



Accountancy Recruitment News - 4th February 2021

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Good morning - this is the February edition of Accountancy Recruitment News. It includes our accountancy job market report, salary and freelance rates, a new independent legal advice service, careers advice, an article on surviving the pandemic, using video CVs and suggested interview answers.

Accountancy Job Market Report - February 2021

Summary of the current state of the accountancy job market:

Permanent Recruitment - Quiet

It has continued to be a very quiet year in January on the permanent side as firms are still reluctant to hire on a permanent basis. Very low new vacancy numbers.

Freelance Accountant Recruitment - Quiet

Quieter than usual on the freelance side - firms are taking on temporary assistance to help them through the busy periods and some industry finance departments seeing the benefits of a simple outsourced option. We have good availability amongst freelancers at all levels - bookkeeper through to senior accountants. Hourly rates inclusive of all costs via our www.freelanceaccountants.co.uk platform. Prices set at £21.24 per hour inclusive of fees and VAT.

Accountant Firms for Sale - Quiet

Accountancy firm buyers remain numerous - sellers are extremely rare to find. There is a clear market demand for small accountancy firms looking to sell their client banks, retire or merge. Contact us for a confidential discussion. We currently have a specialist practice for sale - Ref 100223 - information at <https://www.jonathanfagan.co.uk/law-accountancy-firms-for-sale/>

IHS MARKIT/CIPS UK Services Report (we are members of the panel contributing to this report)

Key Findings

Fastest decline in business activity since May 2020
Job shedding accelerates amid shrinking order books
Growth expectations rise to highest for nearly seven years

January data pointed to a steep and accelerated fall in UK service sector output, with the rate of decline the fastest recorded since May 2020. Survey respondents overwhelmingly linked lower activity to the impact of restrictions on trade and temporary business closures during the third national lockdown. Despite a sharp downturn in client demand due to COVID-19 pandemic, the latest survey indicated that business optimism improved for the third consecutive month. The degree of positive sentiment was the strongest since May 2014. This largely reflected the successful UK vaccine rollout so far in 2021 and hopes of a strong rebound in economic conditions as the pandemic situation improves.

[Hire Freelance Accountants - Click Here](#)

Hourly Rates and Salary Levels

Hourly Rates for Freelancers

Currently set at £21.24 per hour for accountants & experienced bookkeepers undertaking standard accounts work (hourly rate includes agency, VAT and service fees). Contact us to use our platform.

Salary Levels February 2021

Assistant Accountant – Outside London. Range £18k – £32k.
Accountant (ACCA/ACA) – Outside London. Range £30k-£45k.
Auditor – Outside London. Range £40k-55k.
Bookkeeper – Outside London. Range £16-23k.
Industry Accountants (CIMA) – Outside London. Range £30-50k.

Assistant Accountant – London. Range £22-32k.
Accountant – London. Range £28k-45k.
Auditor – London. Range £40-60k.
Bookkeeper – London. Range £20-26k.
Industry Accountants (CIMA) – London. Range £45-75k.

Charity Donations 2021 - £24,000 Fund - Suggestions

Welcome

Our charity bank account currently has over £24,000 in it, which means that it is that time in the year again when the trustees of the Ten Percent Foundation meet to discuss our donation of 10% of the annual profits of the Ten Percent Group of websites, which include Ten Percent Legal, Ten Percent Financial, Jonathan Fagan Law & Accountancy Firm Sales, TP Transcription and Chancery Lane.

We avoid charities with top heavy staffing & admin costs and welcome any suggestions from clients, candidates and general readers of our newsletters. We particularly like small charities with limited

funds. Examples of donations made over the past 20 years can be found on our website at www.tenpercentfoundation.org. To suggest a charity please email Jonathan Fagan at cv@tenpercent.co.uk. We consider all requests very carefully.

Recruit with Video CVs

This week we finally have a client who has specifically asked for anything but written CVs to be sent over for a fairly junior role. We had sifted through a number of applications and produced the shortlist of 5 CVs for the client to review. The feedback was fair enough - the CVs look all the same. How can I decide who to interview?

We came up with the idea of putting questions to each applicant and asking them to video their response. The first list of questions the client has proposed are:

Talk about your experience in private practice, and your like and dislikes of practice life.

What specific attributes could you bring to the team, that you feel similar applicants would not bring?

What is the best advice you could give to a property landlord at this current time who is suffering from the consequences of Section 24?

Do you view this position as a stepping stone, or are you seeking to settle with us for a long term career? Please give your reasons.

The procedure of videoing responses is very simple - the candidates can use their smart phones and then upload the videos for us to forward across to clients. If you are one of our clients we can set you up on our SSL secure video upload service (we also operate high security [transcription services](#) hence the system).

Pros?

Instant decisions can be made without needing to spend time interviewing.

CVs that may look weaker may appear stronger once you have made a personal connection to the candidate from seeing them.

Weeds out the candidates who are not particularly bothered as it takes some effort to go through this procedure.

Cons?

A person's appearance in a video could influence you in the wrong direction.

Senior candidates very unlikely to acquiesce to this and take-up by FCCA accountants for example may be extremely low.

You have to watch the videos rather than spend ten seconds reviewing a CV.

Our thoughts

We suspect this may be a good addition for recruiting for junior roles, where CVs can look very similar due to lack of life experience to date. However we are not sure about using video CVs to recruit senior staff who may well resent being put on the spot.

If you would like to try recruitment with video CVs for any role please let us know - happy to oblige!

Solicitor becomes Gestalt Counsellor

One of our long standing candidates has changed career become a full time Gestalt Counsellor, specialising in bereavement and life choices. Angela Mutum is a former city lawyer who spent the majority of her legal career in the Government Legal Service before branching out into locuming. She has now moved across full time into counselling.

Here is an article Angela has written on how we live our lives in the midst of a pandemic.

"You can't see the water you're swimming in." is a phrase which comes to my mind when I think about how our lives have changed in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. There are the obvious changes such as restrictions on where we can go and who we can see but I am aware there are other, more subtle, changes in my behaviour which I confess I find it hard sometimes to understand. I just know that they exist.

I am reluctant at the moment to leave my home and have been since the lockdown was imposed in March. This reluctance has gone through a number of phases and there have been different reasons behind each phase. I am aware that, whatever the reasons have been for my reluctance, they have had little to do with a fear of contracting the virus. The risk of contracting the virus is real but it has never been one that has concerned me unduly. In Gestalt terms, it is a phenomenon which forms part of the field. The risk of catching Covid-19 is however only one phenomenon in my subjective field when I consider going outside.

This week, I have realised that I do not like going to the shops at the moment because I find the experience somewhat overwhelming. I have become aware that, when out shopping, I am hurrying unnecessarily all the time and just can't wait to get home. When I am in a shop, I am preoccupied with whether I am following "the rules" (social distancing, one-way systems) and anxious about encountering aggression from others if I transgress "the rules". I find the rules irksome as they interfere with my ability to go about my shopping my way, for example turning back to a shelf in the greengrocers in order to look at the produce if it has caught my eye on the way past.

To an extent, my anxiety is a product of what psychotherapists call a "projection", i.e. my unconscious working assumption is that the environment in the shop is hostile and is replete with rules which I cannot avoid breaking. However, our projections are frequently based in reality and the current rules and restrictions on our daily lives are not merely a fantasy. They are real. And breaking them can have real, adverse consequences for us.

As the pandemic unfolds, the constraints on our daily lives wax and wane and the environment in which we are operating continually changes. We are faced with decisions in circumstances where we would not have previously regarded ourselves as making decisions at all: whether to visit an elderly relative, whether to travel or book a holiday, whether to give someone a lift in our car. There is, in the midst of this pandemic, a new layer of complexity in almost everything we do. And with all this comes additional anxiety, particularly for those of us for whom "following the rules", "doing the right thing" or "being good" is our default setting, if you will.

There are no easy answers. We are all balancing our own conflicting needs, and often the conflicting needs of others too, and each of us must work out what factors are really influencing our decisions, and in what measure, in order to navigate the healthiest path for ourselves through the apparent chaos brought about by Covid-19. I do not need to go shopping every day but, if I hardly go at all, I will, at best, end up with a very boring diet or, at worst, may end up with an unhealthy diet which will not best protect me during the winter to come.

To return to my question: how do we go about our lives in the midst of a pandemic? I do not have an answer - we must each find our own answer to that question - but I do have one suggestion. My suggestion is that we treat ourselves with the kindness and understanding which says: "There is no

perfect answer or perfect outcome. At best, I will always make mistakes. But I will forgive myself for them and learn from them. And I will encourage others to do the same.”

For further details regarding Angela's services as a Gestalt Counsellor please visit <https://www.anglamutum.com/>.

Interview Question 43 – Do you know how to motivate other people?

Advice

This is a question that again you could answer with a yes and no but by doing so you would almost certainly miss out on the opportunity to give an answer that demonstrates your management experience. Give two specific examples if at all possible but vary them. This can be in a non-work environment if you are still at the start of your career or if you are working and have been for a number of years it is probably quite important to give work examples as opposed to social or leisure activities.

Examples of Answers

“Yes. When I worked as part of a team on a project to rebuild a community centre in a disadvantaged part of Blackpool. At times the project felt as if it was never going to finish and insurmountable problems began to arise unconnected to the work the team was doing. It was important to keep everybody motivated and usually team dynamics mean that each member of the team has different things that motivate them. Some team members need encouragement and praise to get them to perform at their best, others need extra work and targets to achieve and some people simply need financial incentives to get themselves motivated to increase the task in hand. I have always felt it is important to identify these individual motivations and to use these to drive the team forward as a whole. I think as a manager having the ability to identify what motivates individuals is key to getting the best out of any team. Without identifying individual requirements and needs it is virtually impossible to have a successful team.”

New Independent Legal Advice Service

We are always happy to include a mention for new services set up by our clients and candidates and Joe Phelan from Phelan Independent Limited has been in touch.

Phelan Independent Limited offer independent legal advice (on matters such as personal guarantees, gift letters and occupiers consent forms) guaranteed within 48 hours of instruction. Advice is given by a fully qualified solicitor, with a fixed fee of £295 inc VAT for the first person and £150 inc VAT for any additional person requiring advice on the same matter. Travel included in the price.

For details please email joe@phelanindependent.co.uk or call 07845707515.

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Join our [Freelance Accountant Directory](#) - no charge

Freelance Accountant Directory - our online platform for accountants and bookkeepers in commerce and practice. One set hourly rate.

To invite bids from freelancers for specific jobs or projects, please visit <https://www.freelanceaccountants.co.uk>

Join our Freelance Accountant Directory

Add your Fees to our Fixed Fee Accountant Directory - no charge

Ten Percent Financial maintains a directory of advertised accountancy fees and we can add your business to the list at no cost. Whilst we appreciate that an accountant should, like any professional, be never selected solely on cost as the quality is an important factor, we are maintaining a directory of accountancy services and fees where they are advertised on the internet on a monthly or yearly subscription basis. We also send out customer enquiries to all firms listed in the directory at no cost.

To add your details simply click the button below.

Our directory can be viewed here: [The Ten Percent Accountancy Service Fees Directory](#)

Join our Accountant Fixed Fee Directory

Thinking of selling your firm or looking for investment?

Blocks of fees - if you are looking to sell fee blocks drop us a note. There is interest across the UK for Accountant Fee Blocks. Average rate for sale at the moment appears to be the 12 month value of the fees with the preference of the seller for a 100% upfront rate and the buyer a 30/30/40 split. Please visit our Buying and Selling Client Lists and Accountant Firms here: <https://www.jonathanfagan.co.uk/>

Why use us?

Candidates benefit from our lighter touch - no sales talk or pressure - together with our commitment to donate 10% of our profits to charity (20 years and counting!). Please visit our website at www.tenpercentfinancial.co.uk for further information.

Employers benefit from our assistance recruiting Seniors, Semi-Seniors, Assistant Accountants, Audit Semi and Seniors, Bookkeepers, Trainee Accountants, Accounting Technicians and other staff. We are also part of the Ten Percent Group, specialists in the recruitment of solicitors and legal staff since 2000.

- **CV Reviews for Accountants - visit our**

- website.
- Salary Reviews for Accountants - email us.
- Unlimited Recruitment option from just £60 per month - www.tenpercentunlimited.co.uk.
- Pay in 12 monthly instalments.
- 12 month rebate period.
- Established for over 10 years.

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We hope to be able to assist you with your recruitment, now or in the future.

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Kind regards,

Jonathan Fagan
Director

Ten Percent Financial Recruitment - www.tenpercentfinancial.co.uk
Ten Percent Unlimited - www.tenpercentunlimited.co.uk

E: jonathan@tprecruitment.co.uk

T: 0800 246 5016

Contact:

TP Recruitment Limited
27 Old Gloucester Street
London
WC1N 3AX

Head Office

TP Recruitment Limited
Ty Brith
Llandegla Road
Mold
CH7 4QX

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