

# What Else, Apart From Qualifications, Will Help You Climb The Career Ladder?



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Having the appropriate accounting qualifications is essential as you seek to find your next [accounting job](#), but employers take much more than proven technical aptitude into account when considering who to recruit and who to promote. And this broader approach isn't limited to finance roles in the private sector: in the public sector and in practice too, recruiters look for a broader range of skills from applicants.

A few years ago, in the wake of the Enron and WorldCom scandals and the subsequent introduction of the Sarbanes-Oxley corporate governance requirements, compliance and control were paramount. IAS, IFRS and technical ability were all and we were firmly within 'The Age of the Auditor'.

The role of the accountant continues to change and evolve, and now business acumen, commercial awareness and first rate people skills have become the number one priority. At the moment, not all accountants are ready and able to face this new set of challenges.....

For almost 20 years, Robert S Kaplan of Harvard Business School has said that accountants need to "spend less time dealing with financial accounting, audit and tax", arguing that more time should be spent on

"operations, marketing strategy and behavioural and organisational issues".

Kaplan has certainly now got his wish, as throughout 2009 Reed Accountancy and Reed Finance have been inundated with requirements from employers who specify they want candidates who "demonstrate MD or CEO potential".

Organisations recognise that their most senior finance staff can drive the performance of every area of their business - not just by cutting costs, but by increasing sales and helping improve operational efficiency too. FDs and FCs must be ready to not just be part of strategic and operational decisions, but to lead these processes too.

Possessing the ability to successfully shape, lead and implement business strategies is crucial for a senior-level financial executive, and strong communication skills play a pivotal role in helping them do this.

Excellent presentation, influencing, negotiation and leadership skills all now appear on the Candidate Requirements wish lists of Reed Finance clients as standard. This may not have been the case when you first set out on your accountancy career, but it is a dynamic profession and arguably there's never been a more exciting and high-profile time for finance professionals.

So now is the ideal time to build your 'softer' skills alongside your technical capabilities, and in so doing put yourself in a strong position to realise your career progression ambitions.

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