XYZ Accounting Firm

Staffing Guide

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Executive Summary

XYZ Accounting Firm is a service company founded as of 2001 to provide reliable and accurate consultation service and financial service to our clients. XYZ accounting firm, a regional leading accounting firm, is currently recruiting for an outstanding candidate to join the audit team. The quality and unique services we deliver help establish efficiency and effectiveness in the business world. We hope our business partners can grow their business as a result of our righteousness services. XYZ will provide necessary training and experience that will help start an individual’s auditor career. Audit Staff will work under an assigned mentor who will guide employees to discover their potential and hidden talents. We hope to be the unforgettable past when employees have achieved their career goals.

This staffing guide is a strategic staffing approach for the XYZ Accounting Firm. The staffing process outlined in this staffing guide will provide all readers with essential information to make reliable staffing decisions in the accounting field. This guide also includes the idea and concepts for staffing that can be useful to any managers and organizations.

Legal Compliance

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) provides a uniform standard on employee selection procedures. Under the regulation of EEOC, it is illegal to discriminate against an individual because of certain characteristics such as race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or genetic information. All these characteristics cannot be used in making hiring decisions.

Federal Law established by the EEOC forbids any organizations from using any employment policies and practices to negatively influence the result on applicants or employees due to certain characteristics such as race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or genetic information. If you discovered any unfair situation that is possibly a violation mentioned above, please report it to EEOC.

Each employee and job seeker is also protected by EEOC in the following aspect (Heneman 2011):

* Job advertisements, recruitment, and job referrals
* Application and hiring
* Job assignments and promotion
* Employment references
* Pre-employment inquires
* Discipline and discharge
* Pay and benefits
* Reasonable accommodation and disability, religion
* Training and apprenticeship programs
* Harassment
* Terms and conditions of employment, dress code
* Constructive discharge/forced to resign

Analysis

Summary of the position

This Audit Staff position is an entry-level position. The employee will work with various types of clients, and provide them with accurate and reliable financial consultation and financial assistance. This position can be full-time, part-time, or internship, depending on the preference of the applicant. The audit staff will report to the department manager on a regular basis and will perform assigned tasks.

Summary of the organizational context

This a small business which provides financial consultation and financial services. The mission of XYZ Accounting Firm is to create a better world by providing accurate and reliable financial advice to its clients. We treasure the future of our clients, and we hope to build a life-long relationship with them.

Summary of the source

The senior licensed CPA manager in the audit department has shared his knowledge about the audit position. He has worked in XYZ Accounting Firm for a decade and has gained solid accounting experience through working with the government and the clients regarding financial assistance.

Summary of the process

The senior licensed CPA manager has shared his opinion and perspective regarding the audit position. He has information about the job description because he has climbed the career ladder within the company and has worked in the audit position. His past work experience at the audit position has provided him sufficient information to evaluate the position. The ratings in the job matrix are scaled to the time spent on certain tasks. The more time spent on certain tasks means those tasks are more important to the specific position. The ratings represent the degree of skills needed to achieve a good performance within the tasks (the higher ratings, the fluent skill will be needed).

Job Requirement Matrix

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Tasks | | | KSAOs | | |
| Specific Tasks | Task Dimensions | Job Duty  (% time spent) | Nature | Importance to Tasks  (1-5 rating) | Require |
| 1.Type/transcribe letters, notes, and report from handwritten material or dictated copy to produce final copy, using word and excel program | A. Program processing | 10% | 1.Knowledge of typing formats | 4.5 | Y |
| 2.Knowledge of spelling and punctuation | 5.0 | Y |
| 3.Knowledge of Microsoft Office software | 4.0 | Y |
| 2.Assemble audit reports in accordance to the reporting standard of the CPA organization | B. Document processing | 12% | 1.Knowledge of accounting operations and policies | 5.0 | Y |
| 3.Examine financial statements, researched tax questions, ensured the records are accurate and reliable | B. Document processing | 12% | 1.Ability to proofread and correct work | 4.5 | Y |
| 4.Calculate clients’ finances to determine tax liability, through utilizing interest and discount rates, annuities, valuation of stocks, bonds, and assets | B. Document processing | 14% | 1.Skill in solving mathematical equations | 5.0 | Y |
| 5.Perform regular items check to ensure that the asset of clients are recorded correctly and disposed correctly | B. Document processing | 4% | 1.Skill in solving mathematical equations and counting | 4.0 | Y |
| 6.Continue other staff’s work if they were absent for certain reasons | B. Document processing | 4% | 1.Skill in completing unfinished work | 4.5 | Y |
| 7.Report to senior staff about audit results, changes in operations of clients’ firms, and financial activities. | C. Reporting | 14% | 1.Skill in interacting with diverse people | 4.0 | Y |
| 8.Compare and contrast the current audit work with previous work and document the changes | C. Reporting | 4% | 1.Skill in understanding and researching of previous work | 3.5 | Y |
| 9.Resolve questions of misunderstanding and other accounting compliance from government staff | C. Reporting | 1% | 1.Ability in interacting with government entity | 2.5 | N |
| 10.Meet up with potential clients to discuss about the accounting work they wanted | D. Customer Relation Management | 4% | 1.Skill in communication with clients | 3.0 | N |
| 11.Package mails and documents, then mail through post office | D. Customer Relation Management | 4% | 1.Ability in the understanding of mailing procedure and process | 3.5 | Y |
| 12.Communicate with delivery companies regarding documents delivery service and delivery schedules | D. Customer Relation Management | 5% | 1.Skill in interacting with supply chain | 3.5 | N |
| 13.Deliver urgent documents to the clients directly | D. Customer Relation Management | 2% | 1.Skill in problem solving | 4.0 | Y |
| 14.Contact clients as questions, doubts, or errors occurred during the audit process | D. Customer Relation Management | 6% | 1.Ability in understanding clients’ situation and perspective | 3.5 | Y |
| 15.Purchase office supplies and keep records of them in order to avoid interruption of insufficient materials | E. Supplies Maintenance | 4% | 1.Skill in keeping sufficient office supplies | 2.5 | Y |
| Job Context: Indoors, cubicle, business clothes, mostly sitting and standing, no environmental or job hazards. | | | | | |

Job Qualifications

The following qualifications are required for this entry-level position:

• A bachelor degree in accounting; a master degree in accounting is preferred.

• Certified Public Accounting license preferred; able to obtain CPA within 3 years of employment.

• Excellent customer service and communication skills.

• Extraordinary team working skills and document processing ability.

• Proficient in computer processing programs (M.S. word, excel, access, QuickBooks) and excels in customer relation management.

• Understands the accounting reporting standard and is able to report to audit managers in a timely fashion.

Candidates should also possess the following skills, abilities and knowledge:

• Able to work independently and handle multiple assignments in a fast-paced environment.

• The ability to identify financial problems and generate a solution.

• Able to perform quantitative analysis on financial reports.

• The ability to work productively with other assigned members.

• Fluent in both written and spoken English; Capabilities in multilingualism will be an advantage.

• Skill in understanding of mathematical components and solving mathematical equations.

• Understand accounting operation procedures and policies.

• Able to interact with people with diverse backgrounds and understand their perspectives.

• Able and willing to help other team members and perform tasks that might not be related to your position.

Having concentration in business operations and taxation will be a plus.

Job Description and Specification

Job Description

As the auditor, you will conduct financial and risk management audits that includes reviewing the accounts of companies and organizations to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the financial records and statements. You will also take the advisory role to generate reports and alternatives for possible improvement for our clients. You will work in the audit department with other auditors and under this challenging environment, you will examine financial statements and resolve tax issues.

Job Specification

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| License: | License to practice accounting consultation service and financial service. |
| Education: | Bachelor of Science in Accounting, Master of Science in Accounting is a plus. |
| Experience: | Prefer zero to one year experience working in customer service related position, or zero to one year experience working in financial service related position. |
| Skills: | Able to performance simple mathematic calculations, and willing to listen to customers’ feedback and needs. |

Recruitment Guide

Strategy

XYZ Accounting Firm is expecting to recruit qualified individuals externally. Becuse this position is an entry-level position, the qualified individuals will be invited to an interview. Open recruiting method is used in the recruitment process as it ensures the diversity of applicants.

Guide

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Position: | Auditor |
| Reports to: | Senior CPA manager |
| Qualifications: | Bachelor degree in Accounting  1 year or less work experience in customer service  1 year or less work experience in financial service |
| Relevant labor market: | Western region, United States |
| Timeline:  Week of 1/17:  Week of 2/1/17: | Conduct interviews with qualified applicants  Targeted hire date |
| Activities to undertake to source well-qualified candidates: | Newspaper advertising  Post job vacancy on company website  Request Employee referrals  University career fair |
| Staff members involved: | HR Recruiting Manager (The manager will in charge of the interview and make sure that the Senior CPA manager did not violate any regulation set by EEOC during the interview)  Senior CPA manager (The manager will need to interact with the qualified candidate to ensure that individual will fit well under his supervision) |
| Budget: | $2,000-$3,000 |

Job Advertisement

**Audit Vacancies in XYZ**

**XYZ Overview**

XYZ accounting firm, a regional leading accounting firm, is currently recruiting for an outstanding candidate to join the audit team. The quality and unique services we deliver help establish efficiency and effectiveness in the business world. We hope our business partners can grow their business as a result of our righteousness services. XYZ will provide necessary training and experience that will help to start your career. You will work under an assigned mentor who will guide you to discover your potential and hidden talents. We hope to be the unforgettable past when you have achieved your career goals.

XYZ accounting firm is looking for professionals to support the Audit teams in Chicago.

**Job description**

You will use a program to process documents, and will report to the manager on a regular basis. You will also perform tasks related to customer relation management and supplies maintenance.

The following qualifications are required for this entry-level position,

* A bachelor degree in accounting; a master degree in accounting is preferred.
* Certified Public Accounting license preferred; able to obtain CPA within 3 years of employment.
* Excellent customer service and communication skills.
* Extraordinary team working skills and document processing ability.
* Proficient in computer processing programs (M.S. word, excel, access, QuickBooks) and excels in customer relation management.
* Understand the accounting reporting standard and able to report to audit managers in a timely fashion.

Candidates should also possess the following skills, abilities and knowledge,

* Able to work independently and handle multiple assignments in a fast-paced environment.
* The ability to identify financial problems and generate a solution.
* Able to perform quantitative analysis on financial reports.
* The ability to work productively with other assigned members.
* Fluent in both written and spoken English; Capabilities in multiple languages will be an advantage.
* Skill in understanding of mathematical components and solving mathematical equations.
* Understand accounting operation procedures and policies.
* Able to interact with people with diverse backgrounds and understand their perspectives.
* Able and willing to help other team members and perform tasks that might not related to your position.

Having concentration in business operations and taxation will be an advantage.

In return for your contributions, we offer competitive salary as well as comprehensive, flexible employee benefits. If you are interested, please complete and submit your application to: [www.xyzaccountingfirm.com](http://www.xyzaccountingfirm.com)

**Recruitment process**

You will need to complete an assessment test before advancing through the selection process. Please check your email frequently. You will be notified for an interview within 3 weeks upon the application submission.

**Apply Today**

All applications must be submitted by Tuesday 20th December 2016. This position is open to every job seeker as we work with different clients from different backgrounds. It is necessary to have a diverse set of applicants; everyone is encouraged to apply. If you ever get declined for a position, do not hesitate to consider another position. We do consider applicants for another position that we believe is most suitable for them.

Budget

Recruitment Budget for 10 New Hires

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Administrative Expenses |  |
| Staff | 3,000 |
| Supplies | 100 |
| Equipment | 200 |
|  | $3,300 |
|  |  |
| Recruiter Expenses |  |
| Salaries | 3,000 |
| Benefits | 300 |
| Expenses | 100 |
|  | $3,400 |
|  |  |
| Candidate Expenses |  |
| Travel | 1,000 |
| Lodging | 1,000 |
| Fees | 1,000 |
| Relocation | 500 |
|  | $3,500 |
|  |  |
| Total Recruitment Expenses |  |
| $3,300 + $3,400 + $3,500 = | $10,200 |
|  |  |
| Total Cost per Hire |  |
| $10,200 / 10 new hires = | $1,020 |

Selection Plan

The selection plan contains the necessary KSAO which the applicants will have to go through in order to become qualified candidates. It is essential for each applicant to pass all the assessment tests since those tests are correlated to the job performance.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organization Name | XYZ Accounting Firm | | | | | | | |
| Title of the job | Staff Auditor | | | | | | | |
| Major KSAO Category | | Necessary for Selection? | Method of Assessment | | | | | |
| WP | CT | CB | ST | PI | Interview |
| 1. Knowledge of financial statements’ formats | | Y | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |  |
| 2. Knowledge of spelling and punctuation | | Y | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Knowledge of Microsoft Office software | | Y | ✓ |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Knowledge of accounting operations and policies | | Y |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |
| 5. Ability to attend to detail and accuracy | | Y | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |  |  |
| 6. Skill in solving mathematical equations | | Y |  |  | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |
| 7. Skill in generating mathematical algorithms | | Y |  |  | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |
| 8. Skill in completing unfinished work (of others) | | Y |  | ✓ |  | ✓ |  |  |
| 9. Skill in interacting with diverse people | | Y |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 10. Skill in understanding and researching of financial work | | Y |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |
| 11. Ability in interacting with government entity | | N |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12. Skill in communication with clients | | N |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13. Ability in the understanding of mailing procedure and process | | Y |  | ✓ |  |  |  | ✓ |
| 14. Knowledge of how to use office machines | | N |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15. Skill in problem solving in general | | Y |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 16. Ability in understanding clients’ situation and perspective | | Y |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |
| 17. Skill in keeping sufficient office supplies | | Y |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |  |
| WP = Word processing test | | | | | | | | |
| CT = Correction test | | | | | | | | |
| CB = Computer-based test | | | | | | | | |
| ST = Situation judgement test | | | | | | | | |
| PI = Phone Interview | | | | | | | | |

Assessment Method

|  |
| --- |
| Resume and Cover Letters |
| A resume will always be needed in any job searching circumstance. A resume will be a preview for me to have a general idea about the applicant. I do know that resume padding happens a lot. However, I can examine the degree of padding through a phone interview. If the applicant does qualify for the position (with and without padding as long as they are qualified), I would go through a phone interview.  I do hope applicants submit a cover letter along with their resumes. The cover letter will be optional in the application. This document allows me to understand the applicant in detail since applicants are able to introduce and explain their situation to me. Another reason I would prefer a cover letter is because it demonstrates the characteristics of the applicant. When a Cover Letter is optional, many applicants will choose not to submit it. However, I view submitting a cover letter along with a resume as a virtue. This action also represents the applicant is willing to go an extra mile for their duties if they are hired.  Receiving a resume and a cover letter do not build up much cost to the organization electronically. I would be able to select applicants without much cost constraint. |

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| Phone Interview |
| A phone interview will be used to contact qualified applicants. This is used to test the applicant in his or her communication skills. How well can the applicant receive the information? How well can he or her deliver his or her introduction and ideas to me through the phone? Through the phone interview, I can check the degree of resume padding because I will ask the applicants questions regarding their experience and qualifications. Another reason is that the phone interview is a low-cost assessment method which is fast and efficient. |

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| Structured interview |
| The structured face-to-face interview will be used to assess applicants’ KSAOs to project what their behavior would be in the future working environment. The interview is mostly situational based because large meta-analysis shows it is more valid than the experience based interview. I can use the predictors to predict their future success. |

|  |
| --- |
| WP = Word processing test |
| This is a test required at the end of the online job application. The goal for the applicant is to write an essay within a given timeframe. A topic is assigned with a few listed requirements and the applicant will have to write the essay which fulfills the requirements.  This will act as the writing sample of the applicant. Since word processing is a regular duty for this position, it is important for the employee to communicate through documentation and emails. |

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| CT = Correction test |
| This is also a test required at the end of the online job application. The applicant will need to complete a few multiple-choice questions. The applicant will need to pick the answers that contain no errors. This test is used to test the employees’ ability to pay attention to details. Financial statements have to contain the correct numbers as those are important to companies’ daily operations as well as companies’ tax liability. |

|  |
| --- |
| CB = Computer-based test |
| This is another test given at the end of the online job applicant. It contains mostly accounting knowledge. It is important to ensure the employees have sufficient background and knowledge to participate in the position. Employees have to follow accounting regulation, so they need to pass this test in order to advance in the hiring process. |

|  |
| --- |
| ST = Situational judgment test |
| The situational judgment test allows me to predict the future success of the employees. This test is multiple choice and timed. The applicant needs to make the right decision within a given time period. This allows me to understand how the applicants react under a stressful situation and gives me insight to those persons. Meta-analysis suggests that situational tests are valid in recruitment. The validity of situational judgment tests correlates with job performance (rxy= 0.26) (Heneman 2011). The research results also show the test has less adverse impacts against minorities; it also generates positive applicant reactions (Heneman 2011). |

|  |
| --- |
| PI = Phone Interview |
| After completing the tests (all those tests above) electronically handled by the computer system (screened out most of person/job mismatched applicants), the qualified applicants will be invited to a phone interview. The phone interview is low cost and can be arranged on short notice. The phone interview is used to evaluate the KSAOs of the candidates through discussing the past training and experience. |

Involvement

All of these assessment tests are conducted by a HR personnel and a Senior CPA manager. Two interviewers can reduce the possible unfair treatments towards the interviewee. It can also ensure the scoring system to be more accurate and reliable as the interviewers will discuss about the performance and reaction of the interviewees.

Interview Questions

The following are the necessary interview questions that must be answered by the interviewee. Please explain to the interviewees that they should try their best to answer all the questions during the interview. If they are not able to, please have them let us know the reason. All these questions are essential to the job duty. The auditor will need the following KSAOs to perfor regular duties. It is acceptable that the interviewees do not answer some questions, it allows us to know the necessary trainings in strengthening the candidates’ missing KSAOs.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **KSAO**  **Label** | **KSAO**  **Definition** | **Interview Questions**  **(Situational and Behavioral)** | **Rating Scale with Benchmark Responses Corresponding to (1) *Poor*, (3) *Average*, and (5) *Excellent* Performance** |
| 1. Skill in time management and teamwork | Have the capability to do tasks effectively and understand the priority of certain tasks. | *Situational*: Someone in your team received a sick leave. However, the audit report that the staff was working on is in a hurry. What would do you? | 1 – Keep working on assigned tasks without helping.  3 – Finish assigned tasks before working on that urgent report.  5 – Finish that report and submit it for review before the deadline. |
| 2. Ability in attention to details | Able to discover mistakes and errors on client’s financial statements. | *Situational*: While you were auditing client’s financial statement, you discover the statement contained mistakes and errors. What do you do? | 1 – Contact the client to resolve the issue.  3 – Contact the client to resolve the issue and report to the manager.  5 – Contact the client to resolve the issue, report to the manager, and record the changes on the audit report. |
| 3. Skill in interacting with diverse people | Able to communicate with others effectively and understand the perspective of people with different backgrounds. | *Situational*: You represent the company to gift an appreciation gift to a client who is a Chinese. Which gift would you pick, a clock, flowers, or gift card? | 1 – Clock. The object is a Chinese cultural taboo gift.  3 – Flowers. Depends on the kind of flowers, some flowers will be a cultural taboo gift  5 – Gift card. This is not a taboo gift which is acceptable under most of the circumstances. |
| 4. Ability in the understanding of mailing procedure and process | Ability to mail documents and have understanding in the different type of mail services. | *Situational*: Describe the general mailing procedure. What would you do if you mail a letter to the wrong address? | 1 – Mail the documents again.  3 – Mail the documents again and report the mistake.  5 – Report the mistake, mail the documents again, and try to retrieve the mail. |
| 5. Skill in problem solving in general | Able to resolve problems without the need to consume or occupy the time of another staff member. | *Situational*: If the copy machine broke down for whatever reason, and other staff were busy at the moment, what would you do? | 1 – Notify another staff that the machine is broken.  3 – Notify another staff member that the machine is broken and report the incident.  5 – Notify others that the machine is broken, report the failure of machine, and call the machine maintenance personnel to fix it. |

We are solely interested in the situational judgement questions since it allows the candidate to provide flexible answers. This auditor position is an entry-level position, so we do not expect the candidates to have much work experience. Therefore, we do not focus on behavioral questions besides the specialized questions above. Please complete the questions below that allows us to have a deeper understanding about the interviewee.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organization Related Questions | | | |
| General questions | Reasoning | Record interviewee’s answer below. All the answers will be discussed between the Senior CPA manager and the HR personnel. | Ratings (1-5 points) |
| 1.Why do you want to work in XYZ Accounting Firm? | Understanding the interviewee’s motivation will help us to determine the degree of effort one will put into the work. |  |  |
| 2.What are your strengths and weaknesses? | Understanding the strength and weaknesses allows us to provide necessary training in the long-term. |  |  |
| 3.What is your expected salary? | The interviewee should have a general idea about the company. It represents that the interviewee does research on the position. It is also negotiable regarding the salary because one might live far away from work and have higher travel expenses. |  |  |

Final Selection

After the interview, the questions in the above should receive answers. The interviewer will have to rate each of the questions during the interview. Point 1 is the lowest which represents the least favorable result (or answer). Point 5 is the highest which represents the most favorable result (or answer). Thus, the interview scores are yielded for each of the interviewees.

The Senior CPA manager and the HR personnel will each have their own scoring and rating in the corresponding staffing guide. The scores and ratings will be added up together to yield the total score without averaging the scores.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Interview scores (from CPA manager and HR personnel) + | Lowest possible points for each question is 1,  Highest possible points for each question is 5 |
| + |  |
| scores from all electronic assessment tests | Lowest possible points for each question is 0,  Highest possible points for each question is 1 |
| = |  |
| Total score |  |

We hope to be fair in treating all the applicants, candidates and finalists. Therefore, all the applicants, candidates and finalists will have to complete every section of the assessment tests which are WP, CT, CB, ST, PI and the interview. There should be no exception that an applicant, a candidate, or a finalist may excuse from those assessments. Another reason is that EEOC has regulations on the equality aspect. When we treat everyone equally, we are following the federal laws.

We will then rank the finalists in the order from the most desirable to the least desirable based on the results of discretionary assessments.

The job offers are extended to finalists on basis of their rank ordering, with the finalist ranked 1 (highest total score from assessment test and interview) receiving the first offer. If that person turn down the job offer or withdraws from the hiring process, finalist 2 receives the offer and so on.

References

Heneman, H. G., & Judge, T. (2011). *Staffing organizations*. Middleton, WI: Mendota House.