

Addressing Global Accounting Talent Shortages



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Presented by
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Donny C. Shimamoto, CPA/CITP, CGMA

- Donny is the Inspiration Architect for the Center for Accounting Transformation. The Center is a mind trust of innovative thinkers and experts who help enable transformation by guiding accountants, auditors, and tax practitioners through the adoption and changes required to step into the future of the accounting profession. Its research-enabled courses, coaching, and competency development accelerate business transformation to #improvetheworld.
- Donny is also the founder and managing director of IntrapriseTechKnowlogies LLC, an advisory-focused CPA firm providing innovation acceleration and business transformation services for small businesses, middle market organizations, and nonprofits. Donny is a recognized thought leader and educator in the accounting technology, IT risk management, and performance management areas.
- Donny is co-chair of the National Conference of Lawyers and CPAs, was past chairman of the AICPA's Information Management and Technology Assurance Exec Committee, and is a former member of its Governing Council, Assurance Services Exec Committee, and numerous other AICPA committees and task forces. Donny has been recognized as one of the Top Thought Leaders in Public Accounting by CPA Practice Advisor since 2012, Top 100 Most Influential People in Accounting (2013/2014/2017-2023) by Accounting Today, received the 2009-2010 President's Award from the Hawaii Society of CPAs, was named to CPA Technology Advisor's 40 Under 40 list in 2007 & 2009 & 2014, and was also a Hawaii Top High Tech Leader in 2004.



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Rick Telberg, Founder, CEO, CPA Trendlines



Rick Telberg is Founder & CEO of [Bay Street Group LLC](#). A veteran analyst, advisor, commentator, editor, and publisher, he brings a unique background and perspective to research and advisory services for the professional services community.

Rick may well be the accounting profession's most widely-known commentator through his long associations with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Accounting Today magazine, and today, CPA Trendlines.

As an expert in management, marketing, media and e-commerce, Rick has served as Senior Editorial Director of Pro2Net Corp., now [www.smartpros.com](#), and as Director of Online Content at CPA2Biz, [www.cpa.com](#). Previously, he served as the early Editor-in-Chief of Accounting Today and as Vice President/Group Publisher at Thomson Financial (now SourceMedia /Arizent), overseeing Practical Accountant, Accounting Technology, and what is now AccountingToday.com.

Rick was presented with a special citation by the National Society of Accountants for service to the profession and has served on a variety of boards and steering committees, including BKR International and the IBM Small Business Advisory Council. He is a graduate of New York University.

At CPA Trendlines, Rick has gathered an elite team of professionals, including Glenn Alan Cheney, Beth Bellor and John Covaleski as senior editors and research analysts, Thomas Kothman as marketing director and strategic advisor, Jackson Whelan in digital strategies, and Rick Whelan of DittoDoesDesign.com as art director and brand guardian.



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Polls: Audience Demographics



- Size of organization
 - Solo (1)
 - Micro (2-10)
 - X-Small (11-20)
 - Small (21-100)
 - Medium (101-250)
 - Large (251+)
- Role in Organization
 - Lead Executive
 - Executive Leadership
 - Dept Director/Manager
 - Dept Staff
 - Consultant/Vendor
- Area of practice
 - Accounting technology & system implementations
 - Audit, assurance, and risk management
 - Human resources and talent management
 - Financial reporting and accounting
 - Information technology and cybersecurity
 - Management consulting (not related to other areas in list)
 - Tax and financial planning

Choose one from each set of options that best matches how you view your organization and your role at work.

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Are current staffing strategies successful?



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- Of the overall responses (n=187), there is limited success with staffing strategies:
 - 24% said “successful” or “best in class”
 - 57% said “ok but could be better”
- When we filter for only Successful Organizations:
 - 21% said “best in class”
 - 58% said “ok but could be better”
- Reasons cited for success:
 - Low to no turnover
 - Easy to find talent and fill vacant positions

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Today's Agenda



- Are current staffing strategies successful?
- How to improve staffing strategies
- Resources

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Are current staffing strategies successful?



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- Of the overall responses (n=187), there is limited success with staffing strategies:
 - 24% “successful” or “best in class”
 - 57% “ok but could be better”
 - When filtered for only Successful Organizations (n=77):
 - 21% “successful” or “best in class”
 - 58% “ok but could be better”
 - 17% “bad, needs significant rework”
 - 4% “needs complete revamp”
- Why do they think their staffing strategies are successful?
- Recruiting
 - Easy to find talent and fill vacant positions
 - Internship programs that led to full-time hires
 - Great culture
 - Retention
 - Low to no turnover
 - High staff engagement
 - Effective staffing management
 - Great culture

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How to improve staffing strategies



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- Even those who reported high success in staffing thought they could improve more.

- Increased visibility of firm
- Dedicated recruiter
- Overstaff for growth capacity
- Non-traditional hires: non-CPAs and non-accountants
- Improved compensation & benefits
- Increase outsourcing

Recruiting

- Leverage technology
- Structured people development
- Upskilling for faster career track and industry specialization

Retention

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Poll: staffing strategy improvement guidance



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- Which improvements do you need more guidance on?
 - a. Increased visibility of firm
 - b. Dedicated recruiter
 - c. Overstaff for growth capacity
 - d. Non-traditional hires: non-CPAs and non-accountants
 - e. Improved compensation & benefits
 - f. Increase outsourcing
 - g. Leverage technology
 - h. Structured people development
 - i. Upskilling for faster career track and industry specialization

Select all that apply

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What strategies are people using?



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- Internal
 - Hiring undergrads
 - Hiring graduate school
 - Hiring assoc/trade school
 - Hiring interns
 - Exp hires for reduced ramp up
 - Exp hires for specialization
 - Domestic remote hires
 - Building offshore team
- External
 - Outsource onshore
 - Outsource offshore
 - Handoff to Contractors
 - Handoff to Experts
 - Staff Sharing via Association
- Workload Reduction
 - Automation
 - Work Optimization
 - Discontinue Services
 - Outsource Accounting Operations
- Demand Reduction
 - Cull Non-Niche Clients
 - Cull Problem Clients
 - Cull Clients Better Served Elsewhere
 - Increase Minimum Price
 - Increase Price for Low-Value Clients
 - Accepting Clients By Referral Only
 - Paid Upfront Pre-Assessment

● Green = strategies used by over 50% of respondents

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Which internal strategies were effective?



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Effective strategies

- 83% hiring Bachelor's degree holders for entry level
- 82% hiring Associate's/trade school for less complex work
- 79% hiring interns for less complex work
- 69% hiring Master's for entry level

Note: Percentages represent those responding "effective", "good as-is", and "good but needs refinement"

These are also valid strategies but appeared to be underutilized:

- Hiring experienced workers to reduce ramp up
- Hiring experienced hires for their specialized knowledge
- Hiring remote workers from areas of our country that we don't have offices in
- Building our own offshore staffing capabilities

What valid strategies are underutilized?



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Internal

- Hiring undergrads
- Hiring graduate school
- Hiring assoc/trade school
- Hiring interns
- Exp hires for reduced ramp up
- Exp hires for specialization
- Domestic remote hires
- Building offshore team

External

- Outsource onshore
- Outsource offshore
- Handoff to Contractors
- Handoff to Experts
- Staff Sharing via Association

Workload Reduction

- Automation
- Work Optimization
- Discontinue Services
- Outsource Accounting Operations

Demand Reduction

- Cull Non-Niche Clients
- Cull Problem Clients
- Cull Clients Better Served Elsewhere
- Increase Minimum Price
- Increase Price for Low-Value Clients
- Accepting Clients By Referral Only
- Paid Upfront Pre-Assessment

- Green = strategies used by over 50% of respondents
- Yellow = strategies not being used

What strategies are easily implemented?

- Internal
 - Hiring undergrads
 - Hiring graduate school
 - Hiring assoc/trade school
 - Hiring interns
 - Exp hires for reduced ramp up
 - Exp hires for specialization
 - Domestic remote hires
 - Building offshore team
 - External
 - Outsource onshore
 - Outsource offshore
 - Handoff to Contractors
 - Handoff to Experts
 - Staff Sharing via Association
 - Workload Reduction
 - Automation
 - Work Optimization
 - Discontinue Services
 - Outsource Non-Core Operations
 - Demand Reduction
 - Cull Non-Niche Clients
 - Cull Problem Clients
 - Cull Clients Better Served Elsewhere
 - Increase Minimum Price
 - Increase Price for Low-Value Clients
 - Accepting Clients By Referral Only
 - Paid Upfront Pre-Assessment
- **Green** = strategies used by over 50% of respondents
- **Yellow** = strategies not being used
- **Red** = Lower effort strategies that can have high impact

Poll: staffing strategies guidance

- Which strategies do you need more guidance on?
 - a. Outsource offshore
 - b. Automation
 - c. Work Optimization
 - d. Discontinue Services
 - e. Cull Non-Niche Clients
 - f. Cull Problem Clients
 - g. Cull Clients Better Served Elsewhere
 - h. Increase Minimum Price
 - i. Paid Upfront Pre-Assessment

Select all that apply

Outsourcing Offshore



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- How the strategy works
 - Define the roles & responsibilities of the person you need
 - Contact an offshoring vendor(s) for quote(s)
 - Evaluate quotes and potential candidates
 - Onboard them as you would a regular staff
- Points to consider
 - Do you get to meet the staff working for you?
 - Does vendor facilitate selection or are they just recruiting?
 - Does vendor provide training and supervision of staff?
 - Does vendor provide equipment/address cybersecurity?
 - Who is responsible for retraining when there is turnover?

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Workload Reduction



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- Key strategies
 - **Automation** = use technology to reduce the amount to manual tasks
 - **Process Optimization** = streamline processes, remove excess or unnecessary steps
 - **Discontinue Services** = discontinue offering services that don't have critical mass
 - **Outsource Non-Core Operations** = outsource the parts of your operation that are not core to (doesn't differentiate) your services

In a time of tight staffing, rather than fighting for the few graduates or experienced hires, reduce your need for them.

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Demand Reduction



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● Key strategies

- **Cull Non-Niche Clients** = outplace clients that don't match your specialization or industry niches
- **Cull Problem Clients** = outplace clients who the staff always complain out, or who are slow payers
- **Cull Clients Better Served Elsewhere** = outplace clients that may require specialization or nice services, or clients that need more attention that you don't have the time (or want to) to give more time to
- **Increase Minimum Price** = often will lead to clients leaving on their own; if they stay, immediate increase in profitability
- **Paid Upfront Pre-Assessment** = filter out clients who don't see the value in your services/expertise

In a time of tight staffing, rather than fighting for the few graduates or experienced hires, reduce your need for them.

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Poll: More Information



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- What would you like more information about?
 - a. Courses to help me implement staffing strategies
 - b. How to take the staffing strategies survey
 - c. A copy of final staffing strategies research report
 - d. Other Center for Accounting Transformation programs
 - e. Other CPA Trendlines programs

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Thank you for your attention and participation!



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