

Young Reporters – meet the professionals

Introduction

The “Young reporters – meet the professionals” programme is a continuation of the HKIAAT Accounting and Business Management Case Competition, in which the competition winners become our young reporters and interview a leading member of the accounting profession. This programme aims to strengthen the young reporters’ generic skills and to widen their horizons by giving them the opportunity to interact with experienced CPAs.

Responsibilities

Young reporters are required to find out about the background of the interviewee, draw up interview questions, conduct the interview, take photos and notes, and write an article about the interview.

Interviewee



Webster Ng is the founder of Webster Ng & Co. He is a member of the HKIAAT Board and the HKIAAT Examinations and Accreditation Committee. Mr. Ng is a practising member of the Hong Kong Institute of CPAs.

Young reporters

The young reporters are members of the champion team in the HKIAAT Accounting and Business Management Case Competition 2013-2014. They are graduates from the Institute of Vocational Education (Kwun Tong). They are currently either studying at university or working in a CPA firm. The young reporters are:

Nicola Chan



Cherry Cheung



Yetta Chiu



Yuki Luo



We learnt from your [previous interview with the HKIAAT](#) that you first worked as a bank teller and eventually set up your own firm. Could you tell us more about your story?

My first job was a bank teller. Then I worked in local accounting firms and completed a part-time accounting diploma course. By taking the joint examination scheme offered by the HKICPA (when it was known as the Hong Kong Society of Accountants), I became a CPA practicing after attaining a few years of recognized work experience. I established my own accounting firm, Webster Ng & Co., in 2003. I am grateful that I can apply my accounting knowledge and experience to my own firm.

All things are difficult before they are easy. During the first year of running the firm, I needed to do a lot of administrative work, for example, looking for an office, hiring personnel and supervising office refurbishment. Since the firm was very new, I also needed to intensively make pitches to clients.

When facing hardships, I always ask myself “do you want to daydream or pursue your dream?” The principle for solving difficulties is to set your goal and try your best to achieve it.

Apart from managing your firm and family, you serving on various associations, including being a board member of the HKIAAT, and you write a blog. What is your secret of good time management?

I set priorities. The priority list only has the things that I need to complete but not everything that I am expected to complete. The instant communication applications in our phone, say, Whatsapp and Line, buzz all day long. We need to prioritize. We can scan through the incoming messages but must not be distracted by them, otherwise we are working for others but not ourselves.

When it comes to time constraints in completing my entire list of priorities, I find my way to accomplish these and squeeze in time for things that I want to do. Most people watch videos when taking transport. But I use this time to write my blog. Recently, I joined the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon. Realistically, I did not have enough time for training based on my usual schedule. So I decided to wake up earlier in order to train. The fact is that, you can always come up with at least one solution for the thing that you are determined to do, or end up with loads of excuses to put them off. Achieving goals is always about determination.

What should we/ students do in order to be an all-round accounting professional? How do you view academic and professional qualifications when you select candidates for positions in your firm?

Accountancy covers broad areas. It is not just about calculation. It also includes tax compliance, insolvency, and so on. The wider aspects of knowledge that you acquire, the more advantages you have. However, not everyone is capable of mastering various aspects of knowledge. Therefore, you have to evaluate your ability. If you have the ability to master different areas of

knowledge, then you can decide to be an all-rounder. But if you do not have that ability, you should focus on the area that you are interested in and put your effort in that particular area.

It is vital that you establish your own goal. Once you have a clear goal, then you will be motivated to find ways to achieve it, no matter whether you want to be an all-rounder or to specialize in a particular area. This is what we do in everyday life. You first decide where you want to go, and then you analyze and find out how to reach your destination - just like taking the MTR or a bus!

To me, attaining an academic or a professional qualification might not be the critical factor in selecting employees. I focus on their personal traits and attitude. We recruit staff from different backgrounds and I prefer recruiting sub-degree holders. To some extent, sub-degree holders are willing to do more, they are curious in their learning and they are ambitious.

How should youngsters face the competition or opportunities from the Mainland China?

The crux of competition is about the attitude of our youngsters. As compared with their Mainland counterparts, a lot of Hong Kong youngsters have a serious problem of over-estimating their abilities. If they want to be outstanding in a job, first and foremost, they should have a positive attitude in to working.

Finally, could you give us some advice for our career and continuous learning plans.

You should set your destination and plan how to achieve it. Set your career path within a specified timeframe. Usually, I set a five-year plan through which I can keep track of the progress towards my goal.

~ As you read this article, we hope to share our learning experience with you ~

Our learning process and experience



Mr. Ng shared his ideas, thoughts and experiences, on career and life inspiration with us.



We were keen to learn from Mr. Ng. The interview was cheerful and full of laughter.



Mr. Ng was considerate. He captured abstract concepts by illustrating them for us.



We had a lovely evening with Mr. Ng and left feeling we had gained a lot from our time with him.

Thoughts from the students

Chan Wing Man, Nicola (Leader)

It is an honour for me to conduct the interview with Mr. Ng and I would like to thank HKIAAT for giving us this opportunity. Mr. Ng is a good mentor. He shared his valuable experience and gave useful tips for our life and career. I admire him for his effort and attitude in facing challenges. Attitude determines altitude - I gained this insight from the interview.

Cheung Tsz Wai, Cherry

I was grateful to have been able to conduct the interview with Mr. Ng. In the interview, he shared his story and work experience with us. Those valuable experiences are very useful for my career planning. Moreover, he emphasized that being hard-working and having a positive attitude are important. He also reminded me that if I wanted to be successful, I should take action now. His story has motivated me to work hard and that I should try my best to attain my goal. Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Ng and HKIAAT for giving us this golden opportunity to acquire more understand of the accounting industry.

Chiu Tsz Yan, Yetta

Thanks to Mr. Ng for sharing his precious time and experience with us. He is a charming and successful leader. His thoughts on the right attitude to work and his inspirations from life were impressive and have made me reflect on my own life. I have learnt to be persistent and also flexible in seeking other different ways around problems. Listening to his thoughts made me consider life from different perspectives. Mr. Ng is not just an accounting expert but also a life mentor to us.

Luo Yukui, Yuki

Mr. Ng is a humorous and a meticulous person. He used simple yet interesting examples to elaborate abstract ideas. He is also generous with his time and thoughts. He did not mind talking about his tough experience with us. Personally, I think he has the potential to be an outstanding tutor who enlightens and changes one's life. I am sure students will be engrossed when listening to him.