

## ***Little reporters – meeting the professionals***

### **Introduction**

The programme “Little reporters – meeting the professionals” is a continuation of the HKIAAT Accounting and Business Management Case Competition. The little reporters are the competition winners. This programme aims to further strengthen the little reporters’ generic skills and to widen their horizons through exposure to the real world by giving them the opportunity to interact with CPAs and accounting professionals.

### **Responsibilities**

Little reporters are required to outline interview questions, conduct an interview, take photos and notes during the interview and to write up the interview article.

### **Interviewee**



**Mr. Timothy Chu** is now working as an accountant in Bayer Group, a global enterprise with core competencies in the fields of health care, nutrition and high-tech materials. He has over ten years’ accounting experience. He completed the Accredited Accounting Technicians (AAT) examination in 2008 and is now a fellow member of the HKIAAT. He has registered as a student of Professional Bridging Examination (PBE), heading towards a CPA designation.

### **Little reporters**

The four little reporters are form-seven students from Cognitio College (Kowloon). They are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Runner-up team of the HKIAAT Accounting and Business Management Case Competition 2008-2009. The little reporters are:



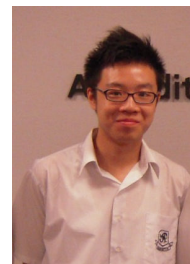
**Chan Yin Ling**



**Cheung Kit Yi**



**Lai Hiu Hung**



**Lo Chun Yin**



## **Moving forward with passion for accounting**

AAT graduate Timothy Chu tells us about his accounting experience and the key to a thriving career. He also demonstrates his passion for life-long learning.

### ***What inspired you to choose accounting as your career? How did you move up the corporate ladder?***

I was first inspired to study accounting in secondary school by my elder sister who is now working as an accounting personnel. Peer influence was also the reason why I chose accounting as my career after graduating from an accounting diploma. Of course, my keen interest in this profession is the key motive.

I started my career as an accounts clerk in a German manufacturing company. Over the past ten years, I have gained accounting experience from different types of companies including manufacturing, engineering and hotels. In 2007, I joined Bayer Group, a multinational manufacturer with core competencies in health care, nutrition and high-tech materials, as an accountant.

Throughout these years, I keep enhancing my knowledge and professional skills through attaining a professional qualification and higher academic achievements. I obtained the AAT qualification in 2008 and now I am striving to pass the Professional Bridging Examination and have enrolled for the coming examination in December 2009. At the same time, I am also studying a bachelor degree programme in finance.

### ***Tell us about your current position and duties. What is the challenge in your work?***

I have been working as an accountant at Bayer Group for two years. With accumulated experience, my work now mainly deals with financial reporting matters rather than book-keeping, which is what I did previously. I am responsible for monitoring the price variances of all affiliated branches under Bayer Group and between the inventory data and purchase invoice, performing monthly financial review function and financial report closing, providing analyses and recommendations for business planning and decision making, and some ad hoc projects. I also need to work with different counterparts from the supply chain, business service, compliance and regulations departments, and so on.

The most challenging part of my work is to keep the financial records accurate and error-free. As this financial information will be reported to the shareholders at the year end, even a small mistake would result in adverse effects. It is challenging yet also a source of pressure.



***Accounting is perceived to be boring. Do you agree with this?***

It is unavoidable that there must be some routine aspects for every job. Nowadays, accounting is more than just numbers. It is the language of business. Accounting professionals should have a global vision, good communication skills and a strong sense of business acumen. Taking me as an example, I am involved in the front line of business frequently and have many chances to meet and communicate with external parties like clients and vendors. To me, accounting is not boring at all.

Accounting personnel do not work alone either. Teamwork is very important, especially in large companies. For example, there are hundreds of cost centres and profit centres in my company. It is impossible to handle such a large and complicated set of accounts on my own. Co-operation among team members is crucial to getting accurate figures and reports.

***You have already obtained the AAT qualification and now plan to pursue a CPA qualification. Why is it so important to acquire professional qualifications?***

Attaining a professional qualification like AAT has strengthened my accounting knowledge, and has supported my work throughout the years. The AAT qualification has also increased my boss's confidence in me and I have been given more opportunities to take part in different projects.

***How do you manage your time and pressure in dealing with your work, study and professional examinations?***

I have a clear vision of becoming an accountant. It helps me stay motivated and keeps me on track. It is true that I am very busy with my work, especially at the month-end and year-end periods. Sometimes I even need to work until midnight. But I still insist on studying after work and during the weekends. To relieve pressure, I go swimming, play tennis, go to church and spend time with family and friends.

***Do you have any advice for those who aim to be accounting professionals like us?***

I am confident in the outlook of the accountancy profession. However, the requirements and expectations for accounting professionals keep changing constantly. In this dynamic business world, we need to keep abreast of professional development. Possessing sound generic skills is as important as having good technical skills. Therefore, it is important to acquire different knowledge that relates to our profession in order to keep up with these different challenges. Besides, continuing education is a trend and a key to success. Only those who are persistent in overcoming difficulties can accomplish their goal successfully.



As you read the interview,  
we hope to share our learning  
experience with you.....



This is the second time we have conducted an interview with an accounting professional under the programme “Little reporters – meeting the professionals”. With our experience from the last interview, we have become more confident during the preparation and interview process .....

**>>> 3 September 2009, 5:00pm (2 weeks before interview - preparation)**



Working on our experience from last interview, our preparation meeting is a constructive and co-operative one. Besides, we were well-prepared for the meeting with ideas and materials ready for discussion.

**>>> 17 September 2009, 6:30pm (interview day)**



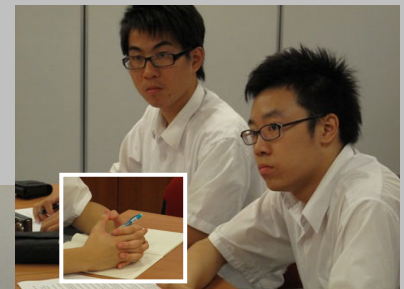
*Thank you!*



It has been our pleasure and honour to join the programme “Little reporters – meeting the professionals”. We have learnt different generic skills and more about the accounting profession.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Ms. Bo Bo Man, the Assistant Director of the HKIAAT, for presenting us with souvenirs as encouragement.

**>>> 17 September 2009, 6:30 - 7:30pm (interview in progress .....**



Timothy Chu has been generous and friendly and took the initiative in sharing his thoughts with us.

Apart from taking photos, this time we paid more attention to two important parts of an interview : listening carefully to the interviewee’s response, and taking notes.



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### **Chan Yin Ling**

“Timothy’s great enthusiasm for his work and continuing pursuit of knowledge impressed me much. Through our conversation, we are inspired by his enjoyment of work and study. I hope I can set a clear goal in my life and find a job which I enjoy in the future.”

### **Cheung Kit Yi**

“Keep learning is really important to us. Timothy advised us to learn as much as possible while we are still young. He reminded us that there are many opportunities to learn, and therefore we should treasure every learning opportunity during our student life, by not only focusing on the textbooks, but also by participating in various kinds of extra curricular activities.”

### **Lai Hiu Hung**

“After conducting two interviews with accounting professionals Mr. Dennis Chung and Mr. Timothy Chu, my perception of accounting has changed. Accounting is not as boring as we thought. Accounting is not only about numbers and figures, but also requires strong skills in communication, investigation, analysis, reporting and presentation. Timothy is friendly and willing to teach us a lot. I am very pleased to have had the chance to interview him.”

### **Lo Chun Yin**

“The interview with Timothy has changed my views on the accounting profession. He told us that accountancy is an attractive profession and accounting knowledge could enable us to understand the operation of different kinds of business. His thoughts are convincing and he has stimulated my interest in accounting!”