

What the employers are looking for from you?

The changing face of employers

The fast evolving technological changes and economic changes have meant that those managing organisations (at various levels), in general and chartered accountants in particular have to display their versatile skills and enter new domains, hitherto, uncharted. For instance, the Internet and the new economy are rapidly transitioning businesses into real time. Consequently, it is important for them to know what will happen tomorrow besides, of course, to

ording of data and may range to areas of consultancy requiring a wealth of knowledge.

Impact on the service quality by members in industry

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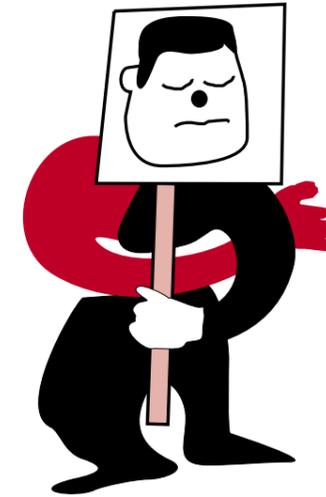
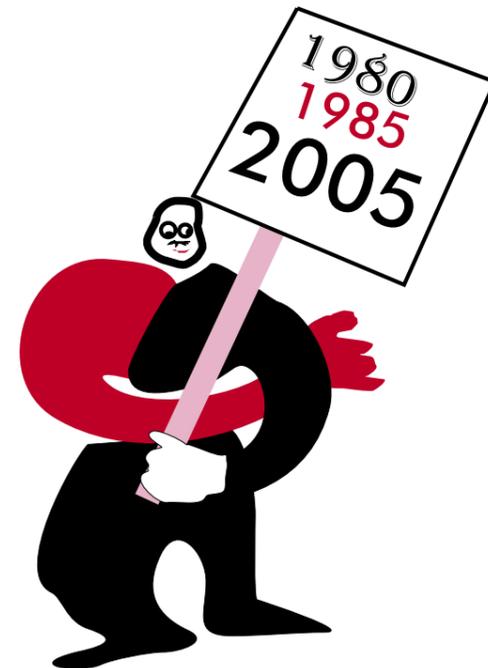
corporate accounting professional remains unchanged.

Indian chartered accountants have already accepted the challenge and are making the progress in their respective fields by leaps and bounds. Professional accountants, in order to meet the challenges, must develop and maintain an attitude of learning. The qualification, education and experience of professional accountants provides a founda-

Worldwide every organisation is undergoing a process of internal churning. Business environment is not the same, as it used to be in the 80s and early 90s. It has been changing very fast. It would not possibly be the same tomorrow as it is today. The demand for accounting and finance professionals has continued at unprecedented levels across the board, fuelled by a strong economy, limited supply of qualified candidates and the continued transformation to an e-commerce economy.

be aware as to what happened yesterday. Technological advances have enabled computers to crunch numbers. This is indeed a blessing in disguise. It has provided an opportunity to chartered accountants to provide assistance to organisations in deciding where they are headed and how best to get there. It may involve simple re-

ing what they are learning to all levels of the organisation. As the focus of corporate accounting shifts, so does the career landscape. There is an unprecedented reliance on technology, the role of consultants is expanding, and people's skills have become indispensable. Amid all this change, however, the core competencies of the



tion of knowledge, skills and professional values that enables them to continue to learn and adapt to changes throughout their professional lives.

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in response to technological advances that have significantly reduced the amount of time it takes to produce financial reports. Financial managers now perform more data analysis and use it to offer senior managers ideas on how to maximise profits.

They often work on teams, acting as business advisors to top management. Financial managers need to keep abreast of the latest computer technology in order to increase the efficiency of their firm's financial operations. Chartered accountant's role as a finance professional inside the company (as CFO, controller) is to help our management team gather accurate data and help them make more informed decisions.

In a strong economy there is always a strong demand in the financial planning and analysis areas. Candidates with solid budgeting and forecasting skills and those with exposure to sales forecasting and pricing are especially in demand, as well as those with merger and acquisition experience.

Methodology of this Study

The Committee for Members in Industry's Secretariat has evaluated the expectations of recruiting entities from the members of the Institute. The

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results are interesting and eye opening. An attempt has been made to present before our readers about the expectations, which require our specific attention and preparations to meet such expectations. In other words, we have not taken the risk of informing the readers about the expectations of recruiting entities, which revolve around the core competencies of the members of the Institute – because the quality control measures of the Institute – do not enable a candidate to qualify to become a chartered accountant without acquiring such core competencies. Experts in Human Resources (who provide consultancy services as well as serving in recruiting entities) were also consulted to make this write up as practical

Chartered accountancy is a dynamic, challenging and highly rewarding profession to enter. It offers a diversity of careers in almost every sector of business. The chartered accountancy qualification, the ACA, is recognised throughout the world, chartered accountants are employed in all areas of business and, of the FTSE 100 companies, 80 per cent have at least one chartered accountant as finance director, chief executive or on the board.

- Big business houses require more experience and more exposure for a CA to handle taxation, auditing and accounting. They provide better salary packages.
- Small business houses provide same job description but pay less. Chartered accountants occupy key posts in business firms or in the accounts department of firms and organisations
- Salary are higher for candidates with specialised skills such as DISA

—Masroor Ahmed, Bharati Management Consultancy Services (BMCS)

What HR people look for while recruiting CA's ?

There are different competencies that one would look for in Sales, Marketing, Operations or Finance spaces. However, there are certain common competencies that are expected from a potential candidate irrespective of the function they represent.

In general, we are looking for candidates to demonstrate three key characteristics through our interview process: Capabilities, capacity to learn, innovation and creativity, excellence and interpersonal skill.

In terms of a CA professional, since the potential candidate will have to undertake client audit, accounts and tax work using the firm's office and client care procedures, one would look at people who are responsible for ensuring all assignments are completed to high standards and within agreed timetables

Exceptional customer-care skills are essential, as you will have contact with clients and professional contacts across all levels. You must be highly motivated, confident, good at communicating with people and willing to work as part of a team. You need to be a team player as there will be many instances of your interaction within and across business units. So if you are a well organised, self-motivated team player who is able to work well under pressure and, with the experience, ability and confidence to work on your own with clients.

—Shri Ajit A Abraham, Chief HR, Sify Ltd., Chennai

as possible.

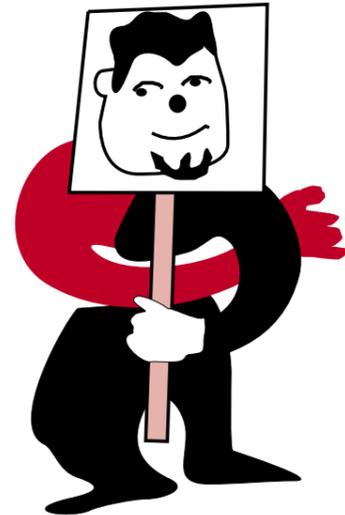
Expectations of recruiting entities from the members of the Institute

Self-management and professional skills

- Ability to exercise due professional care by considering the: extent of work needed to achieve the audit plan; relative complexity, materiality, or significance of matters to which assurance procedures are applied; adequacy and effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes, probability of significant errors, irregularities, or non-compliance; cost of assurance in rela-

tion to potential benefits. Be alert to significant risks that might affect objectives, operations, or resources. Consider the needs and expectations of clients, including the nature timing and communication of results; relative complexity and extent of work needed to achieve objectives; and the cost in relation to potential benefit.

- Proven skills and ability to identify issues, formulate opinions, make conclusions and recommend solutions.
- Planning and organising - Ability to establish priorities and to plan, coordinate and monitor work against plans, present evidence.



- Commitment to continuous learning - Willingness to keep current on new developments in the accounting and audit field.
- Ability and drive to work against strict deadlines and targets
- Ability to work with minimum supervision in a busy and dynamic work environment

- Should be an independent worker, self-starter and self-motivated and be able to articulate well.
- Enterprising, ambitious, highly motivated, focused and should be result-oriented
- Willingness to work hard with a flair for commercial functions
- Creativity - Conceptualises and analyses problems to identify key issues, underlying problems and how they relate; contributes creative, practical ideas and approaches; displays sound judgement in responding to challenges; understands broader socio-political implications.
- Planning and organising - Plans, prioritises and delivers tasks on time.
- Client orientation - Establishes and maintains productive partnerships with clients by gaining trust and respect; meets timeline for delivery of products or services to clients.
- A complete, in-depth knowledge and under-

standing of financial and accounting principles and practices; Proven ability to make appropriate linkages in complex accounting transactions through the use of IMIS and anticipates next step.

- Should be meticulous, accurate and a fast worker, able to work and turn around results in a fast moving environment.
- Good analytical skills and business sense with high degree of integrity and maturity.
- Process-oriented, systematic thinking and mapping of processes.
- Highly proactive, well organised and attention to details with ability to prioritise multiple tasks in a fast paced and dynamic environment.

Skills related to Information Technology

- Good knowledge of computers.
- MIS, administrative functions of an office and other allied functions using computer based systems.
- Exposure on ERP Environment.
- Good knowledge of Microsoft Excel and Outlook Express, Command over MS Excel and its advanced functions proficient in the use of all modern office automation equipment.
- Expertise in using Oracle based RDBMS package.
- Knowledge about information system audit.
- Experience in Great Plains Software.
- Software knowledge in strategic financial planning,

business advisory services, IPO, fund Management, asset liability management and controls.

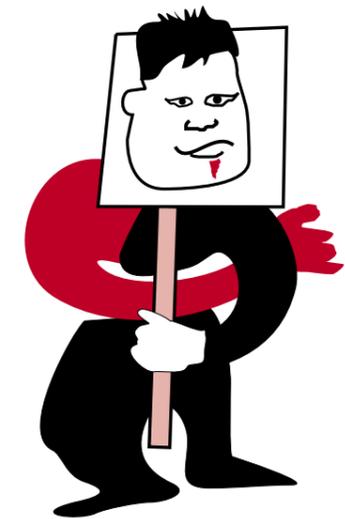
- Working knowledge of audit software (e.g. IDEA/ACL/AutoAudit) and of standard MS office products (e.g. Excel, Access, PowerPoint).
- Strong spreadsheets skills are a must to be successful in the job as well as ability to communicate at various levels and among various teams.
- Working knowledge of IMIS and/or similar accounting software;

Project management skills

- Experience in setting systems and finalising accounts and handling audits.
- Sound commercial acumen.
- Maturity of handling more than a workforce of 1,000, with emphasis on timely completion of orders and quality controls.
- Ability to plan and coordinate schedules in order to meet deadlines.

Communication skills

- Excellent communications skills both verbal and written English language with a flair for negotiation skills.
- Presentation skills together with teamwork spirit.
- Proven ability to write in a clear and concise manner and to communicate effectively orally.
- Formulates written information clearly and persuasively; presents oral information clearly



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- and persuasively
- Sharing information openly with co-workers while using discretion to protect confidences.
- Proven ability to write in a clear and concise manner and to communicate effectively orally.
- Ability to prepare reports, formulating positions on issues, articulating options concisely conveying maximum necessary information, making and defending recommendations.

Numerical skills

- Comfortable number skills with good

- business orientation.
- Strong analytical, problem solving.
- Analytical, systematic and strong numerical skills, and attention to details.

Interpersonal and Public Relationship Skills

- Team player with a high degree of resourcefulness to independently generate leads and achieve targets.
- Resourcefulness, good interpersonal skills and the ability to work in a multicultural, multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity. Proven ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships with auditees and colleagues.
- Demonstrating success in managing industrial relations and establishing a positive and productivity oriented work culture.
- Dedicated and serious team player.
- Possessing public relations skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with abilities in problem solving.
- Excellent interpersonal skills to develop new and enhance the existing relationships.

Other skills¹

- Knowledge of budget development including results-based budgeting and financial administration of resources; accepts additional responsibilities as required by the demands of service; strives for excellence in performance con-

tinually; remains composed while working effectively in stressful situations; uses information technology effectively as a tool and resource; demonstrates substantive and technical knowledge to meet responsibilities and post requirements with excellence; is motivated and demonstrates a capacity to pursue personal development and learn; willing to frequently work beyond normal working hours in order to get the job done.

- Customer Orientation Approach.
- Operations Background.
- Experience of handling Government Organisations/Technical and Commercial Consultants/District administration.
- Exposure to company secretarial functions.
- Preparation of management reports and export-import documentation.
- Ability to manage company accounts independently.
- Experience in ISO-9000, ISO-14000, OHSAS-18000, SA-8000.
- Ability to handle Internal Auditing and implement updated MIS and should have thorough knowledge in entire financial implications of the company.
- Extensive knowledge of auditing treasury products-derivatives, foreign exchange, mutual funds, equities, futures, etc.
- Expertise in the areas of Financial Restructuring/M&A Settlement with FIs/Banks; Project Financing/Funds Syndication.
- Experience in business ap-

plication development, system designs and analysis, with Oracle Application software package.

- Good understanding of internal control concepts and business processes to facilitate the evaluation of risk assessment and control.
- A good knowledge of a multilateral institution's operations.
- Prior experience with ISO (specifically ERCOT).

Limitations of the study

The study is based on the recruitment notices that have appeared in various print media and websites of various recruiting entities (Please see Notice Board: Job Openings in www.placements-icai.org) and views of a few experts. Though appropriate care has been taken to present the requirements of recruiting entities as general as possible, readers may appreciate that the expectations of recruiting entities differ from organisation to organisation depending upon the following factors:

- Size of the organisation.
- Nature of industry in which the organisation is involved.
- Level at which the members are being considered for recruitment.
- Degree of Information Technology interface in the organisation (Ex. organisations in which ERP has been introduced).
- Place of posting.
- Profile of the personnel serving in the organisation. □

¹ There may be some listings relating to core areas of competence which are not exhaustive