

# ORANGE COUNTY BUSINESS JOURNAL



## Top 5 Reasons Accounting and Finance Professionals Select a Career Opportunity

by Ron Proul, CEO, Century Group International

As companies compete for highly sought after accounting and finance professionals, they often turn to us for insights on what is important to top talent when making career decisions. In our annual salary survey, we asked participants the main reasons they selected their current career opportunity over others. While surprising on many fronts, the answers make perfect sense from a community of career-minded accounting and finance professionals.

Below are the top 5 reasons accounting and finance professionals gave for selecting their current job:

**5) Commute.** All things being equal, limiting the time spent on the road is a deciding factor for many professionals. This is just a practical matter for accountants and it does add up. No matter how great the job, a long commute adds hours to a day that could be spent in the office being more productive or at home. For professionals who realize they will have peak workload periods, the extra effort to be productive is better spent in the office rather than on the freeway.

**4) Work life balance and flexibility.** This has been a hot topic and became particularly newsworthy this year when Yahoo's CEO Marissa Mayer called every Yahoo employee in a work-at-home arrangement back to the office. Employers are struggling to find a balance between the synergies of having all employees on-premise and the unique personal needs of key employees. In our constituents' view, being in the office a reasonable amount of time, and being able to manage your life with some flexibility ranks high on the list.

**3) Compensation and Benefits.** For accountants, you would think the numbers would do the talking, but it turns out that is not necessarily the case. While compensation is important, and in the top three, only one in six candidates reported compensation as the number one criteria for choosing their current job. That leaves over 80 percent making the choice for reasons other than compensation and benefits. Money can't buy happiness for all.

**2) Company culture and fit with the management team.** Most people spend more time at work than at home so wanting to enjoy where you work shouldn't be a big surprise. For over 20 percent of our respondents, having the right culture, with the right management is what it was all about. Candidates want to fit in with the company culture, management team, values and mission. Professionals want to work with like-minded people in ecosystems they can thrive in.

And the top reason for selecting their current job according to this year's survey:

**1) Growth opportunities and challenges.** What's in it for the candidate is just as important as what's in it for the company. Growth opportunities on both a career and personal level; for skills, for advancement, for reward from a challenging job is the top

reason candidates made their job selection. Motivated professionals looking to stay at the top of their profession want to be challenged by their work and know there is an opportunity to advance. Nearly 30 percent of all respondents cited this as the number one reason for selecting their current job, demonstrating that candidates see a career opportunity as reward for a job well done and an investment in the future.

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### Ron Proul

Ron Proul is a noted expert on executive recruitment. He is one of Southern California's foremost executive recruiters and CEO of Century Group International. He has been featured in the Wall Street Journal Online, Fordyce Letter and Los Angeles Business Journal. During his 23 years at Century Group, Proul has completed more than 500 CFO, executive and management searches for leading entertainment, manufacturing, technology, real estate, and private equity firms. Proul has served on numerous committees and boards and is currently a judge for the annual CFO of the Year Awards.



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