



The CPA Zone is a bulletin produced by the CSCPA. It is a "quick-read" intended to keep high school educators in the loop with the profession of Certified Public Accounting. Feel free to reproduce The CPA Zone and share it with colleagues and students.

First CSCPA "CHAT Session" a Success!

Idea Exchange Forum for High School Accounting Teachers Garners High Marks from Attendees

In late January, CSCPA hosted almost 20 high school accounting teachers for a free afternoon session entitled CHAT (Connecticut High School Accounting Teachers). The program was created as a forum for secondary accounting teachers to exchange ideas, network, and help each other promote and teach accounting at the high school level via roundtable discussion. CSCPA Student Relations Specialist Jill Brightman planned and moderated the session.

The concept of the CHAT session series resulted from suggestions offered by the CSCPA High School Accounting Advisory Board, a group of high school accounting teachers who have agreed to assist Ms. Brightman in developing ideas and programming specifically for secondary accounting teachers and their students.



Participants listen to ideas from their peers for assessing student work.

In this first session, the teachers discussed topics including:

- Best Practices in Accounting Education: Grading
- Beyond the Textbook: Supplementing the Accounting Curriculum and
- Concerns/Issues/Ideas for Teaching High School Accounting using Technology.

The program also included a "show-and-tell," with each participant bringing an example of his or her best work, including accounting lesson plans, activities, online resources, student work, grading rubrics, game instructions, and more.

"It was nice to have the time to discuss items with others in a relaxed atmosphere," said Jeanne Lauer of the Academy of Information Technology & Engineering in Stamford. "Sometimes at conferences there is so much packed into the program that we don't have the time to relax, and most attendees tend to sit with their own school peers rather than join a group of unknowns," she said. "I appreciate all the interaction and sharing [at the CSCPA session]."

Following the session, a resource page was created to showcase the many samples from "show and tell" and as a way for accounting teachers around the state to share materials and help each other create and maintain creative ways to teach high school accounting. The page will continue to be maintained and updated on the CSCPA website.



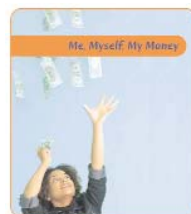
Jill Brightman of the CSCPA records results from the group discussions.

If you would like to view the resource page simply go to: www.cscpa.org/chatsessions and, if you'd like to submit a lesson, idea, or rubric that you would be willing to share with others, you may send it to Jill Brightman at jillb@cscpa.org to be posted on this resource page.

Interested in attending a future CHAT Session? The series plans to continue in the fall, so keep an eye out for e-mails, notification via mail, and on the CSCPA website (www.cscpa.org/students) for upcoming dates!



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COMING THIS FALL!

Get ready for a newly re-designed and updated "Me, Myself, My Money" financial literacy curriculum kit. Look for more details in October!

Have you seen the new CSCPA on-line Student Center?

Visit www.cscpa.org/students

Want to give your students an opportunity to learn more about career opportunities for CPAs? Bring them to the CPA Careers Conference!



Mark Your Calendars!

The 2009 CPA Careers Conferences are scheduled for:

Friday, October 9, 2009 -
Quinnipiac University, Hamden

Friday, October 23, 2009 -
University of Connecticut, Storrs

Conference materials will be mailed out to all schools at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year. CSCPA will not be accepting registrations until that time.

What Students Need to Succeed in Accounting & Finance

Report highlights today's top skills and credentials

Here's some welcome news: Highly skilled accounting and finance professionals are needed in any economic environment, according to the newly released *2009 Salary Guide from Robert Half International*. Following are additional insights from the guide regarding today's most sought-after skills and credentials:

♦**Stellar soft skills.** People skills have become pivotal attributes for job applicants in the eyes of employers. Companies often enhance compensation to secure candidates who have technical expertise and top-notch interpersonal abilities.

Fifty-three percent of chief financial officers said they are willing to hire someone with fewer technical competencies if the candidate had stronger soft skills, according to a Robert Half survey included in the Salary Guide. As a result, job seekers should elevate and promote their communication, leadership and team-building skills in resumes and cover letters.

♦**In-demand accreditations and technical abilities.** The certified public accountant (CPA) designation is the most frequently requested professional accreditation for accounting and finance positions. In addition, holding a master's degree in business administration (MBA) increases marketability. Other noteworthy credentials include the chartered financial analyst (CFA), certified internal auditor

(CIA) and certified information systems auditor (CISA) designations.

♦In terms of technology, **advanced knowledge of Microsoft Excel and Access** is a common requirement, as is an understanding of enterprise resource planning (ERP) and enterprise risk management (ERM) applications. Experience with financial planning and reporting applications such as Hyperion and Crystal Reports also is valued.

♦**A global mindset.** Globalization is having a transformational impact on the accounting and finance professions. As a result, demand is growing for job candidates who have an international outlook and perspective.

Companies that operate overseas or have clients worldwide seek professionals who are multilingual, have worked abroad and are familiar with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The Salary Guide also notes that many industry experts expect that globalization and the likely near-worldwide adoption of IFRS will drive the next large hiring wave in accounting and finance.

*Source: November/December 2008 (SmartPros)
<http://accounting.smartpros.com>*

Questions, comments, suggestions? Contact Jill Brightman, Student Relations Specialist at the CSCPA, at 1-800-232-2232, ext. 239 or email jillb@cscpa.org.