

Career Enhancement

The light at the end of the tunnel...



Guide to use while applying for a job in accounting

- Responses from specific accounting firms
- Handy tips at your fingertips
- Web addresses with resourceful information

Fall Semester 2005/2006

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Important Note:

Accounting firms do their main hiring during the fall, particularly mid-September thru the first of October. If you are a senior or junior seeking a full-time employment or and internship the time to prepare is now!

Introduction

The Accounting Council is a student organization within the School of Business at Indiana University Kokomo. The main objective of the Accounting Council is to serve accounting students by connecting them to the accounting industry.

In the past the organization has arranged Mock Interviews, presentations from accounting professionals, the Career Enhancement Project, and published an annual newsletter in the spring semester.

The Accounting Council currently consists of seven members who contribute to the projects, decisions, and future member selections of this organization.

If you are interested in contributing ideas or joining the Accounting Council contact one of the three persons listed below.

We hope you find this brochure beneficial!

Accounting Council
Indiana University Kokomo
Contacts: Effie Jones Chairperson (765) 418-0107
Vanessa Dotson Co-chairperson (765) 379-2883
Marilyn Kintzele Faculty Advisor (765) 455-9138

Career Enhancement Project Assessment

In the fall semester of 2004 the Career Enhancement Project was initiated. This project consisted of collecting the resumes of accounting students who were interested in internships or full time employment and then sending the resumes to various accounting firms in a professionally formatted booklet. The response to students for employment from these firms was minimal. Therefore, the Accounting Council decided to assess the project by sending questionnaires to all the firms who received the Career Enhancement portfolio in 2004, along with additional firms in the area. From this questionnaire there was a 35% response among the firms. The most preferred method of receiving resumes from the responses received were resumes and a cover letter sent by mail.

Furthermore, two other topics were taken into consideration in this questionnaire, which were whether the firm hires students who do not have 150 credit hours (eligibility to sit for the CPA exam) and whether the firm hires interns.

A detailed summary follows with the accounting firms responses to the questionnaire. Because of the results from the questionnaire the Accounting Council has decided that it is not feasible to carry out the Career Enhancement Project this fall.

However, we do anticipate hosting a Mock Interview Day for accounting students who wish to gain interviewing experience with an accounting professional. Details regarding Mock Interview Day are included on page 8 & 9.

Firms contacted regarding Career Enhancement Project assessment

Carmel

Brown & Co. LLC
Conseco Services, LLC

Delphi

Holsapple & Co.

Flora

Fisher and Associates

Indianapolis

BKD
Blue & Co.
Crowe Chizek and Company LLC
Deloitte & Touche
Ernst & Young
Indiana Farmers Mutual Insurance Company
KPMG
PricewaterhouseCoopers
Salin Bank & Trust (Keystone Crossing Dr)

Kokomo

BCR A CPA Group
Bergstrom, Lenon, & Clark PC
Bucher, McCarty & Metz LLP
Community First Bank of Howard County
Daimler Chrysler Corporation
Delphi Electronics & Safety
First National Bank & Trust (Sycamore St)
Gregory L Sale (Lincoln Rd.)
Howard Regional Health System

Kokomo cont.d

Key Bank (Main St. branch)
National City
Star Financial Bank (E Walnut St)
State Farm Bank (East Lincoln Rd.)

Lafayette

Chandler & Assoc. (Kossuth St)
Cox & Co (Executive Dr)
Dunten and Co PC (Saw Mill Rd)
Giradot Strauch & Co (Main St)
Huth Thompson LLP (Columbia St)
Painter and Pherson CPA (18th St)
Reed & Co. PC
Smith and Co CPAs PC (2nd St)
Thieme and Adair CPAs PC (Main St.)

Logansport

Baldwin Accounting Corporation (East Broadway)
Zehner Maloy and Associates (East Broadway)

Peru

Rea Logan & Co. Inc. (North Grant)
Kirk & Associates (West Main)
Comerford & Co. CPA's (East 2nd St)

Responses from the firms contacted

	Prefers resumes submitted by hardbound portfolio	Prefers resumes submitted by digital file portfolio	Prefers submitted online application	Prefers resumes with cover letter sent by mail	Prefers resumes with cover letter sent by digital file
Baldwin Accounting Corp.	YES				
BCR CPA Group		YES			
Bergstrom Lenon & Clark PC				YES	
Bucher, McCarty & Metz LLP	YES	2 ND PREFERENCE			
Cox & Company				YES	
Delphi Electronics & Safety			YES		
Dunten & Company PC				YES	
Fisher & Associates	YES			YES	
Huth Thompson LLP		YES			
Indiana Farmers Mutual Insurance Company	YES				
KPMG-Indianapolis					YES
Painter & Pherson, P.C.				YES	
Star Financial Bank				YES	
Zehner Maloy & Associates CPAs LLC				YES	EMAIL RESUME AND COVER LETTER
Name of firm not given	YES				
Name of firm not given					YES

	Hires Accounting Bachelor's of Science graduates without 150 credit hours	Hires interns
Baldwin Accounting Corp.	YES	NO-BUT CONSIDERING IT
BCR CPA Group	YES	YES
Bergstrom Lenon & Clark PC	YES	NO
Bucheri, McCarty & Metz LLP	YES	YES- DURING WINTER JAN 1 ST TO APRIL 15TH
Cox & Company	YES	NO
Delphi Electronics & Safety	HIRES MOSTLY MBA GRADUATES BUT HAVE HIRED BACHELOR GRADUATES	NOT ACCOUNTING INTERNS
Dunten & Company PC	NO	YES
Fisher & Associates	YES- BUT WOULD PREFER 150 HRS FOR ELIGIBILITY	YES
Huth Thompson LLP	YES	WE MIGHT START
Indiana Farmers Mutual Insurance Company	YES	NO
KPMG- Indianapolis	YES-TAX NO-AUDIT	YES
Painter & Pherson, P.C.	YES-BUT REQUIRE 150 HR.S WITHIN 3 YR.S OF START DATE	YES
Star Financial Bank	YES	YES
Zehner Maloy & Associates CPAs LLC	YES	SOMETIMES
Name of firm not given	REQUIRED AT START DATE	YES
Name of firm not given	YES	NO

Mock Interview Day

The Accounting Council hosted a Mock Interview Day on September 16th 2005 from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. The Accounting Council coordinates an activity each fall semester for accounting majors. Mock Interviews may be held in future semesters, given there is an interest from students.

The Mock Interviewers were accounting professionals from BKD in Indianapolis, Amy Demuth, and Syndicate Sales in Kokomo, Mark Bilodeau. The interviews were tailored for the public sector (BKD) and the corporate sector (Syndicate Sales).

It is an excellent opportunity to build interviewing skills with no risk. The interviewer evaluates interviewees in areas such as appearance, personality and poise, communication skills, responses, and closing the interview.

We look forward coordinating such projects for accounting majors in the future. If there are any interests in other projects please direct them to the Accounting Council. Preparation tips for interviews follow.

Resourceful web addresses:

<http://www.aicpa.org/nolimits/index.htm>

<http://accounting.pro2net.com>

<http://www.nasba.org/nasbaweb.nsf/nasbahome>

Careers

Think an accounting degree means you'll spend all your time preparing tax returns or making journal entries? Think again! Accountants are needed in all types of business and government. Below are just a few of the general paths your career can take.

Public Accounting

Be a friend to the public. Protect the public interest. Public accounting gives you the opportunity to work with many different types of clients to provide people and businesses with a variety of specialized financial services including auditing and attest functions, tax consulting and financial planning, environmental accounting, and other specialized assurance services.

Business & Industry

A surprising number of high-level executives at well-known companies started their careers with a CPA credential. CPAs in business and industry are considered strategic advisors and provide insight regarding a company's profitability and future growth.

Government

Like their counterparts in public accounting and business, CPAs in government have responsibilities in the areas of auditing, financial reporting, and management accounting. They have the opportunity to evaluate how well local, state, or federal government agencies are being run, and often advise decision makers in allocating resources to promote efficiency. Elected officials rely on the information and advice supplied by CPAs, and use it to determine budgets, spending priorities, and tax programs.

Not-for-profit

Because not-for-profits aren't generating large profits, these organizations must always maintain a strict financial balance to make sure the services they provide do not exceed their revenues. Whether the CPA works within the organizations or as an outside consultant, he or she can help maximize revenue and minimize taxes, create budget resources, and prepare financial data for fundraising.

Education

As educators, CPAs are faculty members at universities in undergraduate and graduate business and accounting programs. CPA educators also work to expand the body of accounting knowledge and publish new accounting theories in books and academic articles.

You can find this information and more regarding your career at StartHereGoPlaces.com, a student site of the AICPA. This website can also give you information on a number of accounting specialties. Check it out!!

Preparing For an Interview

Preparing for the interview involves more than just dressing for success. According to Karen Dowd, PhD of James Madison University, two of the most important things you can do to prepare are conduct a self-assessment and research the company. "Self-assessment is a process through which you become aware of your strengths and weaknesses, skills and abilities, interests, values, goals, and aspirations. Self-assessment is aimed at preparing you to feel comfortable in interview situations where the topic is YOU." Your self-assessment should lead you to be able to easily answer the following questions:

- What are your greatest strengths?
- What are your weaknesses (and what are you doing about them)?
- Where do you want to be in five years? In ten?
- What is your major and why did you choose it?
- How did you choose to spend your summers while in college?
- What courses in college did you most like and why?
- What school activities did you get involved in?
- What is your ideal job and why?

Next, you need to research the company. From the Internet to newspapers to trade journals, you should locate enough information about the company to be able to answer these questions:

- What are the company's major products and/or services?
- Who comprises the company's primary customer base?
- What marketplace niche is the company targeting?
- How is the company organized?
- Where does it operate?
- What is the history of the company?
- What career opportunities are available to someone with my background?
- What are some of the key components of the company's work environment?

This information will allow you not only to answer an interviewer's questions, but also to ask some intelligent questions of your own. Speaking of those questions, here are the Then Most Common Interview Questions, according to Carole Martin, Monster Interview Coach.

1. *What are your weaknesses?*
This is the most dreaded question of all. Handle it by minimizing your weaknesses and emphasizing your strengths. Stay away from personal qualities and concentrate on professional traits.
2. *Why should we hire you?*
Summarize your experiences.
3. *Why do you want to work here?*
The interviewer is listening for an answer that indicates you've given this some thought and are not sending out resumes just because there is an opening.
4. *What are your goals?*
Sometimes it's best to talk about short-term and intermediate goals rather than locking yourself into the distant future.
5. *Why did you leave (are you leaving) your job?*
If you're unemployed, state your reason for leaving in a positive context. If you are employed, focus on what you want in your next job.
6. *When were you most satisfied in your job?*
The interviewer wants to know what motivates you. If you can relate an example of a job or project when you were excited, the interviewer will get an idea of your preferences.
7. *What can you do for us that other candidates can't?*
What makes you unique? This will take an assessment of your experiences, skills and traits. Summarize concisely.
8. *What are three positive things your last boss would say about you?*
It's time to pull out your old performance appraisals and boss's quotes. This is a great way to brag about you through someone else's words.
9. *What salary are you seeking?*
It is to your advantage if the employer tells you the range first. Prepare by knowing the going rate in your area, and your bottom line or walk-away point.
10. *If you were an animal, which one would you want to be?*
Interviewers use this type of psychological question to see if you can think quickly. If you answer "a bunny," you will make a soft, passive impression. If you answer "a lion," you will be seen as aggressive. What type of personality would it take to get the job done? What impression do you want to make?

Interviews can be intimidating. With careful preparation, you can answer the interviewer's questions with confidence, as well and ask the questions that you want answered. This and much, much more job search and career advice can be found at StartHereGoPlace.com, a student site of the AICPA.

Additional Tips to prepare you for an Interview...

- ❖ **Bring your resume. Review your resume.** Make sure everything on it is correct and you are able to discuss the material briefly.
- ❖ Arrive early to make time to relax and do final prep for the interview
- ❖ Dress neatly, conservatively, and professionally appearance is crucial during first impressions. If this firm hired you then you will make many first impressions on the firm's behalf that is why it is extremely important to the interviewer.
- ❖ Plan ahead. Decide what to wear a day or two ahead of time and make time to iron if needed.
- ❖ Body language is another crucial part in making a good impression.
- ❖ Be nice to everyone you encounter on the way to the interview. Someone you meet by chance may know the interviewer and be asked his/her opinion of you.
- ❖ Be prepared to discuss career goals, past achievements, specific examples from school and work experiences that prove skills and abilities.
- ❖ Listen to the interviewer, this is an excellent opportunity to discover what the interviewer is interested in and will help you respond better to questions.
- ❖ Remember that any question you are asked may be followed up by an additional question. For instance if the interviewer asks, Do you like to read? Be prepared to discuss books and authors you like.
- ❖ Always thank the interviewer for his/her time. Write and send a thank-you note immediately after the interview.