



Versatile AAT

Written by Foster Yim



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Company: Health Quotient Consultants Company Limited

Meant to join the accounting profession

Once she was bored by her accounting studies. However, AAT graduate Daisy Tai explains to us how her interest and passion in accounting was re-ignited. She also talks to us about the role that the AAT qualification has played in her career advancement.

Tell us about your academic background.

I first started studying accounting in the fourth form of secondary school. To be honest, without seeing the practical application of the subject, I found it boring. Inspired by the perceived prosperity in the information technology industry, I chose to study for an advanced diploma in Information Technology at the Hong Kong College of Technology after leaving secondary school.

I never thought of having a second shot at accounting until I took on some accounting duties in my first job. I originally worked as a clerk in Standard Refrigerating Engineering Company Limited, a company which specializes in air-conditioning systems. I was mainly responsible for filing and data entry. Later on, my supervisor asked me to handle accounts payable and receivable tasks as well. From that point onwards, I started to realize the use and applicability of the accounting I had studied at school, and I started to be much more interested in it. On my supervisor's recommendation, I took preparatory courses for the AAT Examination.

How did having the AAT qualification change your career?

My passion towards accounting grew as I learnt more through my studies for the AAT Examination. At the same time, I realized that my current job was not challenging enough. I joined Dah Chong Hong Holding Limited (DCH) in 2006 as an accounts clerk. My new job offered not just a better salary, but also more diversified duties. I needed to prepare budgets, forecasts, cash flow statements and financial statements, and to consolidate inter-company transactions.

I attained the AAT qualification in 2009 and thought that this was the right time to change jobs again, particularly since I wanted to have some more time to further my studies. I joined Health Quotient Consultants Company Limited as an accounts clerk. Although my job title was not changed, I saw my salary increase and have benefited from increased exposure to other accounting functions such as handling purchase orders and currency exchange.



Do you have an example of applying the knowledge from your AAT studies to your work?

The AAT Examination syllabus is very comprehensive. After attaining the AAT qualification, I have a solid accounting foundation, which is crucial for the success of accounting personnel. The knowledge I gained from my studies has boosted my confidence when performing my work duties. For example, topics like revenue recognition and measurement, which are part of the syllabus in AAT Examination Paper 7 “Financial Accounting”, exactly cover my duties in my current role. Recently I have been assigned to handle more advanced tasks such as calculating currency costs and sales revenue. The reason why I can take up these new jobs is because of the relevant knowledge that I learnt from my studies for the AAT Examination.

You completed the AAT Examination with flying colours. What is the secret of your success?

Although I got distinctions in three AAT Examination papers (Paper 4 “Business Economics and Financial Mathematics”, Paper 6 “Fundamentals of Business Law”, Paper 8 “Principles of Audit & Management Information Systems”) these subjects were the most challenging ones for me. Since I hadn’t studied auditing or business law before, I needed to put in extra effort by reading reference books. Rote learning does not work since the AAT Examination requires an understanding of the knowledge. Take law as an example. I would suggest that students pay more attention to cases rather than memorizing terminologies and definitions. Apart from taking preparatory courses, I also found the examination technique seminars organized by the HKIAAT to be highly useful. Practising good time management and having an analytical mind are equally important.

What are your future plans?

I wish to become a financial analyst one day. To achieve this goal, I sat the Professional Bridging Examination (PBE) Papers I & II in the December 2010 session, and I am awaiting results. I would like to finish the other two PBE papers by 2012, and then start the Hong Kong Institute of CPA’s Qualification Programme. I also want to study for an accounting degree programme. The top-up degree offered by the Hong Kong Institute of CPAs and Open University of Hong Kong is one of my preferred choices.

Daisy Tai's study and career path

Year	
2001 - 2002	Graduated with an Advanced Diploma in Information Technology from the Hong Kong College of Technology
2003 - 2006	Clerk, Standard Refrigerating Engineering Company Limited
2004 - 2006	Studied AAT preparatory courses at HKU SPACE
2006 - 2009	Finished all eight AAT Examination papers with three distinctions
2006 - 2009	Accounts Clerk, Dah Chong Hong Holding Limited
2009 - current	Accounts Clerk, Health Quotient Consultants Company Limited