**Speakers**

* Abhishek Chokshi, Senior Data Analyst, Aware Super
* Huy Chung, Advisory Committee Member, Senior Advisor TPG Capital
* Yvonne Teo Ee Wen, Deputy General Manager, Decon Inspection (energy firm)
* Shane Sang, Tax Partner, PWC Shanhai
* This year we have all been impacted by something different – COVID-19 has made everyone’s lives harder in terms of crossing locations and borders
* How do we continue learning and teaching?
* CPA now has an online exam version 2.0
* CPA participants are experienced and mobile
* With the rise of automation challenges and opportunities are available for CPA’s

Shane

* The change is something all the big 4 accounting firms are facing
* Automation eliminates repetitive work
* There is an opportunity to make an investment into firm infrastructure, digitisation tools to increase automation and people
* Python and Tableau automation tools and are important to learn
* It is important to check internally and adjust from repetition
* This will work for creative people who can stay at the front of a creative world
* Creation cannot be changed by digitisation

Abhishek

* Automation, creativity and big data are all interrelated
* Analyse trends and provide feedback to clients
* Analyse more efficiently with data tools and use our natural eye for number (as Accountants)

**COVID impacts, how would you or your business respond in preparing for recovery**

Huy

* Investments in cruise ships, health care and education
* Looked into liquidity – cash is king
* Stress tested the business
* Opportunities out of the crisis:
* healthcare, did COVID testing
* in cruise ships, offered ships as accommodation for quarantine
* Guided the business and looked at risk management

Shane

* China was the first country hit straight after the Chinese festival and the country went into lockdown
* Utilised online tools to stay close to clients
* Didn’t ask what clients needed, asked if they had masks as had the resources. This increased trust
* It is important to always support your partners

**What was your first job post-graduation?**

Yvonne

* Accountant for a medium sized firm for 3 years

Huy

* I was not a great student, but had vision and passion
* I noticed a local Vietnamese Accounting practice opened in Brisbane
* Approached and worked there gaining work experience
* Bult up my own clients in tax at the same time

Shane

* I have had one employer for 14 years because I am lazy
* PWC is a place like all the big 4 where you can develop yourself
* It has a clear career path
* Each grade represents the responsibility you will take on and the roles are different
* The environment pushed me forward
* I provide services to a variety of clients in due diligence in different industries with different people

**What skills are needed to thrive and how important are accounting skills in non-accounting roles**

Yvonne

* It is important to be adaptive and able to learn
* Accounting skills can lead to other roles
* Understanding how businesses function can allow you to take on any role and increase job satisfaction

Abhishek

* Breaking down complex issues into simple tasks helps to ensure you move forward
* Howard Marks talks about 2nd order thinking. 1st order is your first reaction, 2nd order is when you think about why
* Dealing with different stakeholders and using 2nd order thinking means you can deal with each as they are

**Advice on Long-term gains**

Huy

* You need to do a CPA as in the financial profession you need a core understanding and competencies
* Work on your self-branding to work on yourself
* Without branding career progression will be short lived and restricted

**Tips and tricks to find jobs**

Abhishek

* When I was 20, I completed an internship at a small CA firm
* The son of the CA Principal was doing deals and I wanted to join him
* I found common ground with him and proposed joining him in my third year, working on smaller deals
* He became my mentor
* Keep your eyes and ears open
* Try different things
* Become a member of a CPA discussion group and social club

Huy

* If you are going to move to a new country, expect it to be different
* Experience the culture and different personality types
* Embrace change, be humble and global
* Build relationships
* Have good cultural sensitivity

**Advice in terms of standing out**

Yvonne

* First impressions are important
* Have a good resume
* Be confident and proud of your achievements
* Be prepared, well presented and research the organisation you are interviewing at

Shane

* A big confident smile goes a long way
* Make genuine eye contact

**When is the best time to commence CPA exams?**

Serinder

* It is good to do the exams as soon as possible after university
* If you are pursuing a CPA, it helps in securing a job
* Employers are better able to gauge the extent of your knowledge

Will the CPA help develop my career?

Abhishek

* All education helps your career
* Constantly preparing for upcoming opportunities, helps prepare you for success
* You will continuously acquire skills
* This will set you apart and help you get CPA professional experience
* It helps in handling everyday work







