

**STUDENT ACCOUNTANT**  
ACCA'S MAGAZINE  
FOR TRAINEES

**DECEMBER 2013**

# SA

## **INTERNSHIPS**

THE BEST APPROACH TO  
GET A JOB OFFER

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING**

MAXIMISING YOUR CHANCES  
OF GETTING A JOB

## **INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE**

HANDLING AWKWARD  
JOB INTERVIEWS

**OXFORD BROOKES GLOBAL MBA**

# **THE LOWDOWN**

**ACCA**

# Everything you need

# for **ACCA** success

# in Manchester

London  
School of Business  
& Finance

MANCHESTER



- ▶ Highly experienced tutors
- ▶ Pass 1<sup>st</sup> Time Guarantee™\*
- ▶ 24/7 access to HD recorded lectures
- ▶ Free financial skills certificates\*\*

## ENROL TODAY!

Full-time | Part-time | Online

[www.LSBFmanchester.com/SA](http://www.LSBFmanchester.com/SA)

0161 669 4278

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Linley House, Dickinson Street,  
just off Portland Street, Manchester M1 4LF



\*LSBF Pass 1<sup>st</sup> Time Guarantee™ ensures that if you do not pass your paper at the first attempt, you will be able to attend a free re-sit course (full-time students), or free revision class (part-time students) – for the next available exam sitting, at no extra cost. \*\*When you book 6 or more papers. †UK and Singapore campuses only. For full T&Cs, see our website.

**ACHIEVE MORE. BECOME MORE.**



---

# EDITOR'S CHOICE

WELCOME TO THE DECEMBER ISSUE OF  
*STUDENT ACCOUNTANT*

Many of you will be just about to take your exams – we wish you all the best with these.

In this issue, we look at how best to stay calm in tricky interview situations, and also how to harness the power of social media to get a foot in the door.

We take a look at how internships can be excellent ways to increase your work experience and develop into permanent work opportunities. And for those of you nearing the end of your ACCA journey, we discuss MBAs and the benefits having one can have on your career.

In Learning Centre, we speak to new member Lawrence Chin about how the



ACCA Qualification has helped him in his career and also speak to recruitment consultants around the world to see how they see 2014 shaping up for job-seekers. We also highlight advice from our bloggers that might help you with any last-minute exam preparation.

We hope you find this issue useful. If you have any feedback, please email us at [studentaccountant@accaglobal.com](mailto:studentaccountant@accaglobal.com)

**Victoria Morgan**  
**Editor, *Student Accountant* magazine**



Published by the Certified Accountants Educational Trust in cooperation with ACCA.

The Council of ACCA and the publishers do not guarantee the accuracy of statements made by contributors or advertisers, or accept any responsibility for any statement which they may make in this publication.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without prior written permission of the publishers.

© CAET 2013 ISSN 1473-0979



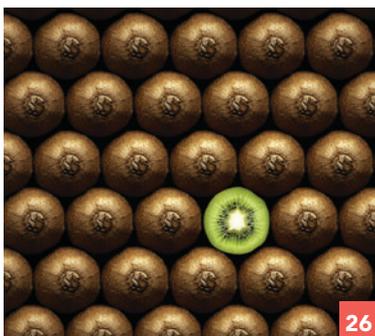
## DISPATCH

- 06 PICTURE NEWS
- 08 NEWS IN FOCUS
- 10 NEWS ROUNDUP



## LEARNING CENTRE

- 12 STUDENT BLOGGING
- 14 MEMBER PROFILE
- 16 EXPERT CAREER ADVICE FOR 2014



## FEATURES

- 18 HOW TO USE SOCIAL NETWORKING AND BLOGGING TO FIND A JOB
- 22 MBA: THE LOWDOWN
- 26 TURNING INTERNSHIPS INTO JOB OFFERS
- 30 AWKWARD JOB INTERVIEWS AND HOW TO HANDLE THEM



### SA TECHNICAL ARTICLE ARCHIVE

All technical content from *Student Accountant* is on ACCA's website

### PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

Why not log into your [myACCA](#) account to record your experience using the online recording tool *My Experience*?



**NEW FEATURES!**

**JOIN ACCA'S FACEBOOK PAGE**  
Find out how other ACCA students plan their studies.  
Join at [www.facebook.com/ACCA.Official](http://www.facebook.com/ACCA.Official)



## TECHNICAL

### 32 TECHNICAL RESOURCES

Access the technical article archive at: [www.accaglobal.com/en/student/acca-qual-student-journey/student-accountant/sa-archive.html](http://www.accaglobal.com/en/student/acca-qual-student-journey/student-accountant/sa-archive.html)

## RESOURCES

### 35 NOTICEBOARD

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION ABOUT ACCA AND YOUR STUDIES  
*ACCA Connect*, subscriptions, recording your PER, rules and regulations and important information about the OBU degree programme

38

38

37

**ACCA CAREERS**  
Upload your CV, access global career opportunities and find advice on careers in accountancy and finance at [www.accacareers.com](http://www.accacareers.com)



37

## CONTACTS

- Martin Turner | **President**
- Anthony Harbinson | **Deputy President**
- Alexandra Chin | **Vice President**
- Helen Brand | **Chief Executive**

### EDITORIAL TEAM

- Victoria Morgan | **Editor**
- Glen Patterson | **Deputy Editor**
- Jackie Dollar | **Design Manager**
- Jane C Reid | **Designer**

### WWW.ACCAGLOBAL.COM

Jamie Ambler | **Digital Editor**  
 29 Lincoln's Inn Fields  
 London WC2A 3EE  
 United Kingdom  
 tel: +44 (0)20 7059 5700  
 email: [info@accaglobal.com](mailto:info@accaglobal.com)  
[www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com)

### PUBLISHING AND ADVERTISING

- Adam Williams | **Publisher**
- Anthony Kay | **Production Manager**

For all advertising-related matters please contact **Nick Willmer**:  
 tel: +44 (0)20 7902 1673  
 email: [nickw@educate-direct.com](mailto:nickw@educate-direct.com)



PHILIPPINES

**PHILIPPINES**

Filipino children carry their belongings in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan, which tore through the eastern and central Philippines. The UN says more than 11 million people are believed to have been affected and some 673,000 displaced



SWITZERLAND

**SWITZERLAND**

Valued at £40m, The 'Pink Star', a 59.6-carat diamond, was presented in Geneva ahead of an auction sale



RUSSIA

**RUSSIA**

Miss Venezuela Gabriela Isler is crowned Miss Universe in Moscow amid her country's economic crisis



AUSTRALIA

### AUSTRALIA

Australia's postal service has released a world-first 'video stamp', which allows people to send a 15-second video with their parcels



AUSTRIA

### INDIA

Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, and his wife Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, visit the Hindu temple Akshardham in New Delhi, India on their third official visit to the country



INDIA

### AUSTRIA

At the house of German art collector Cornelius Gurlitt in Salzburg, Austria, customs investigators found a private stash of 1,500 paintings worth more than £850m that were seized by the Nazis in his Munich apartment more than two years ago



CHINA

### CHINA

Fourteen panda cubs celebrate their 100-day birthday in China's Chengdu Giant Panda Breeding Research Base

# BLACKBERRY REVERSES DECISION TO GO PRIVATE

BLACKBERRY HAS MADE A DRAMATIC U-TURN AFTER LOOKING LIKELY TO BE SOLD TO AN INVESTMENT COMPANY. HAD THE SALE TAKEN PLACE, THE DISTRESSED MOBILE PHONE COMPANY WOULD HAVE GAINED PRIVATE STATUS. WE EXPLORE THE PROS AND CONS OF BECOMING A PRIVATE COMPANY.

ALEX MILLER REPORTS

**Struggling mobile phone company BlackBerry has dramatically reversed a decision to sell itself, despite announcing an initial agreement with US-based investment company Fairfax Financial Holdings for a \$4.7bn deal.**

Instead, Fairfax – the largest shareholder of the company with a 10% stake – and other investors will inject \$980m into the company as part of a revised investment proposal. At the same time BlackBerry has announced that CEO Thorsten Heins is to leave his post.

Due diligence and negotiations were expected to be tied up by early November. The books showed that BlackBerry's fiscal second-quarter loss this year stood at nearly \$1,012m, while the company's revenue fell 45% to \$1,589m during the same period.

BlackBerry had failed in its attempts to turn itself around, with the company banking on its new BB10 phone to produce an upswing in fortunes following its release earlier this year. The release followed other seemingly positive changes such as the roll out of the Q10 and Z10 handsets.

The reality is that the sun has been setting on the phone provider for some time due to the ferocious competition from Apple,

Samsung and other lower-priced Android-powered smartphones.

The company's management was forced to take a massive write-down on inventory of its new phones and was also forced to axe almost half of its workforce – 4,500 employees – as a result of hemorrhaging money.

However, the change of heart came as a result of Fairfax refusing to increase its stake in BlackBerry and consultants recommending that taking BlackBerry private laden with debt was not a good idea.

BlackBerry will now not become a private company, but the company – like many others – will have factored in the numerous considerations of turning private.

Dell and Heinz are among household names to turn to the private world. Burger King has switched back and forth, while Reader's Digest and Levi Strauss are among others to have done so in recent years.

An acquisition by an outside party can create significant financial gains

for the shareholders and CEOs of the company in question and this is always going to be a major factor in a company's decision making.

A massive advantage of being private is the considerable reduction in regulatory and reporting requirements – with the theory being that private companies can dedicate more time and money to focus on the long-term goals, rather than only looking ahead to the next quarter.

Operating and running a private company frees up management's time and energy from compliance requirements and short-term earnings management, and may provide long-term benefits to the company and its shareholders.

A short-term focus on the quarterly earnings report, which is dictated by external analysts, can reduce the importance placed on longer-term functions and goals such as research and development, capital expenditures and the funding of pensions.

Sarbanes–Oxley (SOX) imposes a raft of compliance and

**BLACKBERRY WILL NOW NOT BECOME A PRIVATE COMPANY, BUT THE COMPANY – LIKE MANY OTHERS – WILL HAVE FACTORED IN THE NUMEROUS CONSIDERATIONS OF TURNING PRIVATE**



administrative rules on public companies. A byproduct of the Enron and WorldCom corporate failures in 2001–2002, SOX requires all levels of publicly traded companies to implement and execute internal controls.

Perhaps the most contentious part of SOX is Section 404, which requires the implementation, documentation and testing of internal controls over financial reporting at all levels of the company.

Public companies must also carry out operational, accounting and financial engineering in order to meet quarterly earnings expectations.

In considering whether to consummate a deal with a private-equity investor, as is the case with BlackBerry, the public company's senior leadership team need to consider the

balance between the short-term considerations of the company with its long-term outlook.

As an example, a private-equity firm that adds too much leverage to a public company in order to fund the deal can seriously hinder and damage an organisation. If the economy subsequently dips, the industry could face stiff competition from overseas and the company's operators could miss important revenue milestones.

If the company in question has any difficulty in servicing its debt, its bonds can be reclassified from investment-grade bonds to junk bonds. If this happens it would become harder for the company to raise debt or equity capital to fund capital expenditures, expansion or research and development.

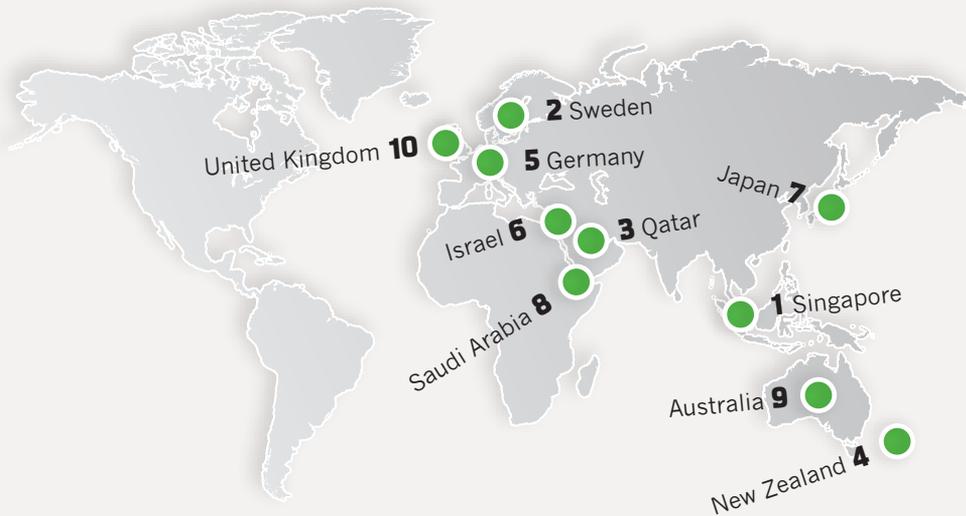
Healthy levels of capital expenditures and research and development are often critical to the

long-term success of a company as it seeks to differentiate its products and service offerings and make its position in the marketplace more competitive. High levels of debt can prevent a company from carrying out these activities and therefore losing any competitive edge.

Nonetheless, a 'take-private transaction' is an attractive and viable alternative for many public companies and the trend continues to grow. If debt levels are reasonable and the company continues to maintain or grow its free cash flow, a private company can enjoy the privilege of only revealing information it wants to, without the constant scrutiny of analysts.

Whether BlackBerry would have seen the advantages of becoming private will, for now, not be known, but who is to say it won't in the future?

# TRENDS



## UNFAZED BY CHANGE - WHO WON'T BE CAUGHT ON THE HOP

Singapore has topped a list of 90 nations in its capacity to respond to changes such as natural disasters, global competition, economic shocks and demographic trends. KPMG's 2013 Change Readiness Index, produced with global advisory firm Oxford Economics, measures 26 components for the index. Satyanarayan R, KPMG's head for government and infrastructure in Asia Pacific, said: 'Countries are being exposed to a vast array of changes – globalisation, automation and rising costs among others – and these create both opportunities and risks. We cannot underestimate the importance of a nation's ability to respond to change as this capability is vital to a country's success in building a sustainable economy and equitable society.'

### PROFITS 'TO CONVERGE'

Profitability rates for Islamic banks are likely to converge with those in conventional banks in the future, predicts Standard & Poor's. Islamic banks in the Gulf region grew by a compound rate of 17.4% between 2009 and 2012, compared with an 8.1% growth rate among conventional banks. Government support and banks' role in funding infrastructure for the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar are cited as factors supporting Islamic banking growth. But Islamic banks are disproportionately affected by the low interest rate environment and by weak revenues in non-core-banking operations.

### NIGERIA ADOPTS IPSAS

Greater consistency, transparency

and accountability are to be introduced to public sector financial reports, Nigeria's government has announced. From next year, the national budget will comply with a new national chart of accounts strategy, based on International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), the public sector version of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). It is intended that IPSAS cash accounting will be adopted next year, with full accrual IPSAS used by 2016. All government ministries, departments and agencies will use IPSAS.

### NEW FX LEADER

Singapore has overtaken Japan as Asia's biggest FX centre for the first time, and risen to third place

globally (behind London and New York) in the latest survey by the Bank for International Settlements. Average daily FX turnover volume in Singapore grew 44% to US\$383bn in April 2013, compared with US\$266bn in April 2010. Global turnover growth in the same period was 35%. Average daily interest rate derivatives turnover volume in Singapore also grew 6% to US\$37bn in April 2013, the second largest in Asia, behind Japan. Jacqueline Loh, deputy managing director at the Monetary Authority of Singapore, said the ranking positions Singapore's financial centre to better serve the investment and risk management needs of financial institutions and corporates throughout Asia.

# HOW CAN YOU STUDY AND WORK?



**FLEXIBLE STUDY  
OPTIONS**



**INVEST IN  
YOUR FUTURE**



**REALISE YOUR  
POTENTIAL**

At ACCA, passing exams and getting the relevant training are equally important. But it's up to you how you achieve the ACCA Qualification. It's really flexible. You decide how and when you study and receive your training.

**Find out more at [accaglobal.com](http://accaglobal.com)**

**The global body for  
professional accountants**

+44 (0)141 582 2000  
[info@accaglobal.com](mailto:info@accaglobal.com)

**ACCA**

**PREPARED TO  
BE DIFFERENT**

# STUDENT BLOGGERS

ACCESS THE LATEST POSTS BY OUR STUDENT BLOGGERS TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR EXAM PREPARATION ►

## DIKSHA JESWANI

Fourteen exams... three years of practical experience...one ethics module...Sometimes it just seems intimidating, right?! When I started working, after completing the Fundamentals level papers, my decision was met with consternation from my family and friends. But it's been three years now, and I don't regret my decision at all! I feel working has definitely changed me completely – for the better!

<http://studentblog.accaglobal.com/2013/10/10/balancing-study-and-work/> ►



**ELYSE BURNS-HILL**  
**KEEPING EXAM STRESS IN CHECK**

Exams can be a stressful time; the pressure we put on ourselves, as well as pressure (real or imagined) we feel from our employers, parents or other fee payers.

We need to make sure we keep this stress in check, if we are to perform our best.

<http://studentblog.accaglobal.com/2013/11/08/how-memory-is-affected-by-stress-and-smiles/> ▶



**NARESH JOHN**  
**DON'T BE SCARED OF PAPER F4**

Hey all.... within the blink of an eye, we're facing them again... exams! What once had me thinking (and a bit scared) was the pass rates of Paper F4, *Corporate and Business Law*. They were quite scary to look at, as they continuously decrease over the years. I asked myself, 'What is the reason for this? Is the paper that difficult? What do I need to do to pass this

<http://studentblog.accaglobal.com/2013/10/25/dont-be-scared-of-exam-paper-f4/> ▶

**JIA WEN**

**HOW TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES ON YOUR ACCA JOURNEY**

From the moment we are born, we are destined to travel a winding, bumpy road. Many a time you will encounter a speed bump, a roadblock or even a detour.

<http://studentblog.accaglobal.com/2013/11/01/how-to-overcome-obstacles-on-your-journey/> ▶



**GET MOTIVATED**

- I'm not a perfect person/  
There's many things I wish I didn't do/  
but I continue learning...<sup>9</sup>

These lyrics really strike a chord with me and did so especially when I received my June exam results. I passed Paper F8, but failed my first attempt at Paper P1. Soon after, the frustration of failing one exam haunted me. But by thinking about the following sources of motivation in my life, I kept this feeling at bay.

<http://studentblog.accaglobal.com/2013/10/18/the-reason-for-my-motivation-is/> ▶

**ADHITYA FADRIANSYAH**

# LAWRENCE CHIN

## KUALA LUMPUR

**Having originally planned a career in science, ACCA member Lawrence Chin switched to accountancy in order to broaden his professional opportunities.**

'I was concerned that a science career may be too specialised, so opted instead for finance and accountancy while still at university,' he explains. 'Every business in the world needs finance skills, and the resulting mobility and opportunity really attracted me.' The next stage was to decide on a professional qualification and, for Lawrence, ACCA was an easy choice: 'I wanted to be certified by the best, and ACCA has a reputation and presence in many countries around the world.'

A postgraduate, and with one ACCA exam paper pending, Lawrence started his career with Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) in Kuala Lumpur in 2006.

'I joined as a banking apprentice,' he explains, 'which resulted in a rotation around the bank's various departments until I finally became an analyst within the finance function. After three years, I moved to group internal audit, where my ACCA studies helped me adapt to the audit function, and gave me credibility among my colleagues.'

Despite having achieved ACCA affiliate status in 2009, and gained his three years' work experience, Lawrence did not immediately apply for ACCA membership – a decision which, at the time, seemed sensible but which, with hindsight, he would not have made.

'Completing the ACCA exams had given me all the recognition I needed to progress within SCB,' he explains, 'and as I wasn't planning to move jobs at that point there seemed no need to apply for ACCA membership. However, I would not advise other students and affiliates in this position to do the same, as I now see the value of gaining membership as soon as possible, because the longer you are a member the more valuable its status on your CV.'

'It was only when I recently decided to move to a different company that I not only realised how important ACCA membership can be, but also appreciated the value placed by employers on the "vintage" of your ACCA membership, as those who have been members for longer can definitely have an advantage.'

Lawrence finally applied for ACCA membership in January 2013, four years after achieving affiliate status, and soon appreciated the benefits membership delivered. 'I recently applied for a new post with my current employer, JP Morgan, within the country risk function; at the interview stage, my ACCA membership brought me instant recognition as a qualified accountant, with the reputation and philosophy behind the qualification adding to its credibility. My application was successful and now I

hope my knowledge of accounting and audit skills, developed with the help of ACCA, will help me contribute significantly in my new role.'

Lawrence also has plans for his longer term career: 'I am sure that ACCA membership will lead to more opportunities across different industries, and across the world. My ultimate ambition is to lead my own organisation, and with the support of ACCA – through continuing professional development (CPD), articles, training and networking – I am sure I will achieve my goal.'



**'I AM SURE THAT ACCA MEMBERSHIP WILL LEAD TO MORE OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES, AND ACROSS THE WORLD'**



Finance Business Training

## Secure your place, secure ACCA success

Benefit from flexible study options and expert  
tuition-backed by a Pass 1<sup>st</sup> Time Guarantee™\*

Create a brighter future  
through flexible learning  
and quality courses.

**ENROL TODAY**

Full-time | Part-time | Online

- Experienced ACCA tutors
- Free financial skills certificates\*\*
- Flexible study options
- HD recorded lectures and extensive online study resources



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
London  
School of Business  
& Finance



\*FBT Pass 1<sup>st</sup> Time Guarantee™ ensures that if you do not pass your paper at the first attempt, you will be able to attend a free re-sit course (full-time students), or free revision class (part-time students) - for the next available exam sitting, at no extra cost. \*\*When you book 6 or more papers. †UK and Singapore campuses only. For full T&Cs, see our website.

[www.fbt-global.com/SA](http://www.fbt-global.com/SA)  
0121 661 7138

2<sup>nd</sup> floor 5-7 Hill Street,  
Birmingham,  
B5 4UA

# EXPERT CAREER ADVICE FOR 2014

THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE NOT BEEN GREAT FOR MANY JOB-SEEKING ACCOUNTANCY AND FINANCE PROFESSIONALS. YOU NEED TO BE WELL-INFORMED AND READY FOR OPPORTUNITIES, SO WE'VE GATHERED TOGETHER RECRUITMENT EXPERTS TO GIVE THEIR CAREER ADVICE FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

**NEIL JOHNSON**, EDITOR,  
ACCA CAREERS



The role of the modern finance professional is a lot more complex than it once was. It's not enough now to rely purely on your accounting skills and academic achievements. Employers need people who drive business growth, cut costs, and think strategically outside of their role and department.

The broad nature of the ACCA Qualification puts you in a great position to meet such demanding

and evolving business environments. Already, ACCA members are at the top levels of major global firms, generating new business, working alongside clients and involved in strategic decision making.

The global recruitment market in 2014 is shaping up to be a far more positive environment than recent years. For many looking to get on the ladder, macroeconomic conditions will continue to shape a tight, competitive environment. Yet there is a continued scramble for top talent, with many employers bemoaning a lack of candidates with the desired communication skills, business acumen, commercial awareness and strategic thinking capabilities. Use your growing knowledge from your ACCA Qualification studies to set yourself apart, expand your skillset, attend CPD events, network, become a social media maverick, register your CV with *ACCA Careers*: these are all things that can give you the edge in what is a difficult market.

**PHIL SHERIDAN**, MANAGING  
DIRECTOR, ROBERT HALF UK



## **Active networking**

Accountants looking to take advantage of opportunities should make sure that their CV is up to date and continue to network, both online and off, to ensure that they are constantly connecting with peers within their industry and profession, should an opportunity arise. Likewise, speaking with a financial recruiter, even if you are not actively searching, will ensure that you're aware of opportunities as they become available.

## **Temping up the ladder**

For individuals looking for work, consider temporary opportunities as you'll have the opportunity

**'SET YOURSELF APART, EXPAND YOUR SKILLSET, ATTEND CPD EVENTS, NETWORK, BECOME A SOCIAL MEDIA MAVERICK, REGISTER YOUR CV WITH ACCA CAREERS'**

to demonstrate your skills and experience while on the job and position yourself for a permanent role if one becomes available.

### Know your value

Robert Half also offers video clips on how to negotiate a salary and a promotion for those looking to increase their career potential.

**NICHOLAS KIRK, PAGE PERSONNEL FINANCE, MANAGING DIRECTOR**



### Constant communication

Candidates must work on their presentation skills at every opportunity. Make sure you ask questions so that your audience understands what you are trying to explain – good communication should be two-way.

### No room for basic mistakes

Above all, spell-check your CV and covering letter thoroughly before applying for a role.

**RACHEL HURST-SMITH, MORGAN MCKINLEY**



### Show your potential

Look at the skills that you do have and sell yourself on those. Employers are more risk averse in this climate and are looking for specific experience, but they are not short-sighted enough to miss out on potential if it is outlined in the right way. Use a positive tone and try to differentiate your experience by highlighting the relevant skills you feel it has afforded you, whether these are from professional or academic experience.

### Employers do not like...

Dishonesty: either by stretching the truth on CVs or purely making things up. Do not lie on applications – you will be found out. Talk to a recruitment consultant about how best to phrase your experience if you are worried, but do not make anything up.

### Be seen in a snowstorm

Online visibility is increasingly important in the jobs market. Make sure that you maintain an up-to-date and professional LinkedIn profile and that you utilise every section on it. For example, the skills part of it may seem a little long winded, but it is really important as it will bring your details up when potential employers and recruiters are looking to fill specific job vacancies.

### Networking... worth it?

Absolutely, building effective professional relationships is key to job searching and this is in effect all that networking is. Make sure

## OUR EXPERT 2014 JOB MARKET OUTLOOKS

- CENTRAL EUROPE ▶
- CHINA/HONG KONG ▶
- MIDDLE EAST ▶
- SOUTH AFRICA ▶
- UK ▶

you are not overbearing in your approach to networking – do not simply request to connect with hundreds of random people on LinkedIn. Attend networking events where possible and use online forums and discussions, but make sure to build relationships with individuals based on personal interactions, either in person or over the internet.

### Keep calm and carry on

Remain positive and upbeat about your search and your skills. Be focused and do not give up hope.

**DANYLO HAYAKAWA, ROBERT HALF BRAZIL, DIVISION MANAGER**



### No experience?

Show the desire to increase your knowledge, using practical examples.

### High expectations

Consider different career levels if possible. Show good communication and know how to position yourself.

### Learning never ends

Improve your career chances by seeking a continued education (courses, extensions, MBAs) – especially in an environment of constant change.

### Networking... how?

Use the main tools (such as LinkedIn) and maintain the reliability of your details and recommendations.

# HOW TO USE SOCIAL NETWORKING AND BLOGGING TO FIND A JOB

SOCIAL NETWORKING HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT AS A TOOL TO HELP FIND A NEW JOB OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS. WE EXPLORE HOW TO ENSURE YOU CAN MAXIMISE THE VALUE OF CHANNELS SUCH AS FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND LINKEDIN

**Networking has always been a great way of finding jobs and opportunities, and with social media it has become possible to take it to another level.**

Social media usage in finance has grown enormously in recent years, with more and more people relying on the channel as a core networking tool. It allows you to have greater access to individuals with whom you may not otherwise have the chance to connect with – essentially, you can connect with nearly anyone who has a presence online.

Nicholas Kirk, senior managing director at Page Personnel Finance, says: 'Social media can be useful for networking within finance; there are a number of professional finance networks affiliated with ACCA. It would be useful to connect to these groups and get your name out there commenting on any relevant status updates.'

'Even if you don't receive comments back, you are still building an online presence

and this is becoming ever more influential.

'Use social media to boost your job search – many businesses now embrace social media as part of their talent attraction strategy. A potential employer can discover a sense of your personality before an interview that they don't necessarily get from your CV and cover letter.'

When thinking about finding a job using social media, most people tend to think of LinkedIn, as it is a social platform for professionals who are actively looking to network.

Phil Sheridan, UK managing director at Robert Half, says: 'There are over 10 million people in the UK currently using LinkedIn, so it is important for professionals

to keep their networks informed, whether they are using the site for recruitment purposes or as a general networking tool. LinkedIn profiles help employees and job seekers increase visibility online and help build a professional profile, so it's important that information is complete, detailed and accurate.

'While most people think about LinkedIn as the most effective way to find a job using social media, it is important to know that there are other social networks that can be just as much help, such as starting a blog or creating your own website.'

Blogging is a great way to build your online profile. If you have time and knowledge it can be an effective way to show potential

**'BLOGS ARE ALSO A FANTASTIC WAY TO POSITION YOURSELF AS AN AUTHORITATIVE VOICE IN YOUR SECTOR AND PUT YOU ON THE RADAR OF HIRING ORGANISATIONS'**



employers that you know a lot about a particular subject and are passionate about it.

Personal websites can be time-consuming to create, but they are a good way of keeping information about you up to date and personalised and they are an effective platform for you to be able to direct interested parties to from your social media accounts.

Ellis King, manager at Morgan McKinley, says: 'Blogs are also a fantastic way to position yourself as an authoritative voice in your sector and put you on the radar of hiring organisations.'

'It is worth considering starting a blog and posting regularly on trends within the accounting field and personal insights and then share these on your other social media channels – could you tweet about it or seed it into a relevant accounting group on LinkedIn, for example? And be sure to also comment on other industry blogs to raise your online visibility.'

If blogging isn't for you, it may be worth considering microblogs such as Twitter, which allows you to share content and perspectives in 140-word posts. Also, don't discount communicating with other blogs by posting comments, sharing content or even providing a guest article if there is a subject matter you are particularly interested in.

James Smith, associate director at Morgan McKinley, believes social media can be used to 'stalk' potential employers in a light-hearted way to find out what job opportunities they might have and as a means to start engaging with them.

'Take a look at what channels they (potential employers) are using – LinkedIn, Twitter or Facebook, for example, and connect with them so you can start engaging. If you view a potential hiring manager's LinkedIn profile, for instance, they will be notified that you have done so and you will be on their radar,' he says.

**'MANY EMPLOYERS AND RECRUITERS WILL DO AN ONLINE SEARCH OF YOUR NAME UPON RECEIVING A CV AND YOU WANT TO GUARANTEE THE RESULTS MAKE YOU STAND OUT FOR THE RIGHT REASONS'**

'Likewise, if you start following them on Twitter, why not send them a message asking for more information about careers. Secondly, identify "touch points" – could you like their latest LinkedIn post and comment on it? Could you share their latest blog? This not only gets you on their radar, but it's also good etiquette.'

While there are undeniable benefits that social networking can bring to job hunting, there are a number of considerations to keep in mind, such as keeping your online profiles current and relevant.

Ellis King agrees. 'It's imperative that your social media profiles are up to date and that you keep your professional and personal ones separate.'

'Many employers and recruiters will do an online search of your name upon receiving a CV and you want to guarantee the results make you stand out for the right reasons. For example, make sure your personal Facebook account has the privacy setting switched on so your personal life stays this way and doesn't impact your career aspirations.'

While it is good to extend your network through social media by connecting with fellow professionals and potential employers, it is important that you consider quality over quantity. It is easy to waste time on social media without gaining much success. It is a much better idea to identify the people and businesses that are realistically going to help you in your job search rather than connecting with just anyone.

Sheridan also warns trainees not to forget the traditional routes to finding a new job. He adds: 'Despite the popularity of LinkedIn and other forms of social media,

hiring managers still prefer more traditional recruitment methods and most employers still believe this to be the most effective approach for screening candidates and assessing competencies.

'Ensuring your CV and interview skills are top notch, as well as registering with a recruitment consultant who specialises in your field, will be critical tasks in landing your next job.'

It is also worth remembering that no matter how strong your CV is, if an employer finds your online presence inappropriate or offensive in any way, you could be jeopardising your chances of landing the role or even getting an interview. If there are several good quality candidates all vying for the same position, an employer will be actively seeking ways to filter down their selection.

Kirk adds: 'Don't bad-mouth fellow colleagues, your boss or the company you currently or previously worked for on social networking sites. You can never be completely sure of who will access this information and their subsequent affiliations.'

'This is not to suggest that you're overly fearful of social media or that you should feel inhibited – it's just advisable to be aware of your online image.'

### **DO YOU USE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR JOB HUNTING?**

EMAIL YOUR DETAILS TO US AT **STUDENTACCOUNTANT@ACCAGLOBAL.COM** WITH **'SOCIAL MEDIA'** AS THE TITLE OF THE EMAIL