

## **SURVEY RESULTS: FUTURE OF ACCOUNTANCY - SEPTEMBER 2009**

### **ACCOUNTANCY PROFESSION CALL FOR NEW MEASURES TO ATTRACT GRADUATES**

*BIG 4 APPEAL: PWC and KPMG top of league but nearly two thirds want in-house positions*

Nearly half of the today's accountants (44%) do not believe enough is being done to attract graduates to the profession or to study accountancy, according to latest research conducted by CareersinAudit.com.

The research "Future of Accountancy" was conducted amongst 477 UK accountants during August 2009. Top solutions to attracting more to the profession included the industry embarking on a campaign to change the perception (14%), offering better training programmes (14%) or making more effort to visit universities (13%). Others believe the profession could be doing more to convey the breadth of benefits (9%).

Part of the problem may also lie at entry level; over a quarter of UK accountants (26%) say the application process could be improved. Many of these believe the current application process fails to provide a clear explanation of the role, the online process needs to be simplified and more user friendly and that recruiters should put more emphasis on a person's innate qualities and their experience.

For those that haven't been put off entering the profession, the top two choices for first job were PWC (14%) and KPMG (13%).

Other key highlights of the research include:

- Just over one in ten accountants (13%) were lucky enough to get offered their first job after their internship; however 10% admitted to applying to more than 20 firms before getting their first job in accountancy. The current climate is clearly taking its toll with 11% still trying to find a job.
- 24% of all accountants believe their family was the greatest influence in their decision to enter the profession.
- 70% of accountants already work abroad or would consider working abroad.
- 27% would choose to work in Western Europe, 20% in North America and 13% in the Middle East.
- 60% would prefer to work in-house compared to just 28% in practice.
- Nearly a quarter of accountants (24%) were not aware of an increase in accounting regulations this year.
- Nearly half (46%) believe accountancy is a job for life.
- 27% believe men are better paid than women but do not deserve it.

Max Williamson, Director of CareersinAudit.com added: "I believe attracting more people to the industry isn't about image alone or glamorising the profession with a series of slick advertisements. But it wouldn't hurt recruiters to take heed of the research and to invest greater time in explaining the long terms benefits and variety that come from being a qualified accountant, particularly at graduate level."