



# VSCPA RECRUITMENT GUIDE

Introduction 3

Direct Recruiting 4

- Online job boards 4
- Social media 6
- Recruiting for diversity 8
- Student recruitment 10
- Engaging professional recruiters 14

Alternative Staffing Solutions 16

- Outsourcing 16
- Creative hiring 18
- Offshoring 20
- Upskilling 22

Hiring 24

- Investigate your hiring practices 24
- Enhance your interview process 26
- Determine the best assessment option 28
- Onboard with ease 30

INTRODUCTION

If you think it's harder to find talent, you're not alone. It really is.

[December 2022 employment statistics](#) from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reveal the unemployment rate for workers in management, business, and financial operations is 1.8%, contrasted with the overall national unemployment rate of 3.5%. [Virginia's is even lower at 2.8%](#). Essentially, nearly everyone who wants a job in accounting *has* a job. That makes the recruitment field uber-competitive in a candidate-driven market.

But the job market is just one reason accounting is feeling the squeeze. While hiring needs aren't disappearing, accounting graduates are. The AICPA's [2021 Trends Report](#) reveals the number of students graduating with bachelor's degrees in accounting has been decreasing since 2015–2016. Master's degree completions dropped by 8.4% from 2018–2019 to 2019–2020. The AICPA also estimates that 75% of current public accounting CPAs will retire within the next 15 years.

The accounting profession is responding to these challenges in full force. There are dozens of programs to help fill the CPA

pipeline at the national level among organizations like the AICPA and National Association of Black Accountants, as well as the state CPA societies. [The VSCPA has scholarships and several other programs](#) designed to attract students to accounting. Even the CPA Exam is changing. Prospective CPAs will encounter a revised Exam in 2024 due to the [CPA Evolution](#) initiative, with more analysis and technology as testable areas.

Despite these challenges, accountants are *thriving*. There are more opportunities in the profession than ever, both for CPA firms and CPAs working in governments, nonprofits, corporate finance and education. Pathways to unique sub-specialties are opening in areas like environmental, social, and governance (ESG) audits, financial planning & analysis (FP&A), cannabis taxation, strategic advisory services, and so much more.

It's a great time to be a CPA! Now, you just need the tools to grab the best talent to take your organization to the next level.

THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU:

Maximize direct recruitment models.

- ✓ Use online job boards and social media the right way.
- ✓ Make meaningful connections with students and new accountants.
- ✓ Increase diverse hiring.
- ✓ See what professional recruiters can offer.

Revamp your hiring process.

- ✓ Ensure your hiring practices and interview processes are helping you, not hindering.
- ✓ Determine the best assessments for job candidates.
- ✓ Design an onboarding program that works.

Explore alternative staffing solutions.

- ✓ Dive into the worlds of outsourcing and offshoring.
- ✓ Design your positions for creative hires and consider remote talent.
- ✓ Find your newest talent sitting right in your office.

NEARLY EVERYONE WHO WANTS A JOB IN ACCOUNTING HAS A JOB. THAT MAKES THE RECRUITMENT FIELD UBER-COMPETITIVE IN A CANDIDATE-DRIVEN MARKET.

# DIRECT RECRUITING

## Online job boards

### Craft a compelling job ad

If you've ever placed a job ad online and only received a trickle of candidates, it may be time to review what you're posting and when. Online career centers and job boards can certainly match qualified candidates with the right position, but to ensure your job is enticing, you need to get the most out of your post. Check out these [tips from Indeed](#):

- 1. Write a job title and an engaging lead.** Clearly define the title of the position and remember, you are *selling* the job to candidates. Make it stand out. Don't use cute titles or buzzwords in the job title; people are looking for specific roles such as "accounting manager." Include any enticing job perks up front.
- 2. Introduce your company.** Detail any information a potential candidate needs to know.
- 3. Include the job description.** But resist the urge to write out every single requirement.
- 4. Spell out the top benefits.** List five or six reasons why someone should apply.
- 5. Include location.** If you offer relocation assistance, state it here. If the job is remote or hybrid, make sure it's spelled out.
- 6. Close with contact and application info.** Include defined steps for the application process and set a clear deadline.
- 7. Proofread.** It sounds mundane, but typos and errors in your ad make your company look sloppy. To attract the best talent, put your best foot forward.

#### READ THESE

[Job posting guide: How to prep and post your job](#) (Indeed)

[How to write a job posting](#) (Insperity)

[5 reasons your job posting isn't generating enough applicants \(and what you can do about it\)](#) (CareerBuilder)

#### RESOURCES

[VSCPA Career Center](#)

[AICPA & CIMA Global Career Hub](#)

[CareerBuilder](#)

[Indeed](#)

[Workable](#)

[Glassdoor](#)

### Did you know?

More than 70% of job searches start on Google.



VSCPA  
MEMBER  
BENEFIT

#### How to... Use the VSCPA Career Center

Using the VSCPA Career Center is quick and easy — and members save! (Get a \$100 discount on a 30-day job post.)

**Step 1:** Visit <https://careercenter.vscpa.com>. You can also access the Career Center via the VSCPA website. On [vscpa.com](https://vscpa.com), click Career Center (center of page).

**Step 2:** Click "Post a Job" (center of page).

**Step 3:** From here, log in with your VSCPA credentials or create an account.

**Step 4:** Once logged in, you'll choose the job post offering that best suits your needs.

**Step 5:** After choosing your package, scroll down the page to fill out all the necessary information about you, your company, and the position.

**Step 6:** Scroll to the bottom of the page, click Next, and continue through to the payment page.

**Step 7:** Your job post is now live! Be sure to engage with your candidates by visiting the "My Account" section. You can find this on the Career Center homepage — <https://careercenter.vscpa.com> — and clicking Employers (top right corner) > My Account.

**BONUS:** Your ad will also appear in the Career Center Jobflash email to all VSCPA members, which goes out every other week.



# DIRECT RECRUITING

## Social media

You've created a compelling employment ad and job description, and you've posted your opportunity online. Now what? You can't ignore the power of social media, with [79% of job seekers likely to use social for their job search](#); that figure goes up to 86% for younger generations. Certain social media platforms, and LinkedIn in particular, can help connect you with your next hire.

Indeed offers [six benefits of using social media for your recruitment efforts](#):

1. Educates candidates about the company.
2. Facilitates networking with industry professionals.
3. Helps recruiters interact with a wider assortment of candidates.
4. Allows recruiters to learn more about candidates.
5. Offers candidates the opportunity to interact with current employees and give a glimpse into your company culture.
6. Reduces hiring costs.

## Did you know?

73% of job seekers between the ages of 18 and 34 found their last job through a social media platform.



Try this...

### Optimize your social media for recruitment



Before going all-in on posting all your open jobs on social media, make sure your company does its due diligence first.

- ✓ Determine which social media sites you want to use for recruitment (this could vary based on the job type).
- ✓ Ensure your brand is consistent across all platforms, including logo, brand colors, voice and presence.
- ✓ Review the description of your company on all platforms and correct for inconsistencies.
- ✓ While you're at it, check your website and make sure a prospective employee will find exactly what they need while researching your company.
- ✓ Create a plan for which types of jobs are posted and when and stay consistent. Because many candidates interact with social media via mobile devices, determine the best times of day to post (such as before or after normal working hours or during lunch).
- ✓ Coordinate with your HR team or an outsourced HR professional to ensure your legal bases are covered.
- ✓ Streamline the résumé submission process so application links all point back to one place. This saves hiring managers time so they don't have to check multiple platforms for résumés.

## LinkedIn: To pay or not to pay?

LinkedIn offers a wealth of opportunities for you to find great hires. As the premier platform for professional social media engagement, many corporations post jobs through LinkedIn in addition to online career hubs.

LinkedIn's job posting options are extremely customizable, and the platform offers everything from free options (currently all users can post one job for free) up to robust talent hubs and recruitment systems. Recruiter Lite is a streamlined recruiting tool that allows you post jobs on a smaller scale. There is no "right way" to use LinkedIn. You must [review all the options](#) and determine what's best for your organization; LinkedIn will walk you through each option based on your needs and goals.

LinkedIn also has [recruitment marketing options](#) you can add on, such as career pages, which help your jobs stand out from the competition and reach new candidates. These can also work well for seasonal hiring.

Deciding whether your organization wants to invest in a paid version of LinkedIn depends on how much you will use all the tools. If you are larger and have many jobs, it may be worth it to invest. If you only have an opportunity once a year, Recruiter Lite, or forgoing a paid version and using free options, may be better.

## What about the other platforms?

While LinkedIn may be the juggernaut, organizations are also posting on other platforms too, like Facebook, Twitter and even TikTok and Instagram.

[Facebook offers a great opportunity to brand your employment](#), according to [recruiting.com](#).

You can post pictures of your workspace, employee testimonials, and summaries of your company culture.

You can share and post jobs as well, but don't forget to show the true colors of your brand. Likewise, Twitter can be an easy way to post open jobs that link directly to your employment ad. [Recruiting.com recommends](#) that before you do, make sure you have an active account and are proactively growing your followers.

Several accounting firms have started accounts like @lifeatdhg and @lifeatrmsus, separate from their main corporate accounts, to highlight and showcase their company cultures and employees.

### READ THESE

[How to use social media for recruitment](#) (Indeed)

[5 tips for recruiting with social media checklist](#) (CareerBuilder)

[Recruiting candidates on mobile devices](#) (CareerBuilder)

[Free vs. paid hiring tools on LinkedIn](#) (LinkedIn Talent Solutions)

[Getting the most out of LinkedIn: 7 tips for finance executives](#) (Robert Half)

[5 ways to leverage Facebook for recruiting](#) (recruiting.com)

[How to use Twitter for recruiting](#) (recruiting.com)

[Using your CPA firm's website as a recruiting tool](#) (Terrier Tenacity)



# DIRECT RECRUITING

## Recruiting for diversity

As you continue to attract the best and brightest new talent, you can't overlook the importance of helping to build a diverse and vibrant accounting profession. A lack of diversity in accounting is not new, but a concerted effort by the entire profession is moving the needle.

The [AICPA's 2021 Trends Report](#), which investigates the state of the CPA pipeline, found that hiring of new, diverse bachelor's and master's degree graduates increased by almost five percentage points during the 2019–20 and 2020–21 academic years. A wide array of programs on the state and national levels are making an impact, but organizations must make diverse hiring a priority if they want to continue the upward trend.

Consider this, from CareerBuilder: "If you're serious about increasing diversity on your teams and making your workplace more inclusive, you have to meet candidates where they are — from professional groups to niche job sites."

## Find accounting talent at HBCUs

Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) provide an opportunity for companies to directly connect with talented students eager to make career connections. The following historically Black Virginia universities offer accounting programs:

- Hampton University
- Norfolk State University
- Virginia State University
- Virginia Union University

CPA firms and corporate finance teams can reach out to HBCU deans and alumni networks to discover the best ways to meet students. The VSCPA [CPAs in the Classroom](#) program also provides opportunities for CPAs to speak at HBCU club meetings or in classrooms. See page 10 for more information on the program.

## Tailor your outreach

Analyze what job boards you typically use and which professional organizations to whom you usually reach out. To beef up diverse hiring, consider a wide variety of organizations with unique perspectives.

- [Accounting diversity organizations](#)
- Diversity-related job boards, such as [Diversity Employers](#), [Black Enterprise](#), [Black Career Network](#), and [HBCU Career Center](#)
- [8 great job boards for diverse professionals](#)
- Black chambers of commerce, such as [Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce](#) and [Central Virginia African American Chamber of Commerce](#)
- Veteran job board, such as [MilitaryHire](#) or [HiringOurHeroes](#)
- [Professional women's organizations](#)

### READ THESE

[Carving a diverse path: How one firm developed a program to develop and advance a diverse workforce](#) (Disclosures)

[Diversity is critical to the future of the CPA profession](#) (AICPA)

[Data for diversity: How to measure your DEI performance](#) (Robert Half)

[Improve candidate sourcing to build more inclusive teams](#) (Career Builder)

[9 tips on finding more diverse candidates for your company's open positions](#) (Recruiter.com)

[Hiring veterans? What employers need to know](#) (Business News Daily)

How to...

## Design your hiring process to attract diverse talent

Diversity will not happen on its own, and the recruitment process needs to thoughtfully take diversity and inclusion into consideration. The [Diversifying Global Accounting Talent Report](#), from IMA, CalCPA and the International Federation of Accountants, offers these actionable practices your organization can begin implementing:

- ✓ Require a demographically diverse candidate pool prior to advancing to the interview stage of the recruitment process.
- ✓ Proactively establish a database of (or file of résumés for) demographically diverse candidates for key disciplines that can be searched alongside other databases when vacancies occur.
- ✓ Anonymize résumés prior to having them reviewed to minimize the effect of bias.
- ✓ Require a diverse candidate selection panel, with multiple interviewees from diverse demographic backgrounds, and institute mandatory diversity training for interviewers and search committees.
- ✓ Regularly review demographic composition of candidates hired and implement an independent review process to assess levels of diversity in employee selection.
- ✓ Institute mandatory training for those serving on interview panels or candidate search committees.
- ✓ Host an independent review of comp packages to eliminate disparities and ensure unfair compensation distribution across demographic groups.

### RESOURCES

[VSCPA diversity, equity & inclusion resource center](#)

[DEI initiatives for increasing the CPA pipeline](#) (VSCPA)

[Accounting careers awareness program](#) from [NABA Richmond](#)

[A CPA diversity report: Uncovering the barriers to success](#) (Illinois CPA Society)

[Diversifying global accounting talent: Actionable solutions for progress](#)

[Accounting diversity organizations](#)



## Did you know?

One in four job seekers say DEI messages published by employers would make them more likely to apply to that company.

# DIRECT RECRUITING

## Student recruitment

Gone are the days of finding bright new hires via a single college career fair. Today's students are seeking their first jobs with engaging, innovative firms — even watching companies' social media feeds to understand an organization's culture before they interview. Today's businesses seeking new accountants should cast their net far and wide, using tried-and-true tactics but also experimenting with innovative approaches.

### 5 actionable ways to attract new grads

A [2022 VSCPA survey of accounting students](#) (PDF) asked them what they really want from their first employers. Here are five ways your organization can take action now; for more in-depth explanation on each, check out this [tipsheet](#) (PDF).

1. Analyze the salary market and be prepared to be competitive. The [VSCPA 2022 Compensation & Benefits Survey](#) can help.
2. Develop ways to accommodate new CPAs who want hybrid work options.
3. Don't overlook smaller schools and historically black colleges and universities.
4. Make your hiring process tight and error-free.
5. Create clear steps on how your organization helps new hires sit for the CPA Exam.

### Build your internship program

VSCPA member Gabriele Lingenfelter, CPA, a former accounting educator at Christopher Newport University, says the increased competition for top-quality accounting students has driven CPA firm recruiters to hire college juniors, sophomores and even freshmen as interns.

Capitalize on school ties to increase the visibility of your internship program. You can even coordinate with colleges and universities to see if an internship can qualify for college credit. You can [post internships in the VSCPA Career Center](#); [Handshake](#) can connect employers with students nationwide.

### Make a classroom connection

If you'd like to directly connect with students and promote the benefits of the CPA profession, why not go right to the source? The VSCPA [CPAs in the Classroom](#) program helps members share their career passion with middle, high school and college students. We've got materials to help, from talking points to a PowerPoint presentation.

Some CPAs are even making their mark by taking on adjunct professorships. VSCPA member Jessica McClain, CPA, an instructor for Nichols College, says [teaching allows her to show students the wide job responsibilities of CPAs](#). "We're doing more than just being an accountant and having many titles at all the different organizations that we work for. We need to show that."



# 2022 Accounting Student Insights

What do Virginia accounting students want? Forty students responded to the VSCPA 2022 Student Survey with insights on their career aspirations.

## Remote Work, Please!



51% of students want the ability to work remotely post-graduation, whether full-time or with a hybrid schedule.



### Top 3 Job Priorities

1. Salary
2. Benefits
3. Company culture



### Top 4 Job Search Challenges

1. Making connections
2. Slow response times
3. Lack of entry-level positions
4. Difficulty meeting recruiters in a virtual world.

## Accounting Students are Future CPAs



Over 90% plan to sit for the CPA Exam.

# DIRECT RECRUITING

## Student recruitment

### Meet your match at a career fair

Policies around typical career fairs and campus outreach opportunities have changed as in-person events modified during the pandemic. If your organization has not had success at a tried-and-true career fair, consider visiting fairs beyond business schools. Your next great hire may be majoring in technology but interested in accounting.

Virtual career fairs are taking off post-pandemic. [One respondent to the VSCPA 2022 student survey said](#), “As someone who has hearing loss, it’s easier for me if I can do a virtual fair. It depends upon the design of the fair. The few I’ve been to are where you can sign up for one-on-one sessions. I have a dedicated time; I’m not waiting in line with 50 other people.”

In an article on [finding success with virtual campus recruiting](#), the Journal of Accountancy has a few recommendations, from using technology creatively to knowing each school’s procedures and capabilities. Remember: Messaging at career fairs is important! You can try to connect

with students in multiple ways, but if you aren’t “selling” your organization or its job opportunities well, you will not be successful. Make sure you and your employees are on the same page about what you have to offer and how to communicate it.

You can find career fairs from multiple sources. Here are a few ideas:

- ✓ Reach out to career centers at your target colleges and universities and get on the list.
- ✓ Leverage your staff’s alma maters (newer staff may still have connections with accounting professors and career advisors).
- ✓ Lean in to personal connections at smaller institutions that may not have large career fairs.
- ✓ Sign up for [Handshake](#).
- ✓ Ditch the career fair altogether and invite students to attend a community service event sponsored by your organization.



### Try this... Innovative student recruitment ideas [Learn more about each idea.](#)

- ✓ Externships
- ✓ Leadership conferences
- ✓ Case competitions
- ✓ Develop relationships

### RESOURCES

- [Internship portal on VSCPA Career Center](#)
- [Virginia Accounting Insights Toolkit](#) (VSCPA)
- [Handshake for employers](#)
- [CPAs in the Classroom](#)

### READ THESE

- [What new grads really want](#) (Disclosures)
- [Entice them early](#) (Disclosures)
- [Powerful internship programs for smaller firms](#) (Journal of Accountancy)
- [6 tips for recruiting today’s top accounting students](#) (CPA Practice Advisor)
- [Find success with virtual campus recruiting](#) (Journal of Accountancy)
- [Back to class](#) (Disclosures)
- [Adjunct teaching opportunities for CPAs](#) (The CPA Journal)



### How to... Find interns using the VSCPA Career Center

Using the VSCPA Internship Center is quick and easy — and members can post for free!

**Step 1:** Go to <https://vscpainternships.careerwebsite.com>. You can also access the Internship Center via the VSCPA website. On [vscpa.com](#), click Career Center (center of page) > Internships (top right corner).

**Step 2:** Click “Post an Internship” (center of page).

**Step 3:** On this page, either log in or create an account.

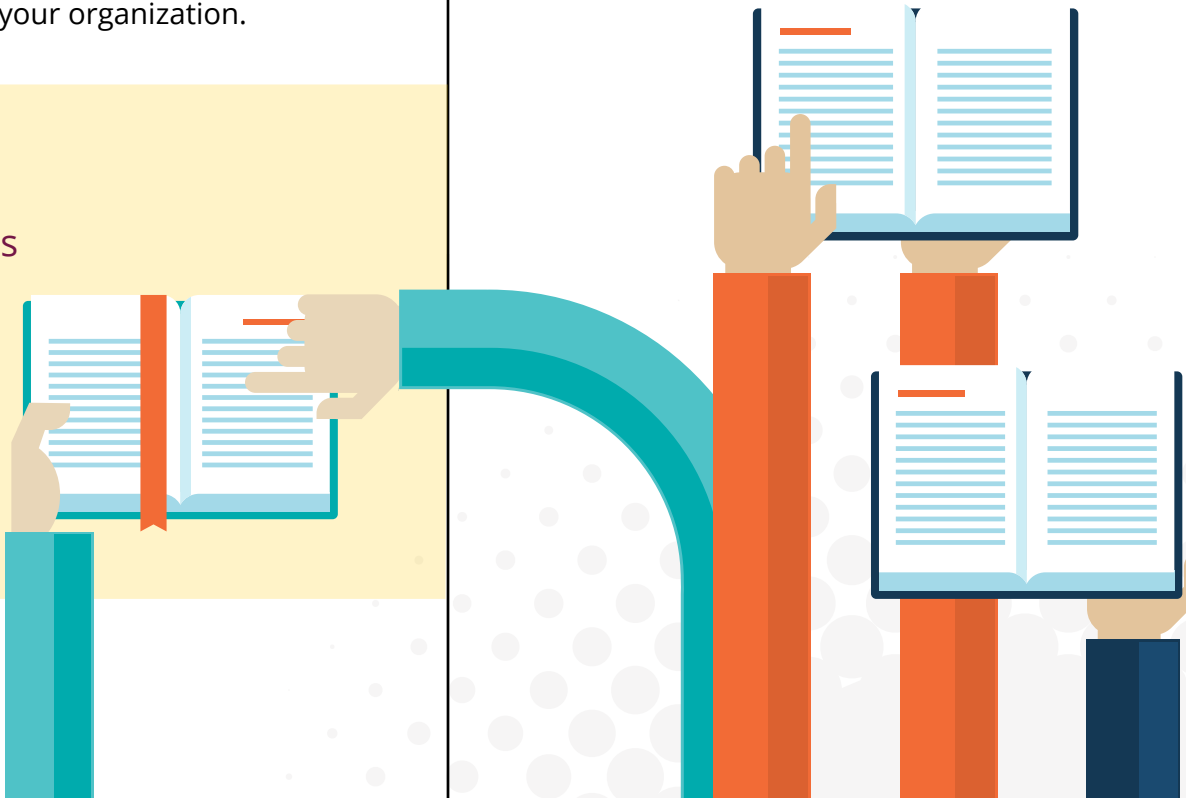
**Step 4:** Now that you’re logged in, you’ll land on your internship dashboard. Click “Post an Internship.”

**Step 5:** Choose the internship post offering you’d like and fill out the necessary information.

**Step 6:** Scroll all the way down and continue through the internship creation process, all the way to the payment page. For members, you’ll continue through the steps with a \$0 balance.

**Step 7:** Once your payment is made, your internship is live, and you’ll land back on your internship dashboard.

**Step 8:** Be sure to engage with your internship posting and candidates by visiting the “My Account” section you clicked on previously.





# DIRECT RECRUITING

## Engaging professional recruiters

As the hiring landscape gets more competitive, many organizations turn to professional recruiters for their market expertise, connections, interview prowess, and cost savings. Recruiting firms offer valuable services, but many companies don't fully understand their daily activities and responsibilities.

### HOW RECRUITERS WORK

Recruiters identify prospects to inquire about their background, interest in a new opportunity, qualifications, technical expertise in specialized industries, accomplishments, financial expectations, and career goals. They conduct in-depth interviews to further assess the candidate's qualifications and overall suitability to the position and to ensure a long-term match with the company. After this interview and with the permission of the candidate, the candidate's background and résumé are submitted to the client for review. Recruiters also perform reference checks, résumé formatting, client interview preparation and debriefing, as well as post-placement check-ins.

### WHY A RECRUITER CAN HELP

Recruiters often have a vast network of prospective talent — and those prospects *aren't* the ones actively searching for a new job or reading job ads. Recruiters have access to niche skillsets, specialized backgrounds, and a large, passive talent pool.

In addition, recruiters can fill a void for CPA firms and corporate accounting teams by taking on the burden of much of the hiring process, leaving managers to do their jobs of operating and growing their businesses — not sifting through countless résumés.

### READ THESE

[Help really, really wanted](#) (Disclosures)

[What to know about working with recruiters](#) (Journal of Accountancy)

[5 tips for choosing and working with a recruiter](#) (Newsweek)

### RESOURCES

[Randstad](#)

[TalentSource360](#)

[Robert Half](#)

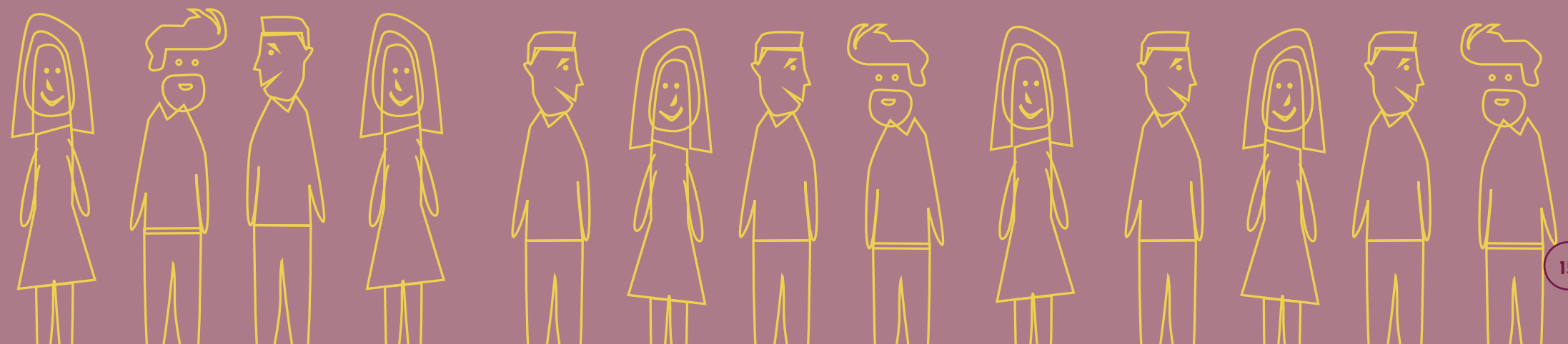
[Vaco](#)

### How to...

### Get the most out of your recruiting engagement

Before going all-in on posting all your open jobs on social media, make sure your company does its due diligence first.

- ✓ Find a recruiter with deep experience working in accounting and finance.
- ✓ Listen to the recruiter's realistic feedback on the job description, compensation, market, and viability of finding a candidate.
- ✓ Ask how a particular role can get the most attention.
- ✓ Be transparent throughout the search process and let recruiters know if multiple firms are working on the hire.
- ✓ Make sure you are responsive and keep an open dialogue with your recruiting partners. Regular communication on the recruiter's techniques, possible candidates, etc., will make the arrangement mutually beneficial for both recruiter and client.
- ✓ Make sure the recruiter will interview and vet all candidates before presenting them.
- ✓ Negotiate payment terms, either a pre-arranged fee up front or a percentage of the hire's salary.
- ✓ Ensure there is a guarantee that the candidate will stay for an agreed-upon period, or the recruiter will return the fee and/or work on a replacement.





# ALTERNATIVE STAFFING SOLUTIONS

## Outsourcing

As the world of work rapidly changes, many organizations are discovering it's easier and cheaper to outsource certain functions rather than hire full-time, in-house employees. Outsourcing can be a tremendous value — it doesn't overburden and burn out employees during peak times, allows organizations to access specialty skills to support overall growth, and gives countless accounting and finance professionals an opportunity to contribute in a way that fits their lifestyles.

"Though hiring remains strong, the increased use of consulting and interim solutions will continue," [writes VSCPA member Brandon Pope, CPA](#). "The pandemic created more choices for professionals, and now more than ever, those professionals are choosing the idea of flexibility and balance." Here are a few types of outsourced talent.

### CONSULTANTS, CONTRACTORS AND FREELANCERS

In the past few years, more accounting professionals are becoming interested in offering their services as self-employed independent contractors in the United States. These are experienced professionals, and they can provide complex advisory, audit and tax services as they often worked for accounting firms earlier in their careers. Hiring independent contractors could be a solution for firms who can't find the full-time talent they need to fulfill all client needs.

Freelance management companies can help connect businesses with consultants; professional recruiting firms often offer these services (see page 14.) You will pay an hourly rate to the company, which then pays the employee and takes a percentage as their fee. Smaller firms that cannot afford to use a company could search for consultants through networking and online searches and reach out to candidates directly. Additionally, independent workforce management companies can post current jobs and receive applications directly from independent contractors. Keep in mind that you'll pay a

higher hourly rate for a contractor than to those who receive standard company benefits because they must pay self-employment and income tax. And remember, if you hire a contractor, you need to [classify them correctly](#).

### RESOURCES

#### Outsourced talent

[Accountingfly](#)  
[Beech Valley Solutions](#)  
[MBO Partners](#)  
[Paro](#)

#### Outsourced services

[ADP](#)  
[Affinity HR Group](#)  
[Belay Solutions](#)  
[Insperity](#)  
[Paychex](#)  
[Sureprep](#)  
[Thomson Reuters](#)  
[Wolters Kluwer](#)

### FRACTIONAL CFOS

It's not uncommon, especially for those companies in the embryonic stage, to hire part-time CFOs, CIOs and controllers because they can't afford to pay a full-time employee. These fractional workers will perform duties for a set period and then move on to other contracts. In many cases, these contractors are experts in their fields but now perform short-term work to maintain work-life balance. Companies looking to raise funds or go public can benefit from the professionalism a CFO — particularly one who has obtained the CPA credential — provides.

### SERVICES

Small- and mid-sized CPA firms may discover that outsourcing certain business functions to other companies is much easier than employing full-time employees. Bookkeeping, payroll and marketing are just a few possible areas. Professional employer organizations (PEO) can provide HR infrastructure. Whether your organization needs hourly help or a more long-term commitment, network with your peers and use online resources to find referrals.

### PROS AND CONS

As with anything, enter contracts with eyes wide open. While outsourcing enables your company to free up full-time staff to do the most impactful work, prepare for hurdles ahead. [Forbes offers a pros and cons list](#), which includes the benefits of lower labor costs, but you could run into a lack of control or quality problems. Setting clear expectations at your organization from the outset will help, and ensure you have all the resources you need (such as appropriate data security protocols) before you embark.

### READ THESE

[What CPA firms need to know about outsourcing](#) (CPA Practice Advisor)  
[The pros and cons of outsourcing](#) (Forbes)  
[Today's talent decisions affect tomorrow's success](#) (Disclosures)  
[Help really, really wanted](#) (Disclosures)  
[Innovative ways to create capacity](#) (Disclosures)  
[What services CPA firms usually outsource and why](#) (Meru Accounting)  
[Classify new hires right](#) (Disclosures)  
[Employee or contractor? Classification matters](#) (Disclosures)  
[What is a fractional CFO? Everything you need to know](#) (Spendesk)  
[Part-time CFO, big-time experience](#) (Disclosures)

Creative hiring

If you’ve tried traditional hiring tactics without much success, it may be time to think outside the hiring box. There are many other ways to find accounting talent beyond traditional in-house, in-office hires. Expand your definition of who an employee is and how and/or when they work, and you may open yourself up to new possibilities.

PART-TIME AND/OR SEASONAL HELP

Hiring seasonally and/or temporarily is nothing new for CPA firms; seasonal help can be a lifeline for small firms during tax season. Post-pandemic, firms may find an even larger pool of candidates willing to work seasonally. Here are a few non-traditional candidates filling a seasonal or part-time candidate pool:

- Accounting professionals who resigned during the pandemic and not yet ready to go back full-time.
- New and young professionals embracing the gig economy.
- Recently retired professionals who want to make extra income.
- College students pursuing accounting degrees willing to do entry-level tasks to gain experience.
- Stay-at-home parents who wish to work part-time on their own schedules.
- Organization alumni with various reasons for departing but interested in coming back.

REMOTE EMPLOYEES

Firms and corporate finance departments across the country are embracing fully remote hires. While hiring remote is nothing new, the feasibility and interest in remote hires accelerated exponentially during and after the pandemic.

Firms that have not considered allowing employees to work in a remote environment in the past, citing security and control reasons, are now finding themselves with a limited local candidate pool and the threat of an employee exodus in search of a more flexible work environment, [according to CAMICO](#).

Many firms find they can secure a remote employee much more quickly than holding out for a local hire. According to Jeff Phillips, CEO and co-founder of Accountingfly, a CPA firm can hire a remote tax manager in approximately 45 days.

INTERNATIONAL HIRES

With the gig economy, many professionals are moving overseas and willing to work for U.S.

companies, and foreign workers are eager to dip their toes into the American labor market. There are a variety of compliance and tax obligations when hiring internationally, as well as different approaches. Here are seven approaches to international hires, [according to Grant Thornton](#):

1. The U.S. company registers overseas.
2. Hire the individual into the local company.
3. The new hire takes on the compliance obligations.
4. Hire a contractor instead of an employee.
5. Use a professional employment organization (PEO).
6. Embrace “digital nomads.”
7. Hire internationally but take no actions in foreign jurisdictions.

The decision to hire internationally should involve upper management, finance, legal, and human resources teams.

RESOURCES

[Accountingfly](#)  
[Paro](#)  
[Taxfyle](#)

How to...

Set a remote hire up for success

Before taking on a new remote employee, make sure your organization completes due diligence with these tasks.

1. During the interview process, deduce the candidate’s remote work style to ensure it meshes with your team.
2. Conduct a thorough background check by contacting references and asking about a candidate’s work habits.
3. Review policies and procedures in areas like cyber safety, work hours, use of company resources, client file handling, etc.
4. Determine expectations up front. Is an employee expected to be online from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.? Are their hours fluid but they are expected to remotely attend meetings? Make expectations clear to avoid miscommunication later.
5. Create a technical/office checklist. Will your company send a laptop? Pay for Internet access? How will you determine that a remote employee is working on a secured network?
6. Consult with your human resources and finance teams about your tax obligations. Some companies will not hire employees living in certain other states because of tax requirements.
7. Develop a plan for management, mentoring, and supervising. Document how often a supervisor checks in with an employee and how they can help new hires meet their goals.
8. Don’t forget to survey remote employees and regularly check in. Assessing their needs and wants is key to keeping them motivated and engaged.

Remote accounting jobs with Accountingfly

VSCPA members have asked for help connecting with talent solutions, so the Society has partnered with Accountingfly to address organizations’ remote accounting needs. Visit [vscpa.com/Accountingfly](#) to find out how to connect to remote talent. Members receive a \$100 discount on the monthly flat fee for seasonal/temporary contractor placements, and a 10% discount off the total hiring fee for permanent placements.



READ THESE

[How to get the most out of your seasonal staff this tax season](#) (Canopy)

[Sourcing a strong candidate pool is pushing firms outside their comfort zone](#) (VSCPA)

[8 tips for finding, hiring, and retaining the best busy season staff](#) (Journal of Accountancy)

[CPAs and the growing gig economy](#) (Illinois CPA Society)

[‘Quiet hiring’ is on the horizon — here’s what employers and employees need to know](#) (Entrepreneur)

[How to hire remote workers, remotely](#) (Robert Half)

[Operation boomerang: Why and how you should recruit former employees](#) (CareerBuilder)

[5 ways to thrive with your remote accounting team](#) (VSCPA)

[Tax risks when hiring international talent](#) (Grant Thornton)

# ALTERNATIVE STAFFING SOLUTIONS

## Offshoring

Even a few years ago, the idea that a CPA firm would look to offshore certain tasks would have been unheard of. But times are different, and offshoring can be a reasonable alternative for companies that need help alleviating burdens on in-house staff.

Offshoring is a “mass opportunity for everyone,” believes Jeff Phillips, CEO and co-founder of Accountingfly. The largest benefit is access to a large supply of high-quality talent at a lower cost than hiring stateside.

How could it work?

“As an example, you might have someone on your local team who takes a new client, onboards them to figure out the processes, documents them, and then turns over those processes to a bookkeeper in the Philippines to run those processes,” said Dave Olsen, founder and CEO of Nimbl, during a [VSCPA virtual roundtable on offshoring](#).

### OFFSHORING PROS AND CONS

Before you embark on offshoring as a solution, make sure you’re aware of the benefits and potential drawbacks.

#### Benefits

- ✓ Reduced labor costs.
- ✓ Increased efficiency.
- ✓ Free up U.S.-based talent to complete other tasks, such as strategic advisory services for clients.
- ✓ Get entry-level tasks completed when a firm is unable to find entry-level talent.
- ✓ Allows firms to accept new work even during periods of high demand.

#### Drawbacks

- ✗ Complex labor regulations and tax requirements.
- ✗ Time zone differences.
- ✗ Communication and language barriers.
- ✗ Management and coaching.
- ✗ Skepticism by U.S.-based employees and clients that the offshoring process can work.
- ✗ Client unease with data sharing across boundaries.

### Success Tips

- ⦿ Before starting with an outsourced team, know exactly what tasks you need completed and develop the processes. Ask yourself what barriers your firm needs to overcome, what resources you need to make offshoring work, and what type of work is the best fit.
- ⦿ Consider outsourced talent a part of your team, just like everyone else. Workers will be happier if they feel wanted and appreciated — not just robots crunching numbers.
- ⦿ Disclose in engagement letters intent to use outsourced talent and comply with Internal Revenue Code 7216.

#### READ THESE

- [Intro to offshoring for accounting teams: Roundtable replay](#) (VSCPA)
- [Outsourcing, offshoring, nearshoring: What to do?](#) (Journal of Accountancy)
- [How offshoring can transform accounting firms](#) (Entegrity)

#### RESOURCES

- [Entegrity](#)
- [Nimbl](#)



# ALTERNATIVE STAFFING SOLUTIONS

## Upskilling

What happens if an organization engages tried-and-true methods for filling open positions, implements new and innovative ways to attract talent, and *still* can't find the right fit? The answer may be on the payroll all along.

Upskilling — teaching current employees new skills — can be a solution. “As technology creates new opportunities and job positions within the workplace, it becomes increasingly important for accounting firms to fill these new roles with candidates who possess relevant, specialized skill sets,” [according to CPA Practice Advisor](#).

“The setback, however, is the time and effort it takes to find top talent to fill these roles. Rather than spending months finding the right candidate, organizations can train the workers they have to learn the skills needed for the role. Implementing upskilling programs within your workforce allows organizations to work towards closing the talent gap while maintaining their current workforce.”

The digital transformation taking place in finance and accounting is one of the biggest drivers to instill new skills in current staff. Big Four firms are already on board, committing billions to upskill their workforces and increase digital proficiency.

With the advent of automation and artificial intelligence, CPAs must learn how to *leverage* new technologies, and that takes concerted effort.

Upskilling is important for retention, too. The [2022 State of the Corporate Tax Department Report](#) from Thomson Reuters found that a lack of upskilling opportunities was the primary challenge for 21% of respondents.

Simply put, top-performing employees want to stay and learn new skills; you just need to give them the opportunities to rise to the occasion. Companies with upskilling programs may start to reap the benefits: improved morale, retention and performance.

### DOS AND DON'TS

#### Do

- ✓ Offer clear career paths at the organization when presenting a job offer.
- ✓ Research and engage learning tools and opportunities and clearly communicate them to employees.
- ✓ Make the upskilling process formal and accessible to anyone who is interested.
- ✓ Accommodate for different learning styles.

#### Don't

- ✗ Overpromise and under-deliver career growth opportunities promised to employees.
- ✗ Neglect to offer tuition reimbursement.
- ✗ Overlook credentialing programs. For example, a CPA firm could commit to a new hire interested in technology that they will help the employee obtain the Certified Information Technology Professional (CITP) designation.

SINCE 2015, SKILLS REQUIRED BY JOBS HAVE CHANGED BY 25% ON AVERAGE, GLOBALLY. IF CHANGES CONTINUE AT THIS PACE, SKILLS COULD CHANGE ANYWHERE FROM 39% TO 44% BY 2025.

— LinkedIn [Future of Skills report](#)

#### READ THESE

- [Neglect of upskilling detrimental to accounting profession, experts say](#) (Accountancy Age)
- [The case for upskilling programs in accounting firms](#) (CPA Practice Advisor)
- [Upskilling is the path forward for emerging CPAs](#) (Indiana CPA Society)
- [Four tips on how CPAs can digitally upskill](#) (New Jersey Society of CPAs)



Investigate your hiring practices

Have you considered that your hiring procedures — how you hire, who conducts interviews, etc. — could be hindering your ability to attract top talent? Assessing and tweaking your organizational practices could give you a leg up the next time you have a job opening.

WHAT DOES A SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYEE LOOK LIKE?

Sure, you may have a job description for your next recruit. You may even have a potential career path laid out. But have you considered defining exactly what this employee needs to do to become a success? And if so, is *everyone*, from upper management down to direct reports, on board?

Evaluate the traits of current high performers to discover what sets them apart. Conversely, why have less successful employees left? Identify key attributes you desire in your next hire and make sure you ask dedicated questions during the interview process.

DO YOU HAVE THE RIGHT HR SYSTEMS IN PLACE?

If you do not have a reliable system to manage the hiring process, consider implementing a human resources information system (HRIS), human resources management system (HRMS), or something similar. This software can help you make data-driven hiring decisions and even reduce time-intensive labor with automation and analytics.

If you do have a system, evaluate how well it performs and, if you have internal issues, develop a plan to review and/or implement a different option. Many systems integrate with recruiting platforms (Workable, for instance, has a Hired integration). There are also online tools to help you compare systems.

WANT TO DESIGN YOUR  
HIRING PROCESSES TO  
ATTRACT DIVERSE TALENT?  
YOU CAN! SEE PAGE 8 FOR  
IDEAS.

How to...

Write a decent job description

You already learned how to craft a compelling job ad in the “[Online Job Boards](#)” section. But what about the longer bit — that full job description you want to *hook* the right candidate?

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) [says a job description](#) should be “a useful, plain-language tool that explains the tasks, duties, function and responsibilities of a position.” Here are the steps SHRM recommends to get to the final product:

- 1. **Perform a job analysis.** Gather, examine and interpret job data to determine the job’s tasks and responsibilities.
- 2. **Establish the essential functions.** These must explicitly state how an individual is to perform the job. These also help identify Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations.
- 3. **Concisely organize the data.** Standardize all job descriptions at the organization.
- 4. **Add a disclaimer.** State that other duties may be assigned.
- 5. **Add the signature lines.** Make sure there is room for an employee to sign the description and demonstrate they understand the position in full.
- 6. **Finalize.** Present a draft to upper management and supervisors for final review.

READ THESE

- [What is an HRIS?](#) (ADP)
- [How to write a job description](#) (Indeed)
- [10 tips for crafting highly effective job descriptions](#) (CIO)

RESOURCES

- [ADP](#)
- [Workable](#)
- [Workday](#)

## Enhance your interview process

In the wake of the pandemic, it's now commonplace for first-round interviews (and *all*, for a remote candidate) to take place virtually. Is your organization equipped to adequately assess a candidate through a screen, when so many of the nuances of in-person contact can be missed? Plan ahead to get the most out of new interview processes.

How to...

### Conduct a killer virtual job interview

We're all more comfortable in front of the camera than ever before, but still, virtual hiring can be nerve-wracking. Make sure you hit the mark by checking off the following items from your to-do list.

1. **Communicate.** This sounds like a no-brainer, but even the most well-planned CPAs can make mistakes regarding meeting times, software platforms, scheduling and more. Make sure you and your HR team are on board for the hiring timetable and timely communicate everything to the candidate. Make sure the candidate knows how to download a virtual platform, if necessary for the interview.
2. **Get the tech in order.** Nothing is worse than starting an interview and then getting derailed by a botched connection. Connect well in advance to test the platform, always do a sound check, and make sure your camera is facing the correct position at eye level. You may have someone conduct a pre-interview with the candidate to ensure all technology is in working order on both ends.
3. **Decide the right interviewers.** Determine the best employees to meet with the prospect, but try not to overwhelm them. Also consider requiring a diverse candidate selection panel, with multiple interviewees from diverse demographic backgrounds.
4. **Draft a script.** Don't go into an interview willy-nilly, especially if there are several team members on the call. Make sure everyone knows who speaks first and who asks which questions.
5. **Ask the right questions.** See the "Read These" section at right for articles of top interview questions. But always make sure you get to the gist of why this candidate wants to work for you. What are they passionate about — at work and in life? Will their values align with yours? Also consider including [behavioral interview questions](#).

NOTHING IS WORSE THAN STARTING AN INTERVIEW AND THEN GETTING DERAILED BY A BOTCHED CONNECTION. CONNECT WELL IN ADVANCE TO TEST THE PLATFORM, ALWAYS DO A SOUND CHECK, AND MAKE SURE YOUR CAMERA IS FACING THE CORRECT POSITION AT EYE LEVEL.

### READ THESE

[Finding the best talent using remote interviews](#) (Journal of Accountancy)

[4 ways to improve the accuracy of virtual interviews](#) (Forbes)

[Best interview questions to ask candidates](#) (Indeed)

[Top 15 questions to ask job candidates](#) (Robert Half)

[What is behavioral interviewing? And how to use it to hire for your business](#) (U.S. Chamber of Commerce)

Determine the best assessment option

You’ve done the first round of interviewing and have two equally great candidates. Both could be a good fit for the position, but you need to uncover if there are any red flags. Enter an assessment.

Companies use assessments all the time. While many may not base a final hiring decision solely on an assessment, the information they provide can give insight into a candidate’s potential in the position.

Assessments can include cognitive testing, such as intelligence and general aptitude tests, job simulations, and even AI-assisted interviews and games. You can test for personality, specific skills, culture fit, and situational judgment, just to name a few.

Deloitte gives [Predictive Index](#) assessments to anyone they consider hiring, says VSCPA member Neena Shukla, CPA, a Deloitte partner. “They tell us how that person likes to work, how they prefer to be managed, and how to deal with them,” she says. The assessment is even used after hiring to help employees understand each other and communicate well.

When determining the best assessment, discuss with your team what skills you truly want to evaluate and seek out an appropriate tool. Many will integrate with talent acquisition platforms, becoming a seamless part of your hiring process.

It’s important to investigate the legal ramifications of certain assessments. [SHRM says](#) the tests must have predictive validity and are free from bias. Poor testing could lead to discrimination cases.

PROS AND CONS

[Workable offers the following benefits and disadvantages to using assessments](#) during the hiring process:

- Pros
- ✓ Tests are more objective than interviews, résumé screens, etc.
  - ✓ They are the same for everyone.
  - ✓ They can save you time on interviews.
  - ✓ They allow you to rely on quantifiable insight.

- Cons
- ✗ Tests rarely give the whole picture.
  - ✗ They can be discriminatory.
  - ✗ Certain tests can invite lying.
  - ✗ Results can be ambiguous.
  - ✗ They prolong the hiring process.
  - ✗ They cannot capture the variation between unique people

RESOURCES

- [Berke Assessment](#)
- [CliftonStrengths](#)
- [Insights Discovery](#)
- [McQuaig](#)
- [The Predictive Index](#)

NEARLY 60% OF COMPANIES USE SOME TYPE OF ASSESSMENT IN THEIR PRE-HIRE PROCESS. 88% OF FORTUNE 500 COMPANIES USE THE MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR (MBTI) TEST IN SOME

READ THESE

- [6 talent assessment methods to use for recruiting in your company](#) (Workable)
- [The 7 test types you need for a strong pre-employment assessment](#) (TestGorilla)
- [Why you should use assessments when hiring every level of employee](#) (Inc.)
- [15 of the best recruiting assessment tools](#) (Workable)

Onboard with ease

Creating a positive, mutually rewarding relationship between employer and employee begins with a stellar welcome and a great onboarding process. Onboarding goes beyond a simple orientation to include things like ensuring the employee has the correct technology and log-in passwords, assigning mentors, and performing regular check-ins.

According to the [2018 State of Recruitment and Onboarding Report](#) from [CareerBuilder](#), 51% of employees expect HR to check in with them regularly throughout their first year of employment. And while 93% of employees say a positive onboarding experience is critical for retention, 29% of employees give their organizations poor marks for proper onboarding.

Don't make mistakes with onboarding — the process is crucial to setting the stage for a positive working relationship with your coveted new hire.

Onboarding checklist

Make sure you onboard employees efficiently and effectively with this [checklist from Indeed](#).

- ✓ Make it official with HR.
- ✓ Prepare new-hire paperwork.
- ✓ Procure devices and equipment.
- ✓ Set up accounts and create logins.
- ✓ Set up the workspace.
- ✓ Schedule new-hire orientation.
- ✓ Send a welcome email.
- ✓ Perform a building tour (for in-person hires).
- ✓ Assign a peer mentor.
- ✓ Send a new employee announcement.
- ✓ Schedule time for onboarding feedback.
- ✓ Set up check-in plans for 30, 60 and 90 days.



Successfully onboard remote hires

Onboarding remote employees is just as important as onboarding in person, if not more so. Establishing a strong connection to an employee who gets rare face-to-face time will be the key to retaining them for the long haul. In addition to the regular onboarding checklist, make sure you're doing the following for remote employees:

- 1. Get the tech right before they start.** All the hardware, software, Internet connection, and systems needed for the new employee should be shipped, received and set up prior to the employee's first day so they can hit the ground running. Include step-by-step instructions.
- 2. Consistently communicate.** Reach out to ensure the new employee doesn't feel isolated. Schedule multiple meetings with different staffers, assign a buddy — whatever it takes to make the employee feel part of the team.
- 3. Cultivate engagement.** Whether or not an employee feels truly connected to the organization will make or break their long-term commitment. Be intentional about how you engage the employee. Set up virtual meetings to check in regularly, create virtual coffee chats or happy hours, introduce the staffer to upper management to make them feel welcome, etc.
- 4. Ask them what they need.** Don't underestimate the power of simply asking or surveying new employees. Give them opportunities to tell you where they need more support or more connection. Showing you're invested in their onboarding will make them feel more connected.

*Note:* If you think these apply to ALL employees, not just remote, you're right! Everyone wants to feel connected to the new organization, receive all the right technology, and become engaged. Make sure you create an onboarding process that works for everyone across the board.

READ THESE

- [Onboarding and offboarding employees: Why getting it right matters](#) (CPA Practice Advisor)
- [6 way to accelerate new employee onboarding and increase retention](#) (Business 2 Community)
- [New hire onboarding checklist](#) (Indeed)
- [New employee onboarding guide](#) (Society of Human Resource Management)
- [Employee orientation vs. employee onboarding: Why you need both](#) (Insperity)
- [How to establish a virtual onboarding program](#) (Society of Human Resource Management)
- [4 ways to improve virtual onboarding for new hires](#) (Forbes)



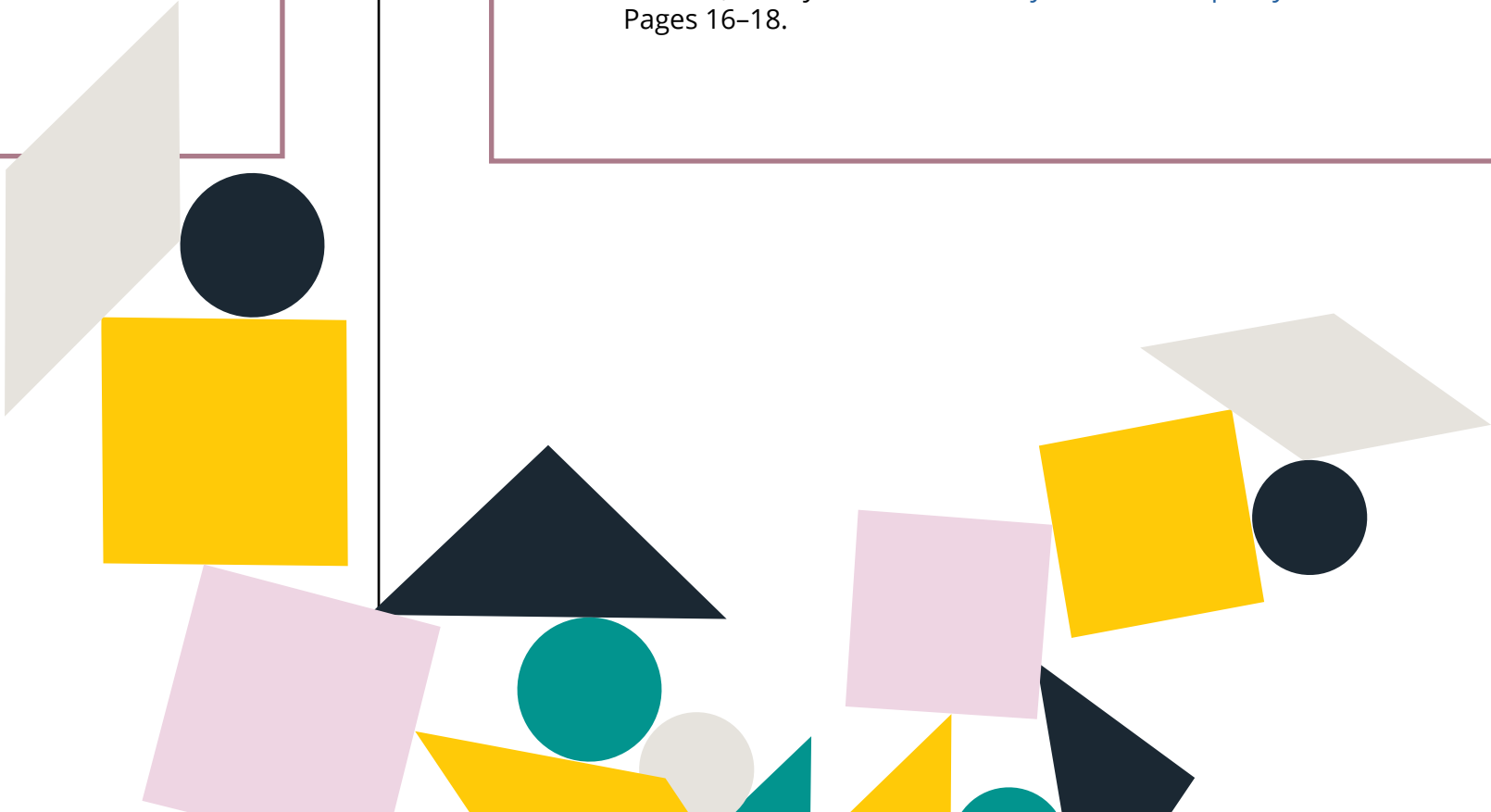
REFERENCES

The information in this guide was pulled from a variety of sources. See below for links and references.

1. "2018 State of Recruitment and Onboarding Report." CareerBuilder. Nov. 7, 2018.
2. "2021 Future of Recruiting Study." CareerArc.
3. "2021 trends: A report on accounting education, the CPA exam and public accounting firms' hiring of recent graduates." American Institute of CPAs.
4. 2022 State of the Corporate Tax Department Report. Thomson Reuters.
5. "5 global stats reshaping recruiting trends." The Undercover Recruiter.
6. "5 ways to leverage Facebook for recruiting." Recruiting.com.
7. "The Case for Upskilling Programs in Accounting Firms." CPA Practice Advisor. March 22, 2020.
8. Current Employment Statistics. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2023.
9. Future of Skills Report. LinkedIn Economic Graph.
10. "Google for jobs is a game changer — Here's what you need to know." Recruiter.com
11. "How to develop a job description." Society of Human Resource Management.
12. "How to use Twitter for recruiting." Recruiting.com.
13. "Improve candidate sourcing to build more inclusive teams." CareerBuilder.
14. "New hire onboarding checklist." Indeed.

REFERENCES CONTINUED

15. "Using pre-hire testing & assessment when hiring." Paycor Sept. 12, 2022.
16. "Tax risks when hiring international talent." Grant Thornton. Feb. 24, 2022.
17. "Virginia's November Unemployment Rate Increased to 2.8 Percent." Virginia Employment Commission. Dec. 16, 2022.
18. Bika, Nikoletta. "Pre-employment testing: Pros and cons." Workable.
19. CAMICO's Loss Prevention Team. "Sourcing a strong candidate pool is pushing firms outside their comfort zone. VSCPA.com. July 20, 2022.
20. Grenshing-Pophal, Lin. "Your hiring assessments could get you in trouble." SHRM.org.
21. Knighton, Chip. "Part-time CFO, big-time experiences." Disclosures. May/June 2016. Pages 18-21.
22. Lingenfelter, Gabriele. "Entice them early." Disclosures. January/February 2020. Pages 20-23.
23. Patel, Deep. "The pros and cons of outsourcing." Forbes. July 17, 2017.
24. Pope, Brandon. "Today's talent decisions affect tomorrow's success." Disclosures. May/June 2020. Pages 24-26.
25. Pope, Brandon. "Help really, really wanted." Disclosures. Fall 2022. Pages 20-23.
26. Smith, Tori. "Back to class." Disclosures. Fall 2022. Pages 28-32.
27. Smith, Tori. "What new grads really want." Disclosures. Summer 2022. Pages 20-23.
28. "Writing a job posting (with free template downloads)." Indeed.
29. Yashina, Natalya. "Innovative ways to create capacity." Disclosures. Fall 2022. Pages 16-18.





## **ABOUT THE VSCPA**

The Virginia Society of Certified Public Accountants (VSCPA) is the leading professional association in the Commonwealth dedicated to empowering CPAs to thrive. Founded in 1909, the VSCPA has nearly 13,000 members who work in public accounting, corporate finance, government and education. To meet its mission, the VSCPA is focused on five top strategies: create a culture of learning; drive innovation and vision; increase diversity, equity and inclusion in the profession; influence students to become CPAs; and advocate for CPAs' interests. For more information about the VSCPA, visit [vscpa.com](https://vscpa.com).

## **DISCLAIMER**

The materials and information in this guide are offered as material only and not as practice, financial, accounting, human resource, legal, or other professional advice. Statements of fact do not imply an opinion on the part of VSCPA officers, members, or editorial staff. Links to resources are not all-inclusive and do not represent a VSCPA endorsement of a product or service. Copyright © 2023 Virginia Society of CPAs.