: These are the ones who choose government agencies as their employers. They often work for the Internal Revenue Service or other state and local governments. Government accountants are the ones who conduct audits on individuals and businesses.

Internal Auditors: These behind-the-scene professionals are the ones who catch potential problems, including illegal activities. They ensure management procedures are incorporated and internal controls are in place and are functioning as designed. They also provide feedback on the security of networks and other digital data.

Those who are earning their degrees in accounting are also

simultaneously earning technology degrees of some kind. With the rapid changes in software design, it's a wise advantage for those pursuing these secondary educations. In fact, it's estimated nearly 94 percent of potential employers consider strong computer knowledge along with the accounting degree as necessary and mandatory. With newer and advanced software applications released every year, complete with higher levels of security to prevent hijacks and hackers from obtaining confidential company information, it's important to remain vigilant with a willingness to take on this responsibility. Not only does an accountant provide the financial numbers for his employer, he also carries the lion's share of ensuring this information remains confidential and doesn't fall into the wrong hands.

Other educational considerations include the fact that forty-two states, as well as the District of Columbia, require 140 semester hours of coursework. Keep in mind; this is thirty hours more than the traditional four year bachelor's degree. Dedication and commitment are musts. Statistics show that one half of those who take the AICPA, the examination by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, will fail on their first attempt. Clearly, a strong fortitude is another useful trait that's advantageous to the up-and-coming accountant.

A snapshot of four hundred company presidents and vice presidents reveals 82 percent have accounting backgrounds or experience in internal audits. This is a clear indication of the advancement opportunities to those who are dedicated and who remain committed to the accounting field. Other peripheral job opportunities for those with accounting degrees (and some without these degrees) include loan officers, cost estimators, tax collectors, bookkeepers, and financial advisors. Once totaled, including these peripheral descriptions, there are nearly 1.3 million Americans in these roles. Projections



Entry-Level Career Feature

tell of over 1.5 million over the next decade. Even as some job positions are slowly being phased out, those with solid accounting backgrounds should be able to ensure they're never without career options. Finally, you might be interested

to know that starting salaries are also projected to continue to rise at faster percentages than any other job classification.

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.