

## School is In: Inspiring the Next Generation of CPAs



With school in session for summer, and fall approaching in a few months, hundreds of thousands of students are embarking on their college careers. It's a date with destiny that will culminate in the answer to the question they've been asked a hundred times: "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

Where kids and young adults get their ideas for the occupation that will define their adult lives varies widely. Some follow the footsteps of parents or other family members. Some find themselves attracted to a profession through something they learned early in their education. Still others admire a public figure, CEO or fictional character who inspire their choices.

But if you want to help set yourself on a career path that is rewarding, interesting and lucrative, accounting is a natural suggestion. And pursuing the CPA credential will help keep you in demand well into the future.

Advantages to the accounting profession are numerous, and they only multiply for those who seek the CPA credential. If you're a student and considering possible career choices, here are a few things that should be pointed out about the advantages of becoming a CPA.

### You will do well for yourself.

One of the top reasons for students to choose a particular career path is salary, and being a CPA can offer an attractive compensation. New CPAs average \$66,000 annually, but experience and career path can drive that number much higher. In the U.S., average CPA salaries are well into the six figures. A wide variety of corporate leadership positions covet the CPA credential, many of them offering exceptional salaries, benefits and bonuses that compare favorably with those of any profession.

### Accounting is a growing profession, and CPAs are where the action is.

Demand and job stability are also attractive factors for students choosing an occupation, and accounting offers both. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the job outlook for accountants and auditors is projected to grow 10% faster than the average of all occupations through the year 2026. For employers, possessing the CPA credential represents additional mastery and adherence to an ethical code of conduct that makes for an excellent job candidate.

### The job prospects are diverse and interesting.

CPAs work in a variety of fields, and young people might not be aware of all the options that the profession affords. While auditing and tax are well-known to the general public, fewer are familiar with the roles CPAs can take in other areas. The Spencer Stuart Fortune 500 CFO Index for 2017 found more than a third of Fortune 500 CFOs possess the CPA designation. Additionally, the analysis reported one of the most common routes to a CFO position is an

accounting background. Emerging areas such as IT and cybersecurity are also fields that seek CPA expertise, meaning that prospects can be on the cutting edge of new technologies.

As education and business change to meet the needs of a world that looks vastly different from just a few decades ago, a number of new occupations are capturing interest as others wane. But accounting and the CPA designation have remained in demand and as reliable career choices, not just keeping pace with change, but also driving it.

Inspiring the next generation of CPAs is one of the most important aspects that accountants can do to contribute to the future of the profession. Students should be encouraged to consider the possibilities that an accounting career can offer. Students can check out [www.StartHereGoPlaces.com](http://www.StartHereGoPlaces.com), a fun, interactive site built to teach them about careers in accounting. College students or recent graduates should visit the website [www.ThisWayToCPA.com](http://www.ThisWayToCPA.com), a site created to help them on their way to CPA licensure. Students and graduates can also prepare for the CPA Exam by reviewing the [CPA Exam Blueprints](http://www.aicpa.org/becomeaCPA/CPAexam), on [www.aicpa.org/becomeaCPA/CPAexam](http://www.aicpa.org/becomeaCPA/CPAexam) which detail the content and skills eligible for testing on each section of the exam.

*Adapted from an article by Adam Junkroski, Lead Manager - Communications - Tax & PFP, Association of International Certified Professional Accountants*

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## 5 Interview Lines That Make Job Interviewers Cringe

Interviewing? Beware, here are some things not to ask. Don't ask how to get your interviewer's job, and other eye-rolling inducers.



By Alison Green

When you are interviewing for a job, the last thing you want to do is inadvertently say something that makes your interviewer cringe – and yet some of the most common lines used in interviews do exactly that. Here are five things you might be tempted to say that will make your interviewer internally roll her eyes. (So avoid the temptation!)

### 1. "I'm the perfect candidate for this job."

Maybe someone somewhere once said this and was correct, but most candidates who say this aren't. Strong candidates tend to know that they can't possibly tell from the outside if they're "perfect" for the job or not because what makes someone a good fit is nearly always more nuanced than what can be captured in a job description. Plus, as a candidate, you don't know what strengths the other candidates for the job might bring. So this kind of statement marks you as naïve at best, and can feel pretty awkward for an interviewer who knows that you're not quite as well-matched as you just announced you are.

### 2. "How do I get *your* job?"

Candidates who ask this generally think they're showing initiative and ambition, but it comes across as off-key. Interviewers want you to be enthusiastic about the job they're interviewing you for, not one several steps up. It can also make interviewers feel really awkward if the answer to the question is "Wait for me to leave or retire."

### 3. "I'm a perfectionist."

If you read any advice on interviewing, you've probably read that you should claim that your biggest weakness is that you're a perfectionist or you work too hard or have trouble leaving your work at the office at night. In other words, the advice goes, offer up something that the interviewer will think is a good thing and not much of a weakness at all. But this strategy has become so cliché that most interviewers recognize it easily and roll their eyes at it, and you'll look disingenuous or lacking in self-awareness. What's more, most of these answers don't actually reflect well on you anyway. For example, if say you're a perfectionist, you may be conveying that you spend energy on the wrong things, miss deadlines and struggle with productivity.

### 4. "I don't really have any questions."

You should have questions! Asking questions is how you determine if this job, this manager and this employer are right for you, and good interviewers want to see that you're thinking critically about those things. Hearing a candidate say that she doesn't have any questions about the job she's contemplating spending more than 40 hours a week at for the next several years is alarming for a hiring manager. It says that the candidate either isn't very interested in the job or isn't thinking deeply enough about it.

I sometimes hear candidates say that all the questions they had were already answered during the earlier part of the interview. While that may be true of all of your prepared questions, now that you've learned more you probably have different, more nuanced questions. Build on the conversation you've already had, and ask new questions. Don't squander the opportunity to better inform yourself about a job that you're seriously considering accepting. (Of course, if you've decided during the interview that

the job isn't right for you, it's fine not to ask additional questions. In that case, it makes sense to just let things wrap up.)

### 5. "So how did I do?"

Other versions of this question include "Is there any reason you don't think I'm a great fit for the job?" and even "Did I get the job?" These types of questions put your interviewer on the spot in an uncomfortable way. If the answer is "You did great," she may have no problem sharing that – but often the answer is something more like "Eh, you did OK but not great," or even "Not so good" and sometimes your interviewer may just want some time to process her thoughts or get input from others before reaching any conclusions. This kind of question comes across like you're trying to pin the interviewer down before she's ready to share her assessment, and making your interviewer feel awkward isn't the final impression you want to leave her with.

*Alison Green is a contributor for U.S. News and World Report.*

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[Amy.Merletti@aicpa-cima.com](mailto:Amy.Merletti@aicpa-cima.com)

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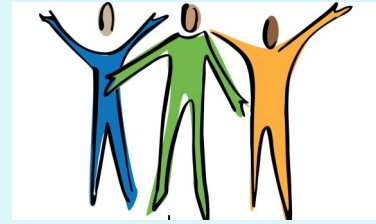


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If you plan to take the CPA Exam, or if you know someone ready to take the CPA Exam later this year, please pass along the latest [CPA Exam Blueprints, effective July 1, 2019](#). The Blueprints give readers useful information about the content, knowledge, and skills that are eligible for testing on each of the sections of the Uniform CPA Examination. To check out the CPA Exam Blueprints or to find out what's changed since the Blueprints were published last year in July 2018, check out this helpful [summary document](#), or go to <https://www.aicpa.org/becomeacpa/cpaexam.html>

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Approved by the Board of Examiners  
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Oct. 4, 2018  
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### Arkansas Society of CPAs

11300 Executive Center Drive  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72211  
501.664.8739  
800.482.8739 in Arkansas  
Fax: 501.664.8320  
Email: [rharris@arcpa.org](mailto:rharris@arcpa.org)

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