

PROFILE



- **Name:** Mazrina Mokhtar, 54
- **Current employment:** Vice President at the Internal Audit Department, Retirement Fund Incorporated
- **Work experience:** Started off my career working as a law lecturer at a private institution. Joined the internal audit department at EPF which gave me my first taste of what internal audit is all about. Joined my current company in core operations for several years and now I am now back in the Internal Audit department in KWAP.
- **Education background:** Law Degree from the Polytechnic of East London, Certificate in Legal Practice, Double-Master's Degree in Islamic Finance at the International Centre for Education in Islamic Finance (INCEIF).



MY STORY by MAZRINA MOKHTAR

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

As internal auditor we are required to engage with different business units to understand the operations within an organisation. By pursuing a career as an internal auditor, I am able to dive deep into these processes to provide insights and objective perspective of governance, risk and control for the growth of the organisation.

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

We are the third line of defence. Our role is critical in supporting the organisation to achieve its strategic goals by providing valuable insights in terms of governance, risk and control within the organisation's overall governance structure.

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

Sometimes, there are misconceptions on our roles as internal auditors within the organisation. I believe, to be effective we need to work together as a team and gain the trust of our audit clients. At the end of the day, we aspire to be the trusted partner who provides value added services to our audit clients.

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?

I must say that the Institute (IIAM) has been very supportive by providing relevant and good quality trainings to enhance the skills, knowledge, and competencies of internal auditors. From my personal experience, they are always ready to help and assist wherever possible should we require their assistance.

5. Would you recommend IIA Malaysia to your fellow IA colleagues?

I highly recommend IIA Malaysia to fellow internal auditors who wish to embark on a successful career as internal auditor.

6. What motivated you to take the CIA exam?

I decided to enroll for the CIA certification program since it is the only globally recognized internal audit certification. It enhances my credibility, skills and proficiencies in line with the best practices of internal audit.

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

The passing rate of CIA exam is only about 40%, so CIA exams are extremely challenging in particular CIA Part 3. The study material was voluminous and the time to study was limited since I also have other commitment in my present job. I must say that although sitting for the CIA professional exam is definitely exhausting, it is definitely a worthwhile experience. At the same time, I am quite fortunate that my company is supportive and encourages its employees to embark on continuous learning and improve ourselves at our own pace.

8. How did you manage your study time while working?

Since I was working full time, I had to create a realistic study plan for me to be able to cope with my study, attending revision classes, doing practice exam questions etc while at the same time, performing my audit roles. Although CIA candidates are given 4 years to complete the CIA exam, I'm glad to say that, alhamdulillah I managed to pass all my CIA papers within a year.

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

Given the opportunity, I would like to take up a bigger role to lead. I also wish to contribute my knowledge and experience with fellow internal auditors by becoming a trainer or a speaker in the future.

10. How important is CIA for an internal auditor?

If you want to build a successful career as an internal auditor, then CIA is a must. It adds credibility and respect to your credential as a professional internal auditor.

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

Be prepared in advance of the challenges that you will face once your start embarking on this journey. Stay focused, minimize distractions, and avoid procrastination wherever possible.