

Rebecca Evans

Mr. Svagerko

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Accountancy: A stable and growing profession

In any business—from small businesses to multi-million dollar businesses—accountants are employed. Accountants may work as Certified Public Accountants (CPAs); they may work for the government or a private company but many contract themselves out to organizations who do not wish to hire an accountant on a full-time basis (Accountants). Accountants have the ideal career because their profession is flexible, the pay is adequate, and the path to certification is doable.

Accountants can be found in many forms throughout the United States and the world. One of the most specialized forms of accounting careers is forensic accounting. Forensic accountants are often employed by attorneys who need an analytical accountant to help with investigating white-collar crimes related to money (Davis 54). White-collar crimes are crimes involving members of the white collar class: stock brokers, commercial lending directors, finance directors, human resource managers (Kneale). Crimes committed by white collar workers are usually money-related. In order to be prepared for court, attorneys need assistance with scouring financial records of companies and individuals in question. Only 7.6% of CPAs specialize in forensic accounting and 53% of attorneys indicate a need for such an employee (Davis 54). Forensic accounting is just one small sector of the accounting career. The abundance of differing careers one could pursue with an accounting degree, then, is one appealing aspect of an accountancy career since individuals could find specializations within accountancy. This

variety could take a pursuant anywhere in the world in order to assist with an attorney's research or work for any company located in various locations through out the United States and the world.

While accountants are required to get college degrees, which can be costly, their income is more than adequate for a high standard of living. According to the United States Bureau of Labor, the middle half of accountants "earned between \$45,900 and \$78,210" a year as of May 2008 (Accounting). In 2009, the American household median income was \$49,777 (Denavas-Walt 5). Factually speaking, this means that the average household in America is able to support their families while earning less than \$50,000 each year. Considering the fact that these numbers are averages and the fact that the cost of living is drastically different in various parts of the United States, we could assume that citizens earning less were living in an area of the country where the cost of living was lower and citizens who were earning more were living in a higher cost-of-living region. Furthermore, if we consider a typical family with two working parents, we could assume that, if one bread-winner of the family is an accountant, more income would be earned by a secondary head of the household. With two working parents, a typical household would make more than enough to meet the cost of living for the family. Even without two working parents, it is possible that a household's needs would be met with one bread-winner and smart spending.

While an accounting degree requires a lot from a student, the hoops a student must jump through are doable for one who has problem-solving and math skills. As is the case with many professional occupations, accountants with higher education and experience levels will have a higher income. If a person graduates from a junior or business college, he or she may be an ideal candidate for a junior accountant position within a company and advance from there. More

often, aspiring accountants must earn at least a four-year bachelor's degree in accounting or a related field (Accountants). If graduates desire more education—for the sake of higher pay or advancement within a company—they may earn a master's degree. A master's degree will fulfill the 150-hour requirement set by most states to take CPA exam, which has four sections and is prepared by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Welcome). Passing the CPA exam is required in order to be certified (Accountants). An accountant can also take specialized tests to become Certified Internal Auditors (CIAs), Certified Government Auditing Professional (CGAPs) and other certified professionals. There are many routes an accountant could take in order to obtain an ideal career. These steps may seem daunting, and that would be a correct interpretation. However, becoming a CPA is possible; most people take the test more than once in order to get full certification. During the second quarter of 2010, about half of test-takers passed each of the sections of the exams (Welcome). Obviously, this means that examinees try to pass the exam multiple times before they are successful; this requires the test-taker to be persistent, dedicated, and studious. The challenging exam discourages some from completing certification, but multiple attempts and test preparation will improve test results. Even without passing the CPA exam, one can work in the accounting field, gaining experience and earning sufficient income to support an above-average lifestyle.

The flexibility, adequate pay, and certification process make accountancy an ideal profession for the future.

Works Cited

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