



Interview and write-up  
By Rhys Brabiner

## Practical Experience: Views from the Ground



**Authorized employer:**  
Stella W.M. Kwok & Co.

**Member-in-charge:**  
Ms. Stella Kwok, Partner

**Registered as an AE:**  
4 years

**No. of QP students under supervision:**  
8

### The right fit

As the founder of Stella W.M. Kwok & Co., a small sized CPA firm based in Hong Kong, Ms. Stella Kwok has a passion for her work. She believes the accountancy profession is not just about numbers but also working along with people to provide solutions.

Stella established the firm in 1995. What distinguishes SWMK from other similar sized firms is the higher proportion of its overseas clients. "Our client list has been expanding through recommendations. The quality service we provide is all the advertising we need," Stella said. The firm is now employing 20 staff providing services in the areas of auditing, taxation, financial reporting and company secretary.

### Putting the talent in place

In order to develop and drive the business forward, the firm is looking for graduates with the right character, attitude and skills. The firm has been an authorized employer under the Hong Kong Institute of CPAs qualification programme since 2004, currently with eight QP students. "This is a perfect match as our service areas correlate exactly with the training modules of QP," Stella said. "Our QP students get the essential experience from the job. At the same time, we benefit from the skills and knowledge acquired by them through QP."

When new staff join SWMK, they will go through induction. However, Stella added that as a small firm, resources are limited. That is where QP provides the foundation training for competency and standards required within the profession. "I have to ensure we select the right candidates with the right character for the work. The technical expertise can be taught but it is hard to change someone's personality or mentality," Stella said.



### Getting the best from your talent

“We have two counsellors who coach and monitor the progress of the students. In a small office like ours, counsellors and students work closely with each other. This provides more opportunities for discussion and interpersonal communication, which help equip students with the necessary skills for workshop training.” Stella said.

Every quarter the counsellors will track the job duties covered by the students to ensure that they have obtained the areas and skills required by the practical experience framework. The firm also provides study and examination leave to enable the students to get good results and study balance.

In the QP studies, students acquire basic knowledge of varied industries and business environments. “That keeps it interesting,” Stella said. “We try to link up the practicality of the QP to the student’s work within the firm. Also, we encourage our students to get the most from workshops as what they learn from the cases can usually be applied in real life situations.”

The training process takes commitment but worths our while. “It is rewarding when our clients are satisfied with the quality services provided by our staff – gaining respect and trust from our clients is our ultimate goal.” Stella said.

Prospective CPA  
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