



Interview and write-up  
By Aldric Chau

## Practical Experience: Views from the Ground



**Authorized Employer:**  
Poon, Mak & Wan

**Member-in-charge:**  
Mr. Mak Wai Keung,  
partner  
(on the left)

**Counsellor:**  
Mr. Lau Chi Wai,  
audit manager  
(on the right)

**Registered as an AE:**  
4.5 years

**No. of QP students  
under supervision:**  
5

### Grooming the elite of profession

Human resources professionals often quote Pareto's Principle – 80/20 Rule and apply it to staff performance. Further elaboration has been widely made on how the 20 percent cream of the crop can stand out and contribute to the 80 percent of a company's overall productivity. Mr. Mak Wai Keung, partner, and Mr. Lau Chi Wai, audit manager from Poon, Mak & Wan, share with us how a right qualification can gear up professional accountants to become the 20 percent blooming elite.

### Surviving the keen competition

As a medium sized CPA firm in Hong Kong, Poon, Mak & Wan provides auditing, taxation, merger and acquisition, and business consultancy services to a wide range of customers from varied industries.

To survive and stand out from the fierce competition, the firm believes that client relationships are important. Mak is proud to reveal that the firm is performing particularly well in maintaining a good and long-term relationship with clients by gaining their trust in the services provided. He adds that an indispensable element for achieving that is staff quality – a focus of the firm's development in the long run.



### **Focusing on people**

“We value our talent, especially those who are willing to go the extra mile in attaining professional qualification and sharpening their professional competence.” Mak is delighted to reveal that currently there are five colleagues taking QP while one has already successfully passed the QP. What’s more, these colleagues are taking the challenge as a personal and career achievement.

Mak believes that QP is a comprehensive programme, well equipping accountants with useful technical knowledge to handle daily tasks. “Accounting, auditing, taxation and financial management are not only the essence of an accountant, but they also make up the core business of our firm.” He adds that after getting through QP training, their staff appear to be more competent and more confident in handling job assignments and this in turn helps raise the firm’s productivity significantly.

Both Mak and Lau agree that QP graduates tend to be more up-to-date with the latest professional knowledge and information. Mak is convinced that this is because of the updatedness of the teaching materials as well as discussion of the hot topics at QP workshops. To stay in touch with the latest information is important for professional accountants who work in a fast-changing business world.

QP graduates also receive positive comments in terms of their communication and presentation skills. “We can find impressive presenters among QP graduates.” Lau reckons that QP workshops have tremendously enhanced his colleagues language proficiency – giving them an edge in effective communication with colleagues and external parties.

### **Nurturing the staff development**

The firm is keen on supporting QP’s development, and has registered as an authorized employer of the Hong Kong Institute of CPAs since 2004. “As a counsellor, my main role is to supervise at a broader level, particularly in the areas of student feedback, programme structure and curriculum design,” Lau says. Whilst Mak’s role is to work more closely with QP students in supervising their performance and training progress. Mak and Lau will schedule regular meetings with QP students after completion of each project to share the work experience with them. They believe that this training style can enable colleagues to apply knowledge in the workplace more effectively.

All in all, both Mak and Lau believe that QP does help the firm nurture quality staff, who will become the 20 percent elite contributing to the firm’s overall productivity. The great benefits and wide recognition of the programme are the “success ingredients” for QP.

*Prospective CPA*  
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