CRAFTING YOUR CAREER
AN ACTIONABLE PLAN FOR A REWARDING WORK LIFE
Amazing careers don’t just happen. They’re the result of a great deal of thought and planning. This guide exists to help you piece together an exciting and rewarding career path and contains accounting-specific information for those on the path to certified public accountant (CPA).

CPA-bound students can find a wide array of valuable information and resources to help along each step of that journey at ThisWayToCPA.com.

Happy planning!

Your friends at ThisWayToCPA
Any successful career plan starts with self-reflection. Digging into who you are, what you care about (or don’t) and what you want out of your career can help you bring things into focus. Here are several techniques to help you look inward, with the goal of finding the right path to help you move onward and upward.

1: CREATE A SCOT ANALYSIS

A SCOT Analysis is a great way to evaluate your budding career from a more balanced perspective. As you fill in your SCOT chart, list items in order of priority, starting with your greatest STRENGTH, biggest CHALLENGE, largest THREAT and most substantial OPPORTUNITY. This will allow you to see the areas to leverage to your advantage as well as the areas where you’ll benefit most from additional growth.
As you consider your strengths and challenges, try to think about them from the perspective of a potential employer. Your strengths and challenges are internal, so you’ll have to look inward for these answers. Be honest with yourself. After all, how can you expect to grow if you don’t acknowledge any room for improvement? Here are some questions to ask yourself to uncover your strengths and challenges:

What do your peers see as your strengths?
What qualities or skills do you have that would be attractive to an employer?
Are there any special skills you have or things that you do better than others?
What type of situations should you avoid?

Once you’re clear on your strengths and challenges, move onto the opportunities and threats in your specific career field. Note that opportunities and threats are external, so determining these will require you to look beyond yourself. The goal here is to learn to capitalize on the opportunities while avoiding (or lessening) the threats, whenever possible. Consider:

What obstacles stand in the way of you entering the profession?
What opportunities and trends are you aware of?
How do changes in technology affect your desired position?
What are other candidates (your competition) doing?

Here’s an example of a SCOT Analysis for a soon-to-be graduating senior working toward CPA licensure:

**STRENGTHS**
- Fast learner & good listener
- Technical skills & proficiency in Excel and SQL
- Bilingual with a multicultural perspective
- Beta Alpha Psi accounting club member

**CHALLENGES**
- Presentation skills
- Working in teams
- Standing apart from other job applicants
- Time needed to study for the CPA Exam

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Positive trend in number of available accounting positions
- Forensic accounting is a growing specialty
- Relocation

**THREATS**
- Many industries choose to hire from within
- Large number of applicants
- Don’t live in the same cities as my companies of interest

**NOW IT’S YOUR TURN TO CREATE YOUR OWN SCOT ANALYSIS:**

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The CPA Perspective

Self-assessment doesn’t always come easily. If you’re having difficulty, we’re here to help. Find a variety of real-life CPA profiles showing the various skill sets, personal attributes, values and leadership qualities it takes to be a successful CPA at ThisWayToCPA.com/CPAprofiles
**2: PONDER YOUR PREFERENCES**

To figure out your best type of job and work environment, you’ll want to consider your likes and dislikes. Fill out the chart below by delving inward, once again. The more real you are with yourself about your preferences, the more likely you’ll be to find a position that’s not only a good fit, but one where you’ll thrive. Ask yourself questions that help you explore your preferences, such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIKES</th>
<th>DISLIKES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you enjoy interacting with people or do you prefer to keep to yourself?</td>
<td>Does the idea of travel excite you or sound like a chore?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the idea of travel excite you or sound like a chore?</td>
<td>Are you more comfortable being a big fish in a small pond, or do you prefer it the other way around?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you more comfortable being a big fish in a small pond, or do you prefer it the other way around?</td>
<td>Are you more of a jack of all trades or a master of one?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**3. ASSESS YOUR VALUES AND BELIEFS**

Making sure you’re comfortable with the culture and direction of the place you’ll be devoting your time to is important. For example, if healthy living is a core part of who you are, you probably wouldn’t want to work for a company that makes junk food. If you feel uneasy about an organization before you even start working there, it’s a good sign it’s not a good fit for you. After all, having chemistry between yourself and the organization you’ll be working for is just as important as getting along with coworkers. The more you buy in to an organization, its mission and culture, the more you’ll be able to grow with it. Some things you might want to consider are:

- What qualities and characteristics do you tend to avoid in others?
- What are the things you most admire in others?
- How important is it that others share your personal values?
- What would be a deal breaker for you in an organization—dishonesty, disregard for the environment, lack of diversity?

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**4. CONSIDER WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

Another factor to consider in your planning is work-life balance. Obviously, you want to climb the ranks and reach your goals in a timely fashion, but ensuring that you’re not burnt out when you do is just as important. Be realistic in considering how much you’re willing to work on a regular basis. After all, there are only so many hours in a day. Making sure you leave enough time for the other goals you have (outside of work) will help you to maintain a long and rewarding career—and life.
Use the following chart to list out the various activities and commitments in your life along with the average amount of time each of them require. Think about them on top of a minimum 40-hour work week (often closer to 50-60 hours, for younger staff accountants) and it’s easy to see just how precious your time truly is. The goal here is to help you prioritize your time and make sure you’re devoting the right amount of it to the various things in your life. We’ve included a few examples to get you started.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOBBIES</th>
<th>FAMILY &amp; FRIENDS</th>
<th>SELF-CARE</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video gaming</td>
<td>Out with friends</td>
<td>Spin class</td>
<td>Volunteering at homeless shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.5 hrs/day)</td>
<td>(8 hrs/week)</td>
<td>(4 hrs/week)</td>
<td>(3 hrs/week)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. SEE WHAT’S OUT THERE

Explore some of the many job-searching websites to get a better idea of what’s available in your industry. Start with a broad search to see the different types of positions at every level to get a better feel for the industry’s prospects as a whole. You might be surprised by what you find.

The CPA Perspective

Interested in seeing what your answers to these types of questions could mean for your career? Find Your Fit in the accounting profession by visiting ThisWayToCPA.com/FindYourFit.

Staff Auditor, Public Accounting

Position at a rapidly growing mid-sized CPA firm specializing in real estate. Requires BS in Accounting and 1-3 years of experience. Works directly with clients, focusing on audit, financial statement preparation and tax preparation. 25% domestic travel. Strong communication and computer skills with experience in paperless audit. Must be a good team player and fast learner. Firm provides financial assistance with the CPA Exam and flexible hours to accommodate studying.

Now create your own ideal job description:

Where do you see yourself in a year? How about three?
What about 10 years from now?
Does a small company or a large corporation sound more appealing?
Are you more interested in the public or private sector?
How about a job with the government or a non-profit?
What about a career in academia?
Which industries sound appealing to you? Technology, food, sports?
Once you’ve completed your self-analysis, consider sharing your work with a professor, advisor, coach or anyone else whose opinion you respect. Getting an outside point of view can be invaluable since everyone has blind spots, which are often easier for others to see. Plus, they might be able to share additional insight for you to consider.

Keeping everything you learned from your self-assessment in mind, consider your big-picture career goals. Putting them to paper can help you map out a plan for achieving them faster. Start by figuring out what you’ve already accomplished, then focus on what needs to come next.

Right now, your primary focus may be on finishing school and deciding where to work. If you’re already working, you’ll likely be considering more transitional goals (like moving organizations) or life changes (like relocating or having kids). Developing a career plan with your self-analysis in mind will help you see your options more clearly and make more informed—and intentional—decisions about your career.

1: BUILD YOUR RESUME

Begin by writing down where you went to school and the degree(s) you hold. Add in the places you’ve worked and what your responsibilities were in each position. Make sure your work experience is relevant. This is one of those instances where quality is more important than quantity.
Next, add in any professional licenses or certifications you have (if you’re currently working on them, simply note your expected completion date), along with any awards, recognition or accolades you’ve received. Lastly, list out any other relevant experience you have, such as volunteering, unpaid positions and any additional clubs or organizations you’re a part of.

When it comes to evaluating potential candidates, employers look at everything—including your social media accounts. Even if they’re set to private, it’s best to assume employers can see everything you post, so make sure it’s nothing that could keep you from getting the job. Get more tips at ThisWayToCPA.com/SocialMediaTips

2: GROUP YOUR GOALS

Goals are important to have—and everyone’s exact combination of goals is unique. Start this exercise by thinking about the values and beliefs you defined during your self-assessment. Many people initially think about their goals in very general terms, such as making more money, owning their own business and retiring early. While those can certainly be included, try to think beyond that. Consider things like career stability, flexibility, advancement potential, travel, the importance of work that feels worth doing and being continually challenged.

Then break your goals into three categories: short-term, long-term and overall career goals. Short-term goals are ones that can be reached in a year or less. Long term applies to those that are on a three- to five-year timeline, and overall career goals are essentially long-term goals that will take even longer to accomplish.

- Study for the AUD section of the CPA Exam
- Meet with a recruiter

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Ditch the social (media) anxiety

When it comes to evaluating potential candidates, employers look at everything—including your social media accounts. Even if they’re set to private, it’s best to assume employers can see everything you post, so make sure it’s nothing that could keep you from getting the job. Get more tips at ThisWayToCPA.com/SocialMediaTips
LONG-TERM GOALS (3-5 YEARS)

- Mentor future & freshly minted CPAs
- Learn Mandarin

OVERALL GOALS (5+ YEARS)

- Lead the diverse recruiting initiative for my organization
- Work in China

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Get SMART

Whatever you come up with for your career plan, make sure it’s based on actionable items. Keep it SMART by ensuring its Specific (answers the what, why and how), Measurable (allows for interim goals or checkpoints along the way), Attainable (requires some stretching but is achievable), Realistic (doable) and Time-bound (able to be accomplished within a specific time frame).

3: FOCUS ON TRAINING

Getting the training you need to advance your career is crucial, which makes planning that training equally important. Consider a variety of training and development opportunities you could pursue based on the challenges and threats identified in your SCOT Analysis. Think of opportunities to work on your personal skills (like public speaking) and professional skills (like industry-specific software training).

Write out a plan that includes both formal and on-the-job opportunities. Organize those into short-term and long-term groups, being as specific as possible for the short-term ones.

For example, if there’s a conference coming to your area that interests you, write down its name, where it is, how much it costs and what you hope to gain from attending. If you’re considering taking a class to hone your presentation skills, be sure to follow it up by finding opportunities to practice what you’ve learned—and ask people you trust to give you feedback and constructive criticism on how you’re doing.
Of course, training opportunities don’t only come in the form of classes and conferences. Volunteering can also provide a valuable avenue for gaining experience—both personal and professional. As you evaluate possible learning opportunities, don’t forget to consider any gaps between your resume and the position you’d like to have. Training is a great way to make up the difference between where you currently stand and where you want to be.

Whether the career plan you’ve developed is clear cut or complex, it will give you an advantage in analyzing and planning for whatever comes next. It’s a great way to focus on what’s immediately in front of you, while also allowing you to think more broadly about your career as a whole. Now that you have a better idea about where you want to go and what you want to get out of your career, it’s time to begin looking at the specifics of bringing it all to fruition.

You probably already know ThisWayToCPA has tons of great content to help you on your journey to obtaining CPA licensure. But you may not know there are also a slew of videos covering a range of topics that can help you with your career planning, too. These videos can help you better determine some of your goals and think more deeply about what kind of training you should focus on. Check them out at ThisWayToCPA.com/CareerPlanningVideos
As you look to your future, you’ll realize you have a long career journey in front of you. The path won’t be completely visible from your current vantage point. And that’s okay. It also won’t take the same course as your peers because every career is different. Sometimes your path will seem straight and you’ll see it clearly all the way to the horizon, while at other times you might only be able to see the step directly in front of you. Just remember: It’s your path—so forge ahead in a way that works for you.

Most people’s careers start with an entry-level job in their chosen field. These ideally put you in a position of being an individual contributor—working for the greater good of your department or organization at large. While you might feel both overwhelmed and eager to move to the next level, don’t underestimate the importance of this role in the grand scheme of your career. After all, starting at the beginning sets the foundation for what’s to come.

While you’re there, consider how opportunities like special projects and rotational assignments fit within your current career plan. You’ll likely find you’re gaining some much-needed skills—like growing your technical understanding, broadening your business perspective, cultivating leadership qualities and building on your strengths.

Not only does finding the right opportunities matter—but documenting the accomplishments you’ve made does, too. Be sure to note your successes in real time (before you forget or move on to the next project) and keep them in one place. These come in handy when you’re asked to review your performance and when discussing your career advancement with your supervisor. It can also save you a lot of frustration when it comes time to update your resume.
When you document your accomplishments, think about the initial problem that was presented, the solution you came up with and the skills you used and/or gained from the experience:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBLEM</th>
<th>SOLUTION</th>
<th>SKILLS DEMONSTRATED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Looking through records, noticed a vendor’s invoice was paid twice.</td>
<td>Contacted vendor to request reimbursement. Created a new process for payments to avoid future overpayments.</td>
<td>Client relationship management. Business process improvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you’re not part of a professional social media site like LinkedIn, you should be. It’s a great place to share the skills you’re developing and connect with other professionals. Keep your profile up to date with job-related achievements, training and other accomplishments. Even if you’re not actively looking for another position, it never hurts to network and discover potential opportunities. Find tips on how to make the most of your professional social media profile at ThisWayToCPA.com/social

2: STEPPING UP

A common next step for individual contributors is to move into a supervisor or manager position. It means going from a role where you rely heavily on technical skills and are judged on your own results to one where you’re responsible for the results of an entire team.

Studies show the ability of a team to excel depends a lot on their manager. That’s a lot of pressure— especially when you consider people who are good at doing aren’t necessarily good at managing. But don’t be intimidated, there are lots of resources that can help you in this new role. Even though you may have never managed a team before, you’ve had multiple managers, so you already have some experience seeing what works and what doesn’t.

The following qualities are important for a manager to possess. Rate yourself on each characteristic (with one being bad, three being average and five being excellent):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANAGER QUALITIES</th>
<th>YOUR RANKING (1=BAD 5=GOOD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONSISTENT</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMITTED</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZED</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTUITIVE</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOTIVATING</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERSATILE</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREATIVE</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJECTIVE</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The good news is: Great managers aren’t born, they’re made. Which means you have the ability to improve your ranking to become a better manager. It all starts with being aware of the areas where you can improve and being willing to do the work to make it happen. Meet your challenges head on by:

- Finding a managing mentor within your organization
- Studying the characteristics of the managers you’ve had throughout your life, and decide what made them successful (or not)
- Read a book or listen to a podcast about effective management styles
- Meet with a manager in another field and apply their insights to your field
- Take a personality test to better understand areas where you can improve

The proverbial career ladder is unlike most other ladders in that you have the ability to step horizontally as well as vertically. Vertical steps tend to offer more responsibility and generally provide more managerial tasks and leadership opportunities. Horizontal steps, where you move into a similar or related role in another department or industry, are often necessary to glean a wider knowledge base to help you meet future goals.

A sense of direction

The proverbial career ladder is unlike most other ladders in that you have the ability to step horizontally as well as vertically. Vertical steps tend to offer more responsibility and generally provide more managerial tasks and leadership opportunities. Horizontal steps, where you move into a similar or related role in another department or industry, are often necessary to glean a wider knowledge base to help you meet future goals.

3: MOVING OVER

Horizontal moves are another kind of step you can take in your career. These can help strengthen your understanding of internal and external aspects both inside and outside of your organization—which is imperative if you have your sights set on a high-level leadership position. Horizontal moves can also help broaden your understanding of the business world and get a fresh start in a new industry or company. They also allow you to apply your technical knowledge in new contexts or different situations.

Some horizontal moves are bigger than others. A lateral move within your industry or organization is one thing, but migrating to a new industry is another. For example, if you’ve been working in entertainment but have decided you want to move into the non-profit sector, you might have the skills for the job you’ll be doing but you don’t have the industry knowledge—which can be a huge challenge.

This is when you might want to consider an informational interview. They can be very useful when you want to know more about a specific position, but aren’t interested in applying right then and there. You might also consider completing a certificate program in your new field of interest to help you gain some of the knowledge you’ll need to break into that new industry.
A great way to get access to a wide array of CPAs is to join the AICPA and your state CPA society. Membership for students in both organizations offers valuable benefits to help you in your career—including access to their members. Don’t hesitate to reach out to a CPA (who’s already doing what you want to do) and offer to buy them a cup of coffee or lunch in exchange for a bit of their time. People generally enjoy talking about their path, careers and helping up-and-coming professionals, so it could likely be a win-win situation.

Speaking of informational interviews....

The CPA Perspective

Accounting offers lots of flexibility as well as a wide array of opportunities for both growth and movement over the course of a career. Check out these two possible CPA paths—one is more vertical and the other is more “diagonal”:

### A Vertical Career Path

**Specializing in Tax**

- **Staff Accountant**
  - (1-3 years)
- **Tax Senior**
  - (3-6 years)
- **Tax Manager**
  - (3+ years)
- **Senior Manager/Director**
  - (5+ years)
- **Partner**
  - (only 2% of all personnel reach this level)

### A Less Traditional Career Path

**Spawning Sectors:**

- **Financial Examiner**
  - Government Agency
  - (1-3 years)
- **Staff Tax Accountant**
  - Public Accounting
  - (2–4 years)
- **Senior Tax Manager**
  - Public Accounting
  - (7+ years)
- **Director of Accounting**
  - Corporate accounting
  - (5+ years)
- **Corporate Controller**
  - Corporate accounting
  - (5+ years)

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4: Potentially Pressing Pause

Another thing you may encounter during the course of your career is needing—or wanting—to take a break from your job for an extended period of time. Whether it’s to pursue an advanced degree, to take care of children or elderly parents or for any number of other reasons, there’s a lot you’ll need to consider.

If you’re currently working and seeking a break (or need to adjust your work schedule to accommodate pressures in your life), you should discuss flexible work arrangements with your employer. You’ll also want to make a re-entry plan and maintain any professional licenses or memberships you have while on leave. If you know going into a job that you’ll need a break or a lot of flexibility, make sure you seek out employment opportunities with organizations that support and value the responsibilities of life beyond work.

The possibility of becoming obsolete is easier than you might think, so take advantage of ad hoc work assignments and courses to further your skills, if possible. Do your best during this hiatus from work to maintain (and even further develop) your network of mentors and colleagues—and try to connect with them regularly for advice and to keep up with business and organizational news.

Make the most of your mentor

Stay in touch with an advisor or mentor with experience in the profession. They can help you assess potential career moves based on your experience, preferences and opportunities.
Regularly maintaining your career plan can go a long way in ensuring you’re an active participant and the navigator of its course. While your plan will most likely change and morph as your career and personal life unfold, giving it the attention it deserves helps ensure you’re getting the most valuable experience from every step. Which leads us to the next part of your career-planning journey: maximizing what you do outside of your job to create the fullest, most rewarding career with the greatest number of opportunities.

When it comes to your career, you get out of it what you put in. That’s why it’s so important that you continuously invest in it—and yourself. Staying ahead of the competition, or even just keeping pace with it, means finding ways to further develop yourself as a professional. In doing so, you’ll want to focus on three areas: expanding your technical skills, growing your leadership skills and working on self-improvement.

1: TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MEMBERSHIPS

Join professional organizations in your field. Whether it’s industry trade associations, professional societies or committees, there’s no need to limit yourself to just one. Different organizations provide different benefits to their members. For example, you could get something very different out of a group for young professionals or college alumni than you would from an industry-specific association.
Most of these organizations offer invaluable opportunities to network, volunteer or serve on a board—and many operate on a local, regional or national level. Not only will being an active member of groups get you (and the organization you work for) great exposure, it can also help you further develop those ever-important leadership skills. Joining as a student can provide you with invaluable tools to kick off your career, while continuing your membership throughout your career can offer different benefits at different times.

Think about the professional organizations that are relevant to your future profession, department and position. Consider a wide variety. This will help ensure the time and energy you’re investing in them will provide you with the most well-rounded experiences and opportunities. Then list the ones you’re most interested in joining:

- AICPA

Connect via virtual communities

While they don’t necessarily offer the same experience of in-person groups, joining online professional and trade groups (through professional sites such as LinkedIn) can be very helpful. They provide great platforms for keeping up with industry news and trends, as well as making connections with people you might not otherwise have the opportunity to know (and potentially learn from).

2: NEVER STOP LEARNING

Attending conferences and other industry events is another great way to keep current with trends and emerging opportunities in your industry. You can easily find a slew of interesting and relevant conferences, seminars and courses (both in-person and online) through a quick web search. Consider some of your personal areas for improvement. For example, if your communication skills could use some improvement, look into opportunities for developing those.

Share your interest in continued learning with your supervisor or professor. He or she might be able to help you decide which event(s) would be most impactful and can potentially help you make it happen. If you’re already working, see if your company offers time off and/or training budgets as a way of encouraging employees to continue learning new skills. If they do, take full advantage, otherwise it’s like leaving money on the table—especially since the skills and knowledge you’ll gain will stay with you well beyond that particular job. If you’re still in school, be sure to research potential conferences thoroughly, as many offer discounted rates for students.

Spend some time exploring your options online. Check with your peers, mentors or colleagues to find out what opportunities they’re considering, recommend or have taken advantage of in the past. Then write them down below to make sure you’ve got a good mix of learning opportunities to explore:

- AICPA ENGAGE

INDUSTRY EVENTS

- AICPA’s Intro to Business Acquisitions webinar

SOFT-SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- Toastmasters

RELEVANT SOFTWARE TRAINING

- SQL

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE GROWTH

- Business law
3. GET SPECIALIZED

Expand your expertise while focusing on your skills. Do this by getting relevant certifications or choosing a more specialized field within your industry. Not only do many industries offer certifications and specializations to help you gain knowledge and various skill sets, taking advantage of them can also increase your appeal to potential employers—or even your current one.

Which specializations within your career or industry would you be interested in pursuing? Be sure to consider the benefits you’ll gain from the designation and weigh it against the cost and effort of pursuing it. After all, if you’re investing time and money into becoming more specialized, you’ll want to make sure what you’ll get out of it is worth it.

List out the specializations, certifications and/or designations you’re interested in, along with how long they will take to receive, how much they will cost and what you expect to get out of them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specializations &amp; designations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★ A Certified Information Technology Professional (CITP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Accredited in Business Valuation (ABV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Certified in Financial Forensics (CFF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ A Personal Financial Specialist (PFS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Certified in Entity and Intangible Valuations (CEIV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) designation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Learn more about specializing at ThisWayToCPA.com/specializations

Getting involved in groups and activities that extend your education and expand your network is key. In fact, they’re one of the differences between having a job versus building a career. Taking the time to invest in yourself can propel your career much further and faster than hard work alone.
Congratulations!

You’ve completed this entire booklet and are well on your way to a career that’s both challenging and rewarding. But don’t rest on your laurels just yet—you’ll have plenty of time for that once you’ve retired. Until then, keep this booklet and refer back to it every six months or so to make sure you’re staying on track. We also recommend starting a document on your computer so your career plan is always at the ready for any changes, adjustments or additions you need to make—just in case you accidentally misplace this workbook or simply run out of room for your ever-evolving career plan. To find additional career planning tools and resources in the meantime, visit ThisWayToCPA.com/CareerPlan.

Hungry for more career-boosting content? ThisWayToCPA.com has you covered. There you’ll find a plethora of valuable articles, tools and resources to help you on your path to CPA licensure, such as:

- AICPA Student Affiliate membership application, which allows you to join “the” professional home for CPAs and get lots of great benefits, all for free.
- CPA Profiles that give you a peek into the careers of people who are already doing what you want to do.
- The Find Your Fit tool, which can help you decide which path within accounting would be best for you.
- AICPA Legacy Scholarships information, detailing awards for CPA-bound AICPA Student Affiliate members from community college through graduate school.
- A National Scholarship Search database that includes a wide collection of accounting-related undergrad- and graduate-level scholarship opportunities across the U.S.
- An Interview simulation to help you better prepare for the real thing.
- The CPA Exam & Licensure Center, where you’ll find everything you need to know to help you plan for and pass the exam, and get ready to become a practicing CPA.