



Technical Opportunities in Banking and Finances

If you have a head for figures and you like technical jobs related to finance, one of the most profitable and available positions in the financial industry is that of the accountant. This is a career that can provide you financial employment from the time you get out of college with your bachelor's degree until the time you retire.

When you just got out of college, for example, you can start with an [entry-level accounting](#) position, then move into [accounting managerial jobs](#) once you continue your career and have advanced a bit more. It's wise to get your CPA (certified public accountant) or other certification as soon as you can once you get out of school, since some advanced positions require that you have this type of certification; it also makes you more marketable overall, since you shown that you can rise to this type of challenge. It also makes you suitable for many more positions in the job market than you would be if you didn't have it.

You can work as an accountant in a number of different arenas. Regardless of what you do, though, your main focus is always going to be that you help your clients manage their finances. You're going to analyze and prepare financial reports so that your clients (usually businesses) can see at a glance how they're doing. You may also help your clients prepare their tax returns correctly so that they won't be penalized by the government for any oversights in this regard.

One of the main areas of expertise you are going to have to have as an accountant is not just a proficiency with numbers themselves. You're also going to have to have a very good knowledge of financial laws in general, as well as tax laws, so that your clients are assured that they are within the confines of the law at all times.

Getting a Job

To get a job in [accounting](#), you're first going to have to have a degree in accounting. To prepare, you can begin to take math courses and become familiar and comfortable with numbers in high school. Many colleges offer degrees in finance and accounting; specialize in one of these areas to get a job in accounting after school. If you land a job with an accounting firm, you may need a master's degree for an advanced position. However, a bachelor's degree will usually be sufficient for you to get an entry-level position at this type of company.

After that, you can work your way up and gain a master's degree at the same time.

When you get your master's degree, you can specialize in a particular type of accounting, like cost accounting or tax accounting, at that point.

The CPA Examination

To become a public accountant, you'll need to take the examination to become a certified public accountant. The CPA exam is issued by a American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and has four parts to it. It's quite a difficult test, in that only 25% of those who take it pass it their first time through. Before you can take this examination, though, you have to have at least 150 hours of relevant college coursework. This is the equivalent of having both undergraduate and master's degrees in accounting.

You may be hired as a junior accountant if you just have your bachelor's degree; in so doing, though, you can assist those who have been CPA certified. This type of job is beneficial because usually, you can study for your CPA test while you're on the job and learn on the job as well. This will give you a better chance of passing the examination once you take it. As you advance in your career, you must continually keep up with new laws or accounting rules as they develop. This means that you will need to be self directed and will need to continually "self-study" and complete coursework to stay current in your field and therefore remain employed.

Your First Job

In regard to your first job out of college, your school's placement services might be able to help you get a job in a public accounting firm. Job sites online lists many entry-level accounting positions, and recruiters, too, are looking for candidates to fill these positions. If you use the services of a recruiter, be advised that it's not likely to cost you anything;



Financial Career Feature

instead, they're looking for people to fill positions because they've been hired by corporations or companies to do the job for them. This can make it much easier for you to find a job in this way, and a recruiter can also help you with your interview skills and with your resume.

Moving Up into More Senior Accounting Positions

Once you have been in your career for a while, you may decide that you want to move to a more senior level of expertise. It may be that your employer will simply give you a promotion once you've got the necessary experience. If this doesn't happen, though, you can also seek similar employment on your own, again using online job sites or the services of recruiters to help you find work.

Many accountants also eventually become self-employed once they have the requisite expertise to do so.

Job Outlook and Compensation

The outlook for accountants remains good even with recent economic downturns; in fact, recent financial collapses in the financial industry will likely mean that there will be ever more stringent rules policing how corporations run themselves and handle their money, which will give the accounting industry more work. As of 2004, accountants in all levels of experience across all sectors earned about \$51,000 a year.

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.