

On the Cultivation Pattern of International Accounting Personnel in China

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Abstract

This paper mainly explores the cultivation pattern of China's international accounting personnel in three aspects. First, detailed analysis on necessary qualities of international accounting personnel is conducted in knowledge structure, comprehensive ability, English communication ability as well as moral quality; second, the importance of cultivating international accounting personnel is elaborated on from the angles of the nation and enterprises; finally, the cultivation paths of international accounting personnel are explored in two aspects including university basic education and in-service training.

Keywords: International accounting personnel, Cultivation pattern, University basic education, In-service training

Ever since China's entry into WTO, the tendency of economic globalization has made accounting business more complex and therefore has increased the difficulty of accounting treatment and choice. With its economy melting into global economy, there have been some changes in Chinese accounting industry's demands for talents.

From a nationwide perspective, there are greater supplies than demands in general accounting personnel while in high-level personnel, especially those with all-round quality who are well informed of both international market rules and domestic laws and regulations, there is a severe shortage. Therefore, it is quite urgent to cultivate more international accounting personnel acting on international convention and having a good mastery of the rules for international accounting industry. Beginning with the necessary qualities of international accounting personnel, this paper analyzes the importance of cultivating international accounting personnel and explores relevant cultivation paths in two aspects including university basic education and in-service training.

1. Necessary Qualities of International Accounting Personnel

In complex economic environment, international accounting personnel should be complex ones with strong comprehensive ability. Specific requirements are listed as follows:

First, international accounting personnel should have reasonable knowledge structure. In addition to professional knowledge, they are also expected to have global outlooks, mastery of international accounting principles, market operation rules and relevant laws and regulations abroad as well as the latest industrial knowledge in order to stand at the forefront of their industry.

Second, international accounting personnel need to have strong abilities in analyzing and solving problems as well as in continued learning. They should have clear logic to find and summarize relations among complicated financial and non-financial information and effectively solve a variety of financial problems as well as monitor enterprises' economic operation. Besides, they should have strong thirst for knowledge and learning ability so as to update their professional knowledge at any time and to expand their knowledge structure and professional outlook.

Third, international accounting personnel should have favorable English communication ability in addition to professional and precise financial English to face up to fierce international competition.

Finally, favorable moral quality is also required. International personnel should have high morality, strong legal awareness and responsibility, serious attitudes towards their job and strong sense of service.

2. The Necessity of Cultivating International Accounting Personnel

From the perspective of the nation, the steps of China's economic globalization have been quickened especially after China's entry into WTO, making enterprises entirely exposed to a variety of uncertainty, changes and risks of the unified global market. Therefore, it has become a tough issue for China's accounting industry how to achieve effective management, control and accounting so as to reduce the risks and losses brought about by

global incorporation. In order to solve is problem, economic management personnel need to be internationalized, among which accounting ones are an important part. Accordingly, it is of practical significance to facilitate the internationalization of accounting personnel and to cultivate international accounting personnel.

From the perspective of enterprises, with China's entry into WTO, new accounting business has made accounting more complex, having great impacts on the confirmation, calculation, recording and report of traditional accounting. Besides, under the current circumstances of Chinese economic globalization and internationalization, enterprises should constantly optimize their operation and management, improve quality and reduce labor consumption to realize their operation goals in fierce competition. In order to be adapted to this requirement, accountants need to exert their prediction and decision functions while providing prompt, reliable and precise accounting information. On the whole, with the increasingly complex and advanced economic activities of Chinese enterprises, the service field of accounting has become wider and the key points in accountants' functions have changed correspondingly. Therefore, it is urgent to cultivate international accounting personnel.

3. The Measures to Improve China's Cultivation Pattern of International Accounting Personnel

3.1 Reforming Accounting Major in Universities to Adapt to International Demands

Seen from the employment of accounting graduates in recent years, China's accounting teaching is not quite satisfactory. Many employing units say their newly-recruited graduates have poor ability in associating theory with practice and lacks necessary knowledge structure and ability structure. Therefore, it is inevitable to have reform in accounting in universities. Based on the current situation, this reform should be internationalization-oriented to cultivate undergraduates to be equipped with the necessary qualities for international accounting personnel and to lay a solid basis for them to be qualified international accounting personnel in their future career. Based on my analysis on the problems lying in universities' accounting education in four aspects including teaching content, teaching methods, practical teaching and teaching staff, I come up with detailed reform plans.

3.1.1 Teaching Content

Teaching content is mainly manifested in teaching materials, the quality of which directly influences that of teaching. Nevertheless, the quality of the existing accounting teaching materials is far from satisfying due to its laggard content and excessive emphasis over domestic accounting principles. With the rapid development of economic integration and increasingly frequent international economic exchanges, there have been great changes in enterprises' demands for accounting staff's knowledge structure, that is, requiring them to grasp the latest domestic and international accounting principles. Obviously, the current teaching material system for accounting in universities focused on domestic accounting principles is no longer fit for the demands of internationalization. In order to change this, universities should be bold to innovate to form a series of new teaching material system satisfying international demands with Chinese characteristics. These teaching materials should be based on quality education and focused on cultivating students' abilities in analyzing and solving problems with its ultimate goal of laying solid basis for students' future job with their reasonable knowledge structure. In my opinion, the reform in teaching materials should be conducted in the following three aspects: first, the temporal spirit of content should be enhanced. Universities are expected to constantly adjust the content of their teaching materials according to the latest achievements in relevant academic construction in China. Second, teaching materials should be more practical. Compilers should take the variety of examinations relevant to accounting personnel when compiling textbooks, such as accountant qualification examination, national qualification examination for accounting technique, China CPA Examination and some foreign CPA examinations including ACCA, in order to help students to pass these examinations smoothly and to increase their value in finding a job after graduation. Finally, teaching materials should be more international. Teaching materials should better follow international accounting principles and in some courses original English textbooks can be used along with bilingual teaching, hence improving students' English ability.

3.1.2 Teaching Method

In addition to reasonable knowledge structure, better analysis ability is also required among international accounting personnel. Currently, however, most universities still employ the traditional way, that is, teachers mainly impart knowledge into students while students only absorb it passively and inflexibly. Such a teaching pattern fails to give students enough time and space for them to cultivate analysis ability, hence influencing their enthusiasm and activity for learning as well as their ability in furthering their study spontaneously. As a result, no international accounting personnel can be cultivated. In my opinion, the reform in teaching method should aim at the qualities necessary for international accounting personnel to create a new teaching method conforming to

international demands. This new method is to emphasize teacher-student interaction at class in which students take the subject position while teachers take the dominant role with the goal of encouraging students' enthusiasm and activity and improving their abilities in analysis and innovation, hence laying a solid basis for their being international accounting talents some day.

3.1.3 Practical Teaching

International accounting talents need to have both profound theoretical basis and strong practical ability. However, influenced by traditional ideas, practical teaching is hard to be carried out and suffers from poor effect. In my opinion, the traditional idea that theory outweighs practice should be changed and teaching material construction related to practical teaching should be enhanced to conform them to the demands in cultivating international accounting personnel and therefore satisfy employing units' demands. In addition, universities should create more funds and bases for students' practice in order to prepare them better for their future job.

3.1.4 Teaching Staff

There will be no international accounting talent without excellent teaching staff. However, with many problems, current teaching staff in universities needs to be improved in their overall quality. First, teachers are expected to have favorable moral quality, with which it can be possible to cultivate college students with favorable moral quality and prepare them well to be excellent international accounting talents. Second, teachers should improve their theoretical ability. On one hand, universities should encourage their teachers to further their study by taking on-job postgraduate course and doctorate course; on the other hand, teachers are also expected to keep a close eye on the latest development of accounting industry and grasp the latest academic achievements in order to convey them to their students. Finally, teachers should also improve their practical ability. As long as their teaching is not disturbed, they should step out of school to enterprise and accounting firms for part-time practice so as to improve their abilities in understanding, analyzing and solving practical problems and to lay a favorable basis for the improvement of practical teaching.

3.2 Training Excellent In-Service Accounting Personnel to be International Accounting Talents

Basic education in universities is the basis for cultivating international talents while in-service training serves as the key to it. Relevant documents laid down by China's Ministry of Finance should be based on, such as CFO Ability Framework in China and Instructions for Required Abilities of CPA in China, to establish a set of scientific and systematic training plans.

First, excellent on-job accountants with favorable basis and potentials should be selected as the subject of training. Due to the importance of international accounting personnel for the whole industry, we have to stand at a high starting point to choose those who are honest, reliable, energetic, powerful, of great potential from on-job advanced accountants, CPA as well as those engaged in accounting theories according to the principle of openness, fairness and justice. During the course, written tests should be combined with interviews and daily performance should be combined with test result. In addition, such tests should give priority to proficiency instead of just knowledge.

Second, these selected accountants should be trained with scientific training plans. Priorities should be given to their ability and the pattern of combining intensive training and on-job learning as well as class teaching and applied research should be used to fully cultivate and improve the trainees' comprehensive ability. As for specific training plans, I have the following suggestions: first, the training should be pertinent. Specific training program should be established and trainees should be consulted for advice in order to achieve education in accordance with students' aptitude. Second, a platform for scientific research should be set up to achieve the combination of intensive training and on-job learning. During intensive training, domestic and foreign prestigious experts can be organized to train the trainees in an all-round way to expand their comprehensive quality; after training, trainees can be organized to conduct project research, academic exchanges and on-job learning to improve their abilities in application and solving problems. Finally, a platform for trainees to display their abilities should also be created. For example, they can be given priorities to participate in projects, academic research, investigations, investigation trips abroad, establishment of principles and institutions as well as academic conferences to grow up to be excellent international accounting talents through learning and practice.

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