

The below talking points are provided to help frame your discussion with the high school students. Many of the students will not have a clear understanding of what accountants do; however many will have misconceptions about the profession. This is an *opportunity* to disprove several of the stereotypes while talking about how exciting and worthwhile the accounting profession is. The more positive stories and examples you share, the more engaged the students.

While it's easy to focus on the challenges (long hours, tough CPA Exam, etc.) please remember we are hoping to encourage these students to consider a career in accounting and keep your message positive -- truthful, but positive!

| Career Path |
|--|
| When did you decide to you wanted to become an accountant / CPA? |
| Where did you attend college? / What was your major? |
| Did you have any internships? |
| What was your first job out of college? |
| What was the biggest lesson you learned early in your career? |
| If applicable, what was your CPA Exam experience? <i>*Try to focus on the positives</i> |
| What is your position now? |
| Talk about your industry: What is public/private industry/GNP/etc. accounting? |
| Typical Day |
| What is a typical workday like for you? |
| How did the pandemic impact your organization? |
| Are you able to work from home? |
| Accounting Overview |
| What is the difference between an accountant and a CPA? |
| 150 hours of education, pass the CPA Exam, get your state's required work experience...become a CPA. |
| Accounting Competencies and Skills |
| What are the key skills you need as an accountant? |
| <i>Choose two or three of the following success skills and talk about how you used these in your career.</i> |
| 1) Decision Making |
| 2) Communication Skills |
| 3) Collaboration & Networking |
| 4) Leadership |
| 5) Critical Thinking |
| 6) Technology and Analytics |
| 7) Other |
| Perks |
| What are some of the perks of being an accountant? |
| <i>There are so many perks that come with being an accountant and this is a chance to show the students that accounting is more than taxes and calculations.</i> |
| 1) Travel: Many accountants are able to travel! |
| 2) High Salary: accountants frequently are frequently earning a competitive salary. Interns even get paid! |
| 3) Job Security: Even in uncertain times and a down economy, Accountants are in demand. |
| 4) Teamwork: accountants often work in teams. |
| Flexibility |
| Share a few examples of the flexibility that accountants have. |
| 1) Work Anywhere: Accountants are needed in all business. Give a few examples of what kinds of businesses accountants can work in. |
| 2) Open Doors: The CPA license earns a CPA instant credibility. If applicable, talk about how your CPA license has benefited you. |

* Modified from Talking Points developed by the Indiana CPA Society (INCPAS). Our gratitude for their willingness to share resources developed for the INCPAS CPA Week, after which Accounting Opportunities Week is modeled.