

## **Advice from a veteran teacher**

### **Success key – never give up**



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Every year thousands of students take public exams in Hong Kong. While some perform admirably, others may not do as well as they had hoped. Dickson Lo, a teacher from Hong Kong School of Commerce (HKSC), encourages students not to dwell on the past, but to pick themselves up and look ahead.

#### ***Tell us about your study and career background.***

After obtaining my Bachelor's degree in accountancy, I worked for about four years in the profession before deciding to pursue a career in teaching. During those four years I worked at various firms, holding positions in areas from general accounting and auditing to internal auditing. During my teaching years, I have attained a Master's degree in accounting as well as the Postgraduate Certificate in Education.

#### ***What made you move into teaching?***

I have a strong passion for sharing what I have learnt with others, which explains my natural affinity to teaching. To me, imparting knowledge to students is a very enjoyable process. Moreover, seeing my students grow from suffering adversity to eventually succeeding and qualifying in the profession gives me a great sense of satisfaction that I never experienced when I was working in the commercial sector.

#### ***Do your commercial experiences help your teaching?***

My years of experience working in the commercial world do help with my teaching. Accounting in the real business world is about much more than numbers. It is crucial for students to learn about the meaning behind those numbers and to acquire the skills necessary to communicate that meaning and interpret related information for various business decisions. Real life examples and situations from my own experiences are therefore very useful in helping students follow and understand the theories and grasp the underlying accounting concepts. They also raise students' interest beyond knowledge taught in classrooms, encouraging them to consider real world applications.

### ***What is your teaching method?***

In teaching I follow one principle – to treat all my students equally. I don't think students should be discriminated against or be treated any differently because of any unfavourable past results. What I value most is the amount of effort students put into their studies and their willing-to-learn attitudes. It is true that some of our students did not perform very well in public examinations such as Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination or Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination before they were admitted here, but this does not necessarily mean that they cannot do well in their subsequent accounting studies.

### ***How well are your students doing?***

While our students' academic abilities vary, I think in general they have a very good learning attitude. Part of the reason for this is that they have experienced hardship in public exams, and so they have started to realize the importance of studying for their futures. As a result, many of them are becoming more proactive in learning and sometimes are even willing to help each other out academically, such as by forming voluntary study groups and participating in group revision sessions. This lack of selfishness and willingness to share knowledge and skills is a very valuable characteristic in our students, one that perhaps students from other schools would do well to follow.

As I mentioned, students' previous results do not dictate their performance here or in the future. In fact we have had a steady stream of top-performing students graduating from the school and going on to secure employment at some of the largest accounting firms in Hong Kong. In the past two years several of our students have been awarded the top student prizes in AAT Examination Paper 5 "Principles of Taxation" and Paper 8 "Principles of Auditing and Management Information Systems". Needless to say I have been very proud of my students' performance.

### ***What are your views on the AAT qualification?***

I think the AAT qualification provides a very good pathway for anyone who wants to excel in accounting, no matter what their academic background is. As such, students who were unable to get into university can still have the chance to succeed through this vocational path.

The AAT qualification is also well-recognized among employers within the profession. This recognition coupled with the wide array of subjects covered by the exams mean that students completing them will very likely have access to ample job and promotion opportunities in their careers. Another advantage of this qualification is its flexible study pattern, allowing students to study at their own pace.

### ***What is your advice for accounting students in Hong Kong?***

Never give up. Any single failure or unfavourable result does not, and should not, be the conclusion to your future. Especially in today's knowledge-based society, professional qualifications are more important than ever for fresh graduates and job-seekers.

Accounting is a very viable choice of career for young people today, due to its professional status, well-structured qualifying system and good career prospects. With perseverance, confidence, and hard work, students can surely achieve their goals.

