

GET THE JOB

Accounting Jobs Not Just CPAs

If you think you have to have a CPA to get an accounting job or that accountants are just bean counters, Rich Singer, a senior vice president at the employment agency Robert Half, wants you to know it is time to rethink the field.

He said it is time to fight these misconceptions because accounting professionals are needed more than ever.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, while there is a national unemployment rate of 3.6%, among accounting professionals, the rate is 1.8%. If you've avoided the field because you think it might be boring, there are some facts you might be interested in.

Accounting isn't just about knowing the difference between debit and credits (though that helps) or how to make two columns balance. Today's accountants are involved in such tasks as:

- Managing risk.
- Figuring out supply chain issues.
- Implementing new technologies to enable remote work.



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- Forecasting business trends.
- Guiding a business on cost reduction, revenue enhancement and profit maximization.
- Leveraging assets.
- Maximizing investments.

TYPES OF ACCOUNTING JOBS

While all CPAs are accountants, not all accountants are CPAs.

AccountingEDU.org, a resource site for accounting professionals, classify accounting-related jobs into four areas: Government and

nonprofit (fund accountancy, IRS jobs), public accounting jobs (cost estimator, enrolled agent, forensic accountant, real estate appraiser, tax accountant, tax attorney, tax preparer), private accounting jobs (accounting clerk, accounts payable/receiving clerk, accounting information systems specialist, actuarial accountant/insurance accountant, bookkeeping, budget analyst, capital accountant, comptroller/financial controller, cost accountant, environmental accountant/sustainability measurement, payroll

accountant) and financial services (business valuation specialist, certified financial planner, financial analyst, tax consultant).

Accounting is considered the language of business and there is a need for storytellers as much as there is a need for bean counters.

BECOMING AN ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONAL

Depending on the type of accountant a person wants to become, different degrees of education are required. An associate's degree or even a

certification can open the doors to entry-level accounting jobs while the more complex ones with greater responsibility tend to require bachelor's or even master's degrees. A bachelor's degree is considered the minimum requirement to sit for a CPA exam.

Northeastern University identifies the following skills that are needed to succeed as an accounting professional:

- Attention to detail.
- Communication.
- Business acumen.
- Computer literacy.
- Data analysis.

They point out that it is a common misperception that you need to be a math wizard. Accounting professionals definitely use math skills, but not complex ones.

JOBS WITH GREATEST GROWTH POTENTIAL

For those with bachelor's degrees in accounting, there are a few jobs with great growth potential and that will be in great demand according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook. These include controllers, financial managers, management consultants, personal financial advisors, senior tax accountants, financial analysts, accounting managers, budget analysts, credit analysts, accountants, auditors and treasury analysts.