



MY JOURNEY TOWARDS BEING A CIA

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IIAM Membership Category : Professional Member, CMIIA



MY STORY BY TEH HUI HUI

1. Why did you decide to pursue a career as an internal auditor?

I have always had a keen interest in the various processes that make up a successful business. It was this drive that served as impetus for me to pursue a career as an internal auditor. This career path, I believe, would put me in good stead to gain exposure to many different functions which could potentially lead to better career mobility.





2.

How important is an Internal Auditor's role in the organisation?

In my opinion, the key role of internal audit is to provide independent assurance on the effectiveness of the internal control framework. It would act as an oversight after risk and controls might have been properly identified by business process owners.

In addition, competent internal auditors can build good rapport with business process owners as they can also help raise employee awareness on the risks and controls of their daily practices.

Furthermore, internal auditors might be able to identify areas for improvement where processes may be streamlined and efficiency improved. An effective internal audit function would naturally increase an organisation's credibility to stakeholders.

3.

What is the typical challenge internal auditors generally face? And amongst them, can you highlight what would be one of the biggest challenge?

There are a multitude of typical challenges that generally beset internal auditors. They encompass, amongst others, tight deadlines, unplanned interruptions and uncooperative auditees. There will usually be several audit projects to be accomplished in a year where manpower can sometimes be limited.



Unplanned interruptions can occur during the audit assignments which can stem from mundane events such as auditees not being available, team members going on emergency leave, system problems and staff resignations etc.

Hence, how to manage those unplanned interruptions in order to preserve the project timeline could be great challenge.



The next challenge would be liaising with uncooperative auditees. There may be several reasons leading to uncooperative auditees e.g. they themselves suffer from lack of manpower, they have had bad experiences with internal audits, they do not understand the expectations etc.

Out of these typical challenges, I opine that to understand the business subject and the commensurate potential risks pose the biggest challenge. This is because the business processes might be complex and may come with different requirements i.e. regulatory, internal policy, group policy and so on.

Additionally, the environment can be very fluid. Internal auditors need to be sufficiently agile to adapt to any changes to stay relevant to business subjects.

4.

Does the Institute play a role in supporting your Internal Auditor scope of work? If yes, in what ways? And if no, what can we do better?

It would however be greater if complimentary classes and/ or reading materials be provided to internal auditors to keep up with the everchanging environment, i.e. sharing of new technologies.

5.

Would you recommend IIA Malaysia to your fellow IA colleagues?

For IA colleagues who intend to further enhance their internal audit knowledge, I would wholeheartedly recommend IIA for them. As this will be one of the platforms for them to stay relevant in the field of internal audit.





6.

What motivated you to take the CIA exam?

For me, I have always had the interest to gain a professional certification in internal audit. Thus, when the pandemic happened, I decided to sit for the CIA exam.

7.

What were the challenges you encountered when attempting the CIA exam?

The challenges I encountered when attempting the CIA exam revolved around unforeseen workplace and personal incidents which happened despite having planned for my study leave which would directly adversely impact my exam preparation.

8.

How did you manage your study time while working?

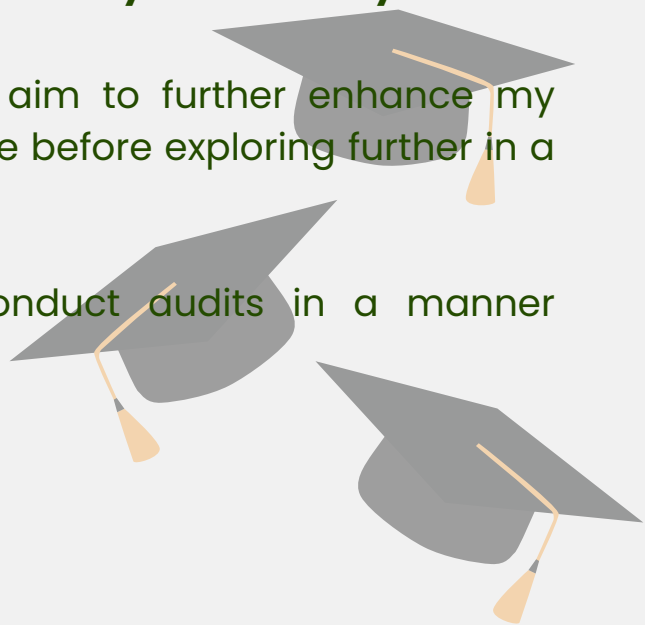
To effectively manage my study time whilst working, I set regular study milestones and was cognizant to practice a degree of good work - life balance. It has always been a bedrock principle of mine that a good balanced life schedule would help better motivate me to accomplish my goals.

9.

As a CIA certified professional, where do you envision yourself?

As a CIA certified professional, I aim to further enhance my relevant knowledge and experience before exploring further in a governance role.

Besides that, I also strive to conduct audits in a manner consistent with CIA doctrines.





10.

How important is CIA for an internal auditor?

CIA can be important for internal auditors as it can aid auditors in ascertaining the appropriate principles to be applied in internal audit. This would inadvertently uplift the confidence level of internal auditors.

Moreover, being certified professional could also boost the competitiveness of one's career development.

11.

Please provide 3 main advice for those attempting to take the CIA examination?

My three main pieces of advice for those attempting to take the CIA examination are :

- a) To keep an open mind for new knowledge,
- b) To be disciplined and
- c) To remain committed.

