

Business Excellence Guide for SMEs



- Why Financial Management Matters to SMEs
- How to Choose an Accountant for Your Small Business Needs

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CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Why Does Financial Management Matter for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)?	2
Key Elements of Financial Management <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning• Accounting and Reporting• Analysis	4
Success Story	9
Who is an Accountant? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• About MIA• Accountants in Various Sectors	10
Employing an Accountant for Your Business	12
Competency Requirement of Accounting Personnel	14
Engaging a Professional Accountant in Public Practice	15
Key Criteria in Choosing a Professional Accountant in Public Practice	18
Questions to Ask Your Prospective Professional Accountant in Public Practice	19
How to Build a Good Accountant-Client Relationship	21
Where to Find a Public Practice Firm and a Chartered Accountant	22



INTRODUCTION

Good financial management is essential for businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to prosper. In many cases, failure could have been avoided if the owners had applied sound financial principles to all their business decisions. Entrepreneurs need to understand basic financial management even if they plan to leave the more complicated work to qualified accountants.

Entrepreneurs usually start their businesses wearing many different hats to fulfil the various roles required for the operations of a new business. Over time, as the business grows, it becomes increasingly necessary to delegate certain functions, such as taxation and accounting, to subject matter experts. The process of employing an in-house accountant or engaging an external accounting firm that provides public practice services represents an important decision-making process throughout the business life-cycle.

Having an expert advising you on financial affairs means you will be alert to financial issues affecting your operations. It is always better to have your accountant tell you this rather than the authorities such as the Inland Revenue Board (IRB).

This booklet aims to:

- Raise awareness among the business community of the importance of financial advisory and management;
- Educate the business community about the important considerations when choosing to either employ an accountant internally or to engage the services of an accountant in public practice externally; and
- Convey to the broader community the role played by accountants and the Malaysian Institute of Accountants (MIA) in strengthening and advising on business growth to support nation building.



We believe that you will find this booklet informative and useful as a guide for selecting the right accountant for your business needs.

WHY DOES FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT MATTER FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMEs)?

Basic financial management skills are the foundation for an enterprise’s success and resiliency. To support sustainable growth of SMEs in a highly competitive landscape, MIA advocates that SMEs:

Apply basic financial management skills to manage cash flow which is the lifeblood of an enterprise

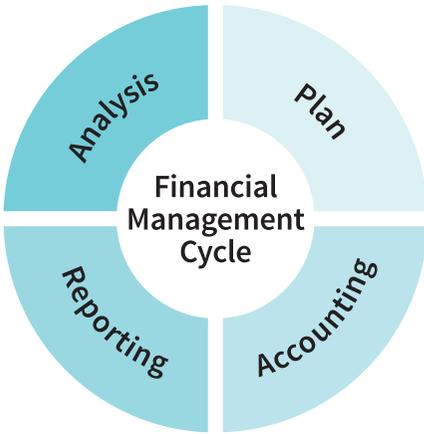
Comply with the tax system, employment and other legislations

Consult competent professionals to bridge skill and knowledge gaps

Improve access to credit and financing through better business profiling

Working with a qualified accountant as a business advisor will ensure that more SMEs will survive, prosper and contribute to overall economic development.





Good Financial Management is Essential for Businesses to Grow and Prosper

Financial management goes beyond simply keeping accounting records. It is an essential part of organisational management and involves planning, accounting, reporting and analysis in order to achieve organisational objectives.

GOOD FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT WILL HELP YOU TO:

Make effective and efficient use of resources to gain competitive advantage

Achieve objectives such as business growth, diversification or expansion into new markets

Gain the confidence of funding institutions and thus access to credit

Formulate and implement a financial strategy to support the overall strategy of the organisation

Make your business more tax efficient

The goal of financial management is to give you the information and perspective you need to make business decisions.

KEY ELEMENTS OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

1. PLANNING

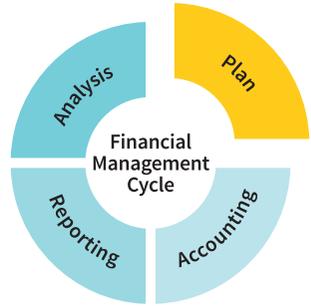
Planning gives an organisation a sense of direction.

Budgeting

Creating a budget is the first step in the practice of good financial planning.

A budget is a list of your (monthly, quarterly or yearly) expenses, organised by categories. It is a tool that helps you to track your business expense in order to plan. Once you have a budget, it can be used to compare your income with the actual expenditure and enable you to adjust your expenses to ensure business sustainability.

Don't forget to budget for improved financial capabilities of your company, such as recruitment of financially-trained staff, procurement of system to trace business performance and to produce accurate management information for decision making purposes. Financial capabilities in SMEs are not just a consequence of growth, but one of its causes.



2. ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

Accounting and reporting are the processes of recording and converting financial transaction data into accrual based financial reports that are utilised to report financial performance to management and other stakeholders.



Bookkeeping

Bookkeeping allows you to communicate with numbers. It will not only help you tally what you have earned with what you have spent but also what you need to spend, your assets, income, debts, turnover of the capital and everything else that contributes in defining your business.

7 Basic Bookkeeping Tips

1

Get a tried and tested **accounting software**.

2

Open a **separate business bank account**. Do not mix business and personal banking accounts.

3

Reconcile your bank account at the end of each month. Check every single deposit and withdrawal in your register to see that it matches up with the monthly bank statement.

4

Track and deposit all sales. Deposit all sales in your business bank account. Total sales should equal total deposits. Be extra careful not to spend cash sales before it is banked-in.

5

Keep track of your business expenses. Issue cheques, make electronic transfers from business accounts or use a business credit card to pay for all business expenses. This is to ensure clear audit trail of all expenses.

6

Always pay business expenses first, personal expenses second. In sole proprietorships, the owner does not get a salary; rather he/she takes an owner's draw. The owner should pay himself/herself by issuing cheques or transferring from the business account to his/her personal account electronically.

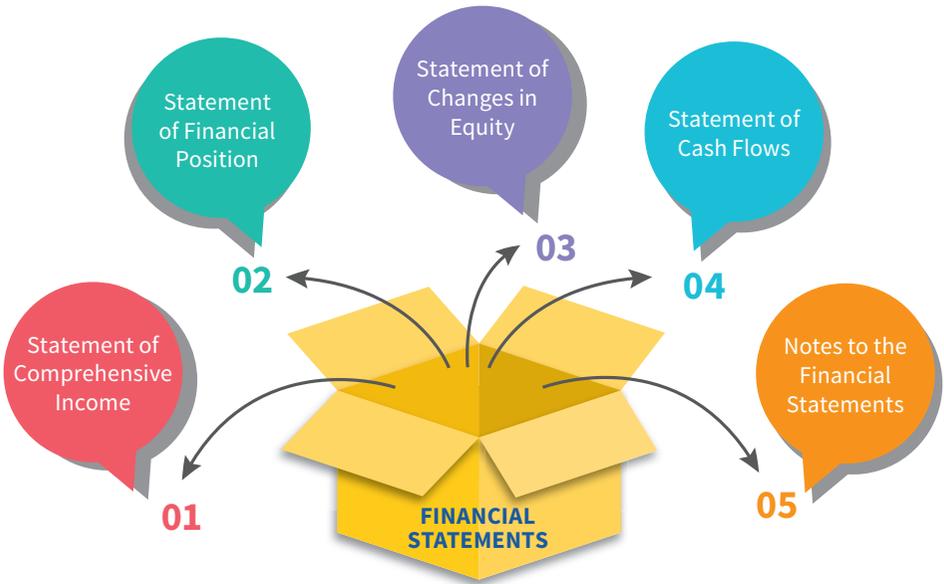
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Prepare financial statements. A bank account balance is not a good indication of how much profit the business has made or what amount is available for the owner's draw. A statement of comprehensive income can provide a better picture of the financial performance of your company over a specific period of time.



Unboxing the Financial Statements

Depending on how you sort, organise, and analyse your financial data, you can see many different pictures of your company's financial strength and potential.



The following are **3 statements** that are important for small businesses:

- 1 Statement of Comprehensive Income / Income Statement
- 2 Statement of Cash Flows
- 3 Statement of Financial Position / Balance Sheet

Directors' responsibility for a company to prepare financial statements in accordance with approved accounting standards is clearly spelt out in the Companies Act 2016. It is therefore vital for directors to have a qualified accountant in place to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities.

The following sections give the basic facts about each of the above statements.

Purpose of Financial Statements

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended

- Also called an Income Statement, it shows income received and expenses paid over a specific period.
- It reports a company's **financial performance** over a specific accounting period.

Statement of Financial Position as at

- Also called a Balance Sheet, it is a financial snapshot of your business. It shows the overall financial position of your company, including all the major assets, liabilities and equity, at a given date.
- It helps users to assess the financial health of the company along with displaying **what the company possesses and owes**.

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended

- A Cash Flow Statement shows how cash is generated and used during a period of time. It is one of the most useful financial management tools because it shows you:

Net cash flow from operating activities

- Collections from customers, cash paid to suppliers and employees, cash paid for interests and taxes, cash proceeds from dividends or interest.

Net cash flow from investing activities

- Purchases or sales of property and equipment.

Net cash flow from financing activities

- Funds available from issuance of shares and loans and payment of both principal and interests.

Net change in cash and cash equivalents

- If the net cash flow is positive, the business is generating cash for ongoing operations;
- If the net cash flow is negative, the business might still have available cash but it needs further evaluation based on the company's sustainability and growth strategy.

- Demonstrates the **ability of a company to generate cash** and how the **funds are then used**.

- Is my business more likely to have a negative or positive cash flow during the next six months?
- What strategies will I have ready in case cash flow is unfavourable compared to what I have planned?



3. ANALYSIS

Financial analysis involves using financial data to assess a company's performance and make recommendations for improvement.



12 common types of financial analysis methods are:

- 01 VERTICAL:** Dividing various components of income statement by revenue and expressing them as percentages.
- 02 HORIZONTAL:** Comparing several years of finance data to determine the growth rate.
- 03 LEVERAGE:** Comparing total debt with total equity to obtain the debt/equity ratio.
- 04 GROWTH:** Analysing historical growth rates and projecting future growth rates.
- 05 PROFITABILITY:** Common examples of profitability measures are gross profit margin and net profit margin.
- 06 LIQUIDITY:** Assessing the ability of a company to meet short term obligations (due in one year or less).
- 07 EFFICIENCY:** Assessing how well a company utilises its assets to generate revenue.
- 08 CASH FLOW:** Analysing a company's ability to generate cash e.g. free cash flow.
- 09 RATES OF RETURN:** Analysing the rate of return for investments.
- 10 VALUATION:** Estimating what a business is worth.
- 11 SCENARIO & SENSITIVITY:** Measuring risk due to uncertainties.
- 12 VARIANCE:** Comparing actual results to forecasts.



Source: Corporate Finance Institute, 2019

SUCCESS STORY

How can an accountant help you to achieve good financial management?

This is a real-life account of a logistic company that benefited from hiring an accountant.

“We made profit but were not sure where our money went,”
says the CEO of a logistic company.

This company thought that their business was doing well, as they were receiving lots of business orders and making operating profit. But as they progressed, they started to experience cash flow issues. The CEO was not able to gauge its position in terms of cash flow and availability of funds for growth.

This is expected when there is no systematic process in place or dedicated person in charge of the company’s financial affairs. These deficiencies led to expensive missteps, such as double paying of suppliers and depletion of cash which outpaced collection, thus leading to cash flow issues.

Fortunately, the company was able to turn the situation around by employing an accountant.

“My financial controller helped us to restructure the entire payment and collection process as well as our reporting structure. Our finance and operations management are more stable now,”
says the CEO.



In the end, the CEO learnt an expensive but valuable lesson. Cash flow management is the backbone of the business and the best way to manage it is by hiring a qualified accountant.

Source: Firefly in-flight magazine, FireFlyz, January 2019

WHO IS AN ACCOUNTANT?

One prominent role that accountants play is as business advisors to the SMEs / microenterprises, which generally lack in-house financial and managerial expertise. In providing the necessary financial management advice and assistance to SMEs/ microenterprises, accountants fill this gap and support their sustainable growth.

In Malaysia, the accountancy profession is regulated by the Accountants Act, 1967. The Act requires persons holding themselves out as, or practicing as accountants, to be registered as a member of the MIA.

ABOUT MIA

Statutory body established under the **Accountants Act, 1967** to regulate and develop the accountancy profession in Malaysia.

- As the national accountancy body, MIA sets high ethical standards which must be adhered to by all accountants in Malaysia.
- All accountants are bounded by MIA's By-Laws. Any breach of the By-Laws may render the members liable to disciplinary proceedings.
- MIA members are regulated, and the public has a recourse by lodging a complaint to the Institute if there is any wrongdoing by the members.
- The public would also be assured of the minimum quality of the professional services expected as it is mandatory for all MIA members to annually acquire a minimum number of hours of continuing professional education to ensure that they are updated, even after being trained as an accountant.
- MIA members are also bound by a strict code of ethics whereby failure to comply may result in a member being suspended or even removed from membership depending on the severity of the non-compliance.

Accountants in Various Sectors

COMMERCE/ INDUSTRY

Internal Auditors
Company Secretaries
Company Accountants
Tax Managers
Corporate Planners
CFOs / CEOs

PUBLIC PRACTICE

Statutory Auditors
Company Secretaries
Tax Consultants
Management Consultants
Advisors (for Corporate Finance)
Receivers & Managers,
Judicial Managers or Approved Liquidators
Forensic Accountants

ACADEMIA

Lecturers
Deans
Heads of Departments

PUBLIC SECTOR

Accountants
Treasurers
Financial Officers
Auditors
Inland Revenue Officers
Bank Negara Officers
Directors of Ministries

■ ACCOUNTANTS IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Accountants in commerce and industry are **employed** by organisations to provide advice on financial matters or general management and may even serve as directors of the organisation. This group of accountants **form an integral part of the management.**



■ ACCOUNTANTS IN PUBLIC PRACTICE

Public Practice is the term used to describe **accounting firms** that are operated by individuals in sole-proprietorship or partnership / limited liability partnership. There are **more than 2,700 accounting firms in Malaysia** providing a wide range of services to individuals and organisations. *See more details of their services on page 15 - Engaging a Professional Accountant in Public Practice.*

■ ACCOUNTANTS IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING (ACADEMIA)

This group of accountants are involved in the **education sector**. Their involvement includes the training of future accountants, accountancy research and development matters.



■ ACCOUNTANTS IN PUBLIC SECTOR

Accountants can also choose to work in the **public sector**. These accountants are generally responsible for the administration and use of public money. They are **employed throughout the public sector, i.e. in government and statutory bodies.**

EMPLOYING AN ACCOUNTANT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

It is crucial to have an in-house finance function in your business. It does not matter if you are hiring an accountant or outsourcing the finance function. It all depends on your business requirements.



Setting-up an In-house Finance Function

- 1 Setting Up a Business Plan** – A business plan is needed even before you start your business. A business plan is key in determining what your goals are, i.e. income that you need to sustain your business and the expenses involved. At this stage, the drawing up of a business plan is often assisted by Small and Medium Practitioners (SMPs). Business plan are also required by the banks when you wish to request for financial assistance from the banks or financial institutions.
- 2 Determine the Business Objectives** – If your objectives are to make sure that all cash flows need to be monitored, i.e. collection of sales, issuance of cheques at the right timing and prompt payment to suppliers while making sure your business respects the credit terms granted by the suppliers, you can either have a dedicated accountant or even outsource the record keeping function. At this stage, your goals apart from the cash flow management is making sure that your business is fulfilling its statutory obligations such as ensuring your business accounts are audited, annual return is lodged accordingly, and your business pays its taxes.
- 3 Standardisation and Monitoring** – As the business grows, the business may require more timely information to feed into formal business plans and management decisions. Trained accountants are required to monitor cash flows and report on the progress and even improve the business process over time. At this stage, a higher level of financial skills is needed to serve the demand of business in the form of expansion, i.e. when the business needs more capital, the business may require more investors to invest in the business. Investors might need more timely information to satisfy their requirements.

Having a sound finance function depends on so many factors such as the size of the business, the budget that the business has and the external requirements of the business.

Source: Accountants for Small Business, ACCA, March 2013

Financial capability is not the result of business growth, but one of its causes

ACCA, 2012

Effective Use of Accountants in SMEs

Accountants can add value to SMEs in building a finance function that contributes to the success of your business by:

1

ENHANCING COMPLIANCE AND CONTROL

Accountants can play a crucial role in implementing financial controls and management to address the risks affecting the business and take care of compliance with laws and regulations relating to external reporting.

2

PROVIDING BUSINESS INSIGHTS

Accountants can provide valuable insights as partners to the business by providing relevant and timely performance management information to support decision-making and sustainable business growth. Greater insights could be facilitated through the use of technology.

3

DRIVING EFFICIENCY

Accountants can improve task performance and transactional efficiency by simplifying and enhancing processes through the use of technology.

4

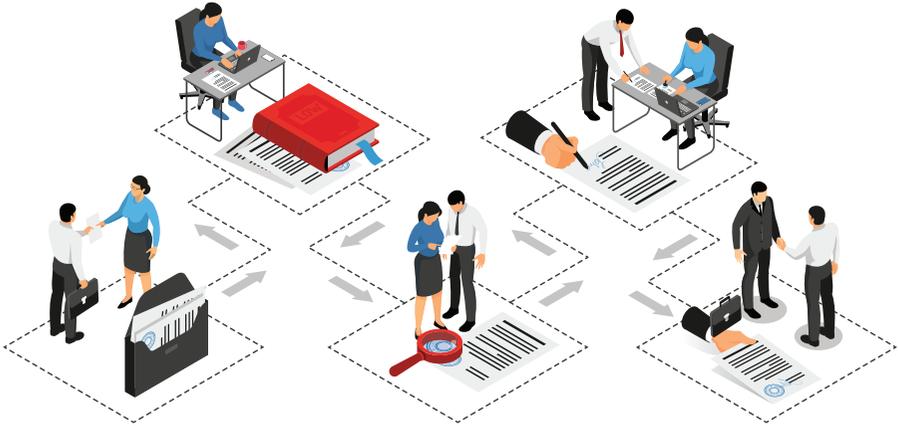
BRINGING PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES TO THE ORGANISATION

As trained professionals, accountants are expected to bring professional qualities to their role and encourage ethical behaviour and decision-making throughout an organisation. They are anchored by their fundamental principles of integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality and professional behaviour.

Source: Competency Framework for Finance Function in Public Interest Entities, June 2019 (MIA)

COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT OF ACCOUNTING PERSONNEL

After determining your need to hire in-house accounting personnel, you need to determine what qualifications your accounting personnel should have before beginning your recruitment process. **Differences in business structure, size and complexity of business will require different categories of accounting personnel with different qualifications and competencies.**



There are 3 key reasons why you should choose an MIA registered accountant:

1

MIA members have gone through a rigorous examination process to demonstrate their knowledge of accountancy. To be qualified, they must also have attained at least 3 years of practical experience.

2

MIA members are required to keep abreast with current issues and legislation and undertake continuous professional development to keep themselves up to date with changes in the regulatory environment.

3

MIA members are bound by a strict code of ethics and professional rules to ensure a high standard of ethical and professional conduct. If you encounter problems in determining whether an accountant is qualified, you should remember that **accountancy professionals registered with MIA are accorded the designation Chartered Accountant Malaysia or “C.A. (M)” which can be used by MIA members after their names.**

However, you would still need to engage a public practice firm to perform other public practice functions.

ENGAGING A PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT IN PUBLIC PRACTICE

Many small businesses **do not have the volume of financial transactions** that necessitate hiring a full-time in-house accountant. **Engaging an accounting firm** on a consultative basis might be a good first step for a new start-up:

- Professional services rendered by the accounting firm can often **cost less** than the salary and benefits of a full-time employee; and
- At the same time, you may be **getting a higher level of advice** from a Chartered Accountant.

■ ACCOUNTING FUNCTIONS

An accounting firm usually manages the following accounting functions on behalf of small businesses:

- Bookkeeping;
- Tax return preparation;
- Preparing financial statements; and
- Analysis or problem-solving advice.

■ AUDITING FUNCTIONS

Companies enjoying the privilege of limited liability must subject their businesses to statutory audits to safeguard the interest of third-party users and other stakeholders. An audit can be considered to be a service to the public at large and it is a small price to pay for the limited liability protection that a company enjoys. The Companies Act 2016 (CA 2016) empowers the Registrar of Companies to exempt companies from performing a statutory audit. The Registrar issued Practice Directive 3/2017 in August 2017 specify three types of companies which qualify for audit exemption, i.e. dormant, zero-revenue and threshold-qualified companies.

Audit licensing requirements

In Malaysia, only an **approved company auditor** can be appointed as a company auditor. An **approved company auditor** is an MIA member with a practising certificate who has passed an audit interview conducted by the Accountant General's Office and obtained **approval from the Ministry of Finance (MOF)** pursuant to CA 2016.

INDEPENDENCE REQUIREMENT OF AUDITORS

The provision of accounting and book keeping services on behalf of an audit client that is a public interest entity is prohibited in MIA By-laws.

An accounting firm cannot be deemed independent with regard to auditing financial statements of a client if it has participated closely in the preparation of the financial statements.

To regard an audit as merely a compliance exercise would be to lose sight of the potential value that a business can gain from a well-performed audit.

Please refer to the MIA booklet **“Why Audit Matters for SMEs”**
https://www.mia.org.my/v2/downloads/resources/publications/smp/2016/12/14/MIA_why_Audit_Matters_to_SMEs.pdf

■ OTHER MAJOR PUBLIC PRACTICE FUNCTIONS

Tax Compliance & Consultancy

Tax accountants usually assist clients in preparing tax returns and tax computation to **facilitate their clients in complying with all the tax requirements imposed by the IRB** and thus **avoid being penalised** for submission of improper returns or delayed submission of tax returns.



The tax accountant is also the right person to provide adhoc advice on specific tax issues as and when they arise.

The issuance of a tax agent license is **governed by Section 153 of Income Tax Act 1967** and it is issued by the MOF. Approval is only granted after the applicant has passed an interview conducted by the IRB.

Company Secretarial Services

The CA 2016 sets out an array of duties, responsibilities and guidelines that must be adhered to in administrating a company. **Failure to comply with the requirements of the CA 2016 can result in severe penalties, including the imposition of hefty fines and in extreme cases, even imprisonment.**

To be a company secretary in Malaysia, an individual has to register and hold a valid practising certificate from the Registrar of Companies irrespective of his or her professional background under Section 241 of the CA 2016.

An accountant can help with business operations within the boundaries of the Act and guide the company to take full advantage of the benefits and protection provided by the Act. An accountant can also assist with matters such as the formation of a company, lodgement of required documents, registration of business names and keeping the required books and registers up-to-date.

Internal Auditing

In addition to external auditors, many businesses now have outsourced their internal audit to examine and improve their business and accounting systems. As internal auditors, accountants would **review the organisation's accounting system and appraise the strengths and weaknesses of internal financial controls.**

Corporate Recovery / Insolvency

Corporate recovery involves **investigating businesses that have gone into financial difficulties**. Accountants dispense advice on financial viability, recommend rescue packages or administer insolvency procedures in the event of receivership and liquidation.

To be an approved liquidator, an individual has to obtain approval from the MOF under Section 433 of the CA 2016.

Management Consultancy and Management Accountants

Accountants are bona fide management consultants, having served as **advisors to a diverse range of businesses and industries**. They offer specialised services such as feasibility studies for new products and business projects, funding advice on capital restructuring and gearing, mergers and acquisition assistance in sourcing loans or equity capital, evaluation, design and implementation of new systems.

Financial Planning

Accountants have the requisite financial expertise to **advise and assist with financial planning, investment planning and estate planning**. An accountant can help clients decide on pension plans, insurance and the purchase of assets such as property, bonds and equities. An accountant is also qualified to act as executor or trustee for an estate.

In addition, professional accountants in public practice can also provide services such as forensic accounting, executive recruitment, information, communications technology, etc, depending on their scope and depth of expertise.



Growing SMEs make the most use of external advice

IFAC, 2016

KEY CRITERIA IN CHOOSING A PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT IN PUBLIC PRACTICE



GENUINE RECOMMENDATION

Wherever possible choose a firm that is highly **recommended by someone** you know or whose opinion you trust as a balanced independent view.



GO WITH A CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT OR A FIRM REGISTERED WITH MIA

Chartered Accountants are members of a professional body. They are **regulated** and there is an **independent governing body** to address your complaints (if any).

There are two types of public practice firms in Malaysia, i.e. audit firm (AF) and non-audit firm (NF). Both types of firm are registered with MIA and are known as MIA member firms.



ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

It is important to know the assigned key contact for your company **to forward inquiries** pertaining to the engagement.



SERVICE OFFERED & EXPERIENCE

Check that the accountant **offers all the relevant services** that you require. Consideration should be given to the accountant who is **familiar with your business or industries** that may have an impact on your business.



SIZE / RESOURCES OF THE FIRM

Ensure that the accounting firm has **enough staff force** in terms of size and expertise to fulfil your business needs.



FEES

Professional services are not cheap! It is important that you should **weigh the costs, efforts and benefits of the service**. Ensure that you are **aware of the basis** on which fees will be charged.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR PROSPECTIVE PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT IN PUBLIC PRACTICE

Different accountants have different specialisations. The key is finding an accountant that is the right fit for you and your business. These are some important questions you should ask before signing an engagement letter.

<p>WHAT ARE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS AND WHAT LICENCES DO YOU POSSESS?</p>	<p>Make sure they have an accounting qualification and they are members of MIA.</p> <p>In addition, your accountant can only provide you the following regulated services if he/she is a licence / practising certificate holder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statutory / external audit can only be provided by an approved company auditor under the CA 2016• Tax compliance and consultancy services can only be provided by a licensed tax agent under the Income Tax Act 1967• Liquidation and corporate rescue services can only be provided by an approved liquidator under the CA 2016• Company secretarial services can only be provided by a registered company secretary holding a valid practising certificate under the CA 2016• Accounting services can only be provided by an MIA member holding a valid practicing certificate under the Accountants Act, 1967
<p>WHO WILL BE ASSIGNED TO LOOK AFTER MY BUSINESS MOST OF THE TIME?</p>	<p>Partners of the firm might routinely pitch for your business, but who will be your regular contacts? Ask to meet them, so that your decision is made with greater confidence and realistic expectations.</p>
<p>CAN YOU PROVIDE BUSINESS ADVICE AND ASSIST IN THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF MY BUSINESS?</p>	<p>Consider practices that will provide regular financial reports on your business with additional commentary.</p>

<p>ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE ACCOUNTING / SOFTWARE PACKAGE USED IN MY BUSINESS?</p>	<p>If the firm uses a different type of software and is unfamiliar with the software package used in your business, there will be potential issues in data sharing. Exporting and importing data in a suitable format between two different software platforms can be time consuming and easily lead to errors.</p>
<p>HOW WILL YOUR PRACTICE HELP ME DEVELOP MY BUSINESS?</p>	<p>Think about where you want your business to be in 5 years and ask if the firm can deal with your needs. Consider choosing a practice that will assist you in the development of your business.</p>
<p>WHAT IS THE BASIS ON WHICH FEES ARE CHARGED?</p>	<p>Will you be charged on an hourly rate or fixed rate? Will you be charged for every phone call and also for travelling time?</p>
<p>WHAT ADDITIONAL SERVICES CAN YOU OFFER?</p>	<p>Consider practices that can provide you with extras or help you seek assistance on issues important to your business such as bookkeeping, IT support, etc.</p>

Another thing to consider: do a ‘google’ search of the firm for any positive / negative comments or articles about the firm.



HOW TO BUILD A GOOD ACCOUNTANT-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

To make sure you and your chosen accountant are always in sync, you must **honour the terms and conditions you sign** when you engage your accountant. You should always:

- Keep to proper records and/or deadlines;
- Discuss major issues with your accountant at all times;
- Pay your accountant on time and in accordance with the letter of engagement.



The cost will usually reflect your level of involvement – if you turn up at your accountant’s office with a black bag of receipts, do expect your cost to go up. If you **build a good two-way working relationship that can be profitable for both parties**, you will of course be rewarded with better service.

Avoid fixing your financial year end during peak periods especially in December, if you prefer more attention from your accountant. Clients who use a reliable and updated accounting software, have well-prepared documentation, hire knowledgeable staff and have quick responses to auditors’ requests, generally can negotiate for a better audit fee.

After you have been with an accountant for a while, it is usually prudent to review your relationship.

Ask yourself the questions such as the following:

- Is my business still getting value for money?
- Is my accountant knowledgeable and can communicate at my level?
- Does my accountant still suit the needs of my business?
- Is my accountant technology savvy and easy to be contacted?

You may find that as your business changes, your requirements for an accountant would also change.

WHERE TO FIND A PUBLIC PRACTICE FIRM AND A CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

The MIA Membership's Online Directory offers a range of information regarding Audit and Non-Audit firms such as Firm Name, Firm Registration Number, Head Office and Branch Addresses, Telephone and Fax numbers, Email and Website addresses.

The MIA online searchable member firms' directory can be accessed via https://www.mia.org.my/v2/membership/services/member_firms_directory.aspx

The MIA online searchable members' database can be accessed via https://www.mia.org.my/v2/membership/services/member_search.aspx

Choosing an accountant and developing an ongoing professional relationship should be a key decision and certainly, it is worth spending some time prior to making a decision.

Finding the right one for your business needs should result in you having an invaluable aid for your business as it progresses through the various stages of its business life-cycle.



MALAYSIAN INSTITUTE
OF ACCOUNTANTS

For enquiries, please contact:



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