

Employer in the spotlight
Written by Aldric Chau



Name: Jeffrey Lam
Title: Sole proprietor
Company: Potential Packaging Co.

Accounting for a special industry

The packaging industry has always been subject to keen market competition. Today an additional challenge is pressure from environmental protection groups. However, a bunch of industry players have managed not only to maintain their niche but also continue to flourish. Jeffrey Lam of Potential Packaging Co. says accounting has a critical role to play in this.

Tell us about your company and its core business.

Established in 1997, Potential Packaging Co. is a company providing packaging services. Over the past decade, as our economy has restructured, we have diversified our service lines into packaging, transport and simple logistics solutions. We mainly package consumer products such as shampoo, detergent, CD-Roms, and so on. The company has around 60 colleagues in Hong Kong.

What do you think as the role of accounting in your company?

As an SME, we rely on an effective division of labour for our daily operations. We need the accounting department to systematically manage cash flow and our profit and loss position. I would say accounting serves as the backbone to support our business and determines how we spend our capital wisely. And I am happy to have Joyce managing the department's operation.

What do you think about Joyce's performance at work?

She is a fast learner. From being someone who knew nothing about the company nor the packaging industry she has become the company's key person managing both people and accounts, and has done a brilliant job in merely four years. Also, she took the initiative to attain the AAT qualification, proving her commitment to both the company and to her career development.



How do you think AAT qualification has helped with Joyce's transformation at work?

The qualification itself is a value to her profile. But as an employer what I considered more important is of course her on-the-job performance. After getting the qualification she gained more confidence and improved a great deal in handling accounting reports and documents. At the year-end audit review, she provides substantial assistance to the external auditor, helping them complete the audit efficiently. She also handles our corporate tax well by updating me with the latest taxation rules and calculating our tax liabilities accurately.

How does Joyce differentiate herself from other colleagues?

Normally an accounting personnel does not do too much out of his or her discipline, mostly because of limited exposure. But I can see Joyce is different. Although she specialises in accounting, she also demonstrates her capabilities in other skills. For instance, I also count on her for HR management and for scheduling jobs in keeping our operations running smoothly. This is almost certainly due to the way she matured her way of thinking and organising matters while preparing for the AAT examinations. She has learnt to translate figures into useful information that can support sound business decisions.

What advice would you like to give Joyce and other accounting personnel?

Accounting was also my first job. With more than 20 years' experience in accounting, I have seen how our colleagues and AAT members handle stressful tasks. I would advise AAT personnel to always keep their heads cool by coping with stress from work effectively. Having peace of mind doesn't only make you more confident and efficient at work – it can also minimize your chance of making mistakes.