

ACCOUNTING+ ACTIVITY B

CAREER PANEL DISCUSSION

EVENT OVERVIEW

- This activity is optimized for volunteer opportunities involving 2 or more Accounting+ volunteers. Volunteers will kick off with an interactive icebreaker, followed by a panel discussion to help reveal the many benefits an accounting background can bring.

EVENT FORMAT

- This 45-minute activity can be facilitated either virtually or in-person. Please reference the sample talking points below for instructional tips and best practices for maximizing student engagement.

MATERIALS

- Run of Show
- Mad Libs Icebreaker Activity

PREPARATION BEST PRACTICES

- Please review this Run of Show and the event materials prior to your classroom visit. We strongly encourage you to demo the Accounting Careers: Limitless Opportunities digital course to better understand the background knowledge students will have been exposed to. Instructions for how to access the course can be found in the [Volunteer Toolkit](#).

Agenda

TIME	EVENT COMPONENT
5-10 minutes prior to the event	VOLUNTEER ARRIVAL Virtual events - Volunteers should log onto the virtual meeting platform at least 5 minutes prior to the event start time. In-person events - Volunteers are encouraged to arrive at the school at least 15 minutes prior to the event start time to allow time for visitor check-in with the main office.
Event Begins	STUDENT ARRIVAL Students begin to log onto the virtual meeting platform or arrive to their classroom.
5 minutes	WELCOME REMARKS AND INTRODUCTIONS What is Accounting+? Volunteer Introductions
10 minutes	ACCOUNTING MAD LIBS ICEBREAKER
20 minutes	PANELIST DISCUSSION
5 minutes	Q&A
5 minutes	CLOSING REMARKS

Suggested Talking Points and Instructional Tips

I. ARRIVAL

- For virtual events, please plan to log onto the meeting platform at least 5-10 minutes prior to the event start time. We encourage all volunteers to test their audio and video functionality during this time. Volunteers should present with cameras on.
- When attending in-person events, volunteers should arrive a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the event start time. Please consider time for parking and visitor check-in with the main office when planning your visit. Be sure to ask the teacher if there are any specific parking or arrival instructions that you should consider.

II. WELCOME REMARKS AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Hello students! We are so excited to be here with you today and to have the opportunity to share our personal experiences regarding how a background in accounting has helped us achieve the type of career and lifestyle we were looking for. Regardless of whether you are interested in an accounting career or not, it's important that at your age you are exposed to a variety of careers so that you can carve your own path after high school.
- Before we dive in today, we'd like to share a little bit of information with you all on what brought me/us here today.
- Accounting+ is a national initiative that was created in collaboration with The Center for Audit Quality and leading accounting firms across the country who are passionate about introducing the next generation of students to the limitless opportunities a career in accounting holds.
- That's why we've partnered with EVERFI to build the Accounting Careers: Limitless Opportunities digital course and help show students like you why accounting just might be a career worth considering.
- Now that you know why we are here, let's start with some introductions!
 - (Recommended response time of 1-2 minutes each) Each volunteer should introduce themselves by sharing:
 - First and last name
 - Firm/organization
 - Position/role
 - Key responsibilities and job duties

III. ACCOUNTING MAD LIBS ICEBREAKER

- Now it's time to hear from you all through an icebreaker activity.
 - If presenting virtually, ask teacher to print out Mad Libs activity and distribute to students.
 - If you are presenting in-person, print out Mad Libs activity and distribute to students.
- If you've never played Mad Libs before, here's how it works: One player acts as the "interviewer" and reads the prompts below the blanks and writes their partner's response into the blank on the Mad Libs sheet. Once all the blanks have been filled in, you'll switch positions and repeat the activity.

- You will only have 2 minutes per partner to complete the Mad Lib so be sure to work efficiently! I will yell out “TIME TO SWITCH” to cue you and “TIMES UP” when it’s time to return to your seats.
- Great! To begin, grab a pencil and a piece of paper/notebook and stand up. When I say “GO” you will begin walking around the room. When I yell “STOP”, you must find the person nearest you to partner with and begin the activity?
- Does anyone have any questions?
- Great....then let’s “Go!”
 - Volunteers should float across the room and listen into groups as students complete the activity.
 - The lead volunteer should track the time and cue the students when it is time to transition.
- Well done, everyone. Please make your way back to your seats.
- Who wants to volunteer to read their partners Mad Lib to the group?
 - As students volunteer, ask them to stand up and have their partner stand as well. As one partner reads, you may ask the other to follow and share with the class.

IV. PANELIST DISCUSSION

Consider having a lead volunteer play the role of panelist moderator and having all volunteers standing or sitting at the front of the classroom. The lead will be responsible for posing the question to the other panelists. Choose one panelist to answer first and then ask the other panelists if they have anything additional they would like to add. You may then ask the next volunteer to respond first to the following question, allowing others to add on. Repeat this process with a few (or all) of the questions below, but be sure to monitor the time!

- **Q: Is it true you need to be really good at math to get into accounting?**
 - **Suggested Talking Points:** Prepare to share how math is used in your day-to-day job responsibilities.
 - **Sample Response:** Not exactly. Thanks to Technology and AI, most of the math and boring stuff is automated which allows me to spend my time doing work that interests me like...(examples: analyzing the numbers to help businesses make decisions, solving puzzles that help prevent fraud, managing finances for brands or celebrities)
- **Q: What makes accounting a critical skill that is attractive to many employers?**
 - **Suggested Talking Points:** Consider sharing a personal anecdote around how Ana accounting background has helped lead to your career success.
 - **Sample Answer:** Accounting requires you to learn how to make sound financial decisions which can help open doors in the future...on top of that, every single industry and company needs an accountant. Whether you have aspirations of working for big tech, making it in the entertainment industry, or working for the FBI, all of these industries depend on accountants to get the numbers right.
- **Q: Why might high school students consider an accounting track?**

- **Suggested Talking Points:** Consider sharing your own personal story about what led you into accounting and why you're glad your path took you there!
- **Sample Answer:** It's a very stable profession, In other words, as long as there is business to be done, there will be a job for accountants. Along those same lines, because accounting is used in every line of business, it gives us tons of freedom to find jobs anywhere we want.
- **Q: Do you have any career tips or general advice for students as they prepare for life after high school?**
 - **Suggested Talking Points:** Consider the students grade levels. If they are freshman or sophomores, you might share advice around things they can be doing now to prepare for college like focusing on their academics or getting a job or internship as they begin to explore what interests them and what kind of careers they could see themselves getting into. If you are presenting to juniors and seniors, you might share advice regarding how they can be successful in college or early career.
 - **Sample Answer:** There's lots you can be doing right now to help yourself figure out what type of career might be a good fit for you. Whether that's a summer job, internship, or after school club, consider what you can be exposing yourself to now to better prepare you for the future. Remember, its highly unlikely the first job you get right after high school or after college will be the career path you decide to go down...but the more experiences you open yourself to, the more you'll learn about what you enjoy and don't enjoy, what your skilled at vs not so good at, or what type of job is sustainable for the lifestyle you are looking for. You don't have to have it all figured out, but by giving yourself plenty of experiences, you'll be one step ahead of the game.

● **ADDITIONAL PANELISTS QUESTIONS:**

○ **CAREER-FOCUSED**

- What's one habit that you think has been helpful in growing as a professional?
- What is one thing you wish you knew when you started your career?
- Do you have advice on how to find great jobs? (networking, LinkedIn, jobsites, Etc.)
- What do you look for in a prospective company when determining if you want to work there?
- What is the most rewarding part of your job? What is the most challenging?
- Can you tell us how you got started in your career and what inspired you to choose a career in the financial services industry?

○ **ACCOUNTING-FOCUSED**

- What would you say are the benefits of understanding accounting in the real world?
- Can you give students some tips on how to set up accounting principals in their personal budgeting?

- *What steps could students do right now to help prepare for financing college and an accounting degree?*
- *What is the workplace flexibility like in an accounting job?*
- *Do you get to travel when you are an accountant? How much, and where have you been?*
- *What's the most critical skill you learn as an accountant?*
- *Can you be your own boss when you're an accountant?*
- *What types of industries hire accountants?*
- *Is accounting a stable career?*

V. Q&A

- We would now like to open the floor up to any questions you may have. These can be questions about future careers, our jobs at the Center for Audit Quality, or follow-up questions you have about accounting as a career or the Accounting+ course.
 - *Students may be shy at first, but remind them that you are there to help them. If they don't have any questions, feel free to talk a little bit more about your career and share advice.*

VI. CLOSING REMARKS

- Thank you for inviting us to join your classroom today. We are so excited and honored to have had the chance to share a bit of our own career journeys and advice with you today. At the Center for Audit Quality, we believe that we can help our communities become better places to live. By doing that, we strive to help the people in our communities create strong futures.