



Accountancy Recruitment News - 14th January 2021

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Good morning and a happy new year - this is the first edition of Accountancy Recruitment News for 2021. It includes our job market report, salary guide and hourly rates, annual assessment of a psychic's predictions, interview answers and interview techniques for employers.

Accountancy Job Market Report - January 2021

Good morning. Here is our summary of the current state of the accountancy job market:

Permanent Recruitment - Quiet

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

Freelance Accountant Recruitment - Quiet

Busier 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.

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.

REC/KPMG UK Job Market Report (we are members of the panel contributing to this report)

Key Findings

Permanent placements rise marginally

Temp billings expand at sharpest pace since October 2018

Total demand for staff rises for first time in three months

KPMG Vice Chair Comment:

“The emergence of a vaccine did bring more confidence to the jobs market in December with a small increase in permanent appointments. Temporary billings were also sharply up across the UK although London was a notable exception. However, we will have to see what January brings with a new national lockdown sure to fuel economic uncertainty, alongside preparing and adapting to the new relationship with the EU. But with the UK leading the way on the vaccine roll out and continued government financial support, there is hopefully light at the end of the tunnel for both business and jobseekers.”

[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 January 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.

Job Interview Techniques – The Fake Receptionist

We have recently been involved in a recruitment process where a rather novel use of a pretend receptionist was employed in order to root out good prospective employees attending for interview. The firm in question decided on the day of interviews to replace their usual receptionist with one of the partners to see how the prospective job applicants behaved at the reception desk.

Dirt on Shoe

One particular applicant turned up and spoke to the receptionist as if she was dirt on his shoe, and when he went through for interview he was surprised to see the same receptionist waiting to interview him. The receptionist turned out to be the senior partner who advised him that his behaviour towards her as a receptionist had made her feel very uncomfortable, in fact so uncomfortable that there was no way she could possibly employ him and that she was not going to interview him.

Other candidates were absolutely fine with the receptionist – polite, professional and friendly, which is what you would expect from someone you intend to employ and work with for some years to come.

So is this a good way of rooting out potential staff?

Our advice is yes definitely. If you do this then it means you can immediately see the character of someone coming to interview. Some people simply cannot help themselves when they speak to receptionists and display their normal behaviour, whereas others will try and be as polite as possible to everyone within the building and the false receptionist test will not necessarily show their true character. However, it is a quick two minute way of assessing someone and saving you bothering interview them for an hour and considering at all any further if they turn out to be thoroughly vile and rude people who treat receptionists with great disdain.

Technique in Practice

So the best way of doing this is simply to go and sit at the front of reception when you know a potential applicant is due to be coming and give your receptionist a break for a few minutes. Be as polite as possible to the job applicant and observe them closely when they enter the building, and also when they sit down to wait for the interview. You can also gain some good feedback simply by observing someone sitting and waiting. What do they do, do they look nervous, are they on their phone to somebody all the time, what have they brought with them?

In fact, spending a bit of time watching someone before they come in for interview can be quite a useful exercise, because it does give you a reading into their character that you don't necessarily get in an interview room. You might think someone in the interview room is completely laid back and you are a bit concerned that they may not take a job particularly seriously, whereas in fact the candidate has sat in reception looking very nervous but is able to perform well during interviews and not give off any sign of nervousness.

If you do decide to go down the false receptionist route you do need to be prepared to be honest to the person you are going to interview and explain that you do not want to continue based on your experience.

Summary

There are lots of different ways of assessing someone at an interview without just asking them questions and this is just one of them. Other exercises include chair positioning to put the candidate under a bit of stress (The Chair Technique - see our [YouTube video!](#)), providing them with a written task, asking them to give a talk for a couple of minutes on a particular subject, or handing them a file and asking them what they would do differently.

Interview Question 42 – Do you feel you are ready to take on greater responsibilities?

Advice

This question is only going to be asked if you are going for a more senior position to the one you currently hold. You could simply answer it with a yes and leave it at that but our usual advice is to answer it and provide evidence to show why you are ready to take on greater responsibilities, linking existing responsibilities with other responsibilities you expect to have. If you are unable to give evidence as to why you feel you are ready to take on greater responsibility you are applying for the job that is probably out of your depth. You must be able to give examples that will give the employer

confidence that you are the person they need despite you possibly coming from a lower job level.

Examples of Answers

“Yes. During my current post I have regularly deputised for the senior manager and dealt with all issues coming across his desk. Specific examples of work I have dealt with include disciplinary action against employees, dealing with a faulty product from a supplier where a production line was shut down until it was resolved and attending board meetings as the stand-in manager for the plant. I feel that my experience dealing at this level as left me ready to take on greater responsibility.”

Or:

“Yes. I am used to handling a high level of responsibility in my current post and have always been able to successfully perform any tasks set for me with any of my previous roles or activities I have undertaken so far in life. In terms of management I have enjoyed some parts of my current role that have involved management tasks being delegated to me as well as in sporting and non-academic activities captaining my local hockey team and being the Chair of the local school governors. I welcome any increases in the levels of responsibility.”

Annual Predictions - how did the professional psychic do?

We have been following the predictions of Craig Hamilton-Parker of psychics.co.uk for some years now - it is fascinating to see how he fares every year with his previous year's predictions.

Here are a selection of his predictions for 2020 taken from his website at the start of the year:

War in the Middle East - hmm - sort of correct (but then there is always a war occurring in the Middle East - its a bit like predicting that it will rain in Wales).

Trump Reelected - incorrect

Boris Marries Carrie Symonds - incorrect

Meghan Markle Pregnancy - sort of correct!

Revolution in China - incorrect

European Economic Crisis - incorrect

Yvette Cooper becomes the leader of the Labour Party. - incorrect

Prince Charles will be hit by an egg. - incorrect (unless Camilla threw one at him and nobody knows).

Elizabeth Warren will be the Democrat Presidential Contender - incorrect.

Total score - 1/2 out of 9. Megan was pregnant for a while and there is a war in the Middle East. However it does like the cosmic rays were not fully functioning in 2020!

Selection of Predictions for 2021 Taken From

<https://psychics.co.uk/blog/predictions/>

There will be a tsunami near Japan.

Giant iceberg causes shipping problems.

There will be strikes and protests in the USA, the UK and Europe. Very violent protests occur in Paris, London and Washington.

North Korea will fire more missiles. There will be starvation in North Korea and moves to remove Kim Jong-un by his own people.

New infrastructure projects will be announced including plans to build a tunnel to Northern Ireland.

Southern Ireland will struggle with Brexit and in the years to come will leave the EU.

There will be a public backlash against the BBC's overt political correctness.

Terrorists hijack a plane. I see Paris. Gunfight in an airport.

Joe Biden will have a short presidency. An illness or accident will stop his presidency short. Biden will be succeeded by a woman.

A serious Trump illness during 2021 is predicted and marital problems ahead. Possible affair revealed. Trump will stand as an independent candidate in 2024. The Republican party will betray him. It's too soon to say if he will win in 2024. (unless he does the remedies) An earlier election may be called.

We will revisit in January 2021 with a score! Incidentally psychics are available now to speak to at £1.50 per minute on the website above (although there is currently a special offer of 29p per minute for 10 minutes for new customers).

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

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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](#)

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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.tenpercentfinancial.co.uk/buying-and-selling-a-practice/>

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Kind regards,

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