

KPMG



Richard Warren-Tangney and Refilwe Taeli

Every year you are promoted to a more challenging task but there is still a support structure in place.

KPMG has been ranked as one of the top 10 ideal employers, what differentiates your company from the other auditing firms?

Richard: There are two main reasons. Firstly, we are truly a values based organisation – we bring our values into everything we do. In our performance management we are assessed as to how we do this. This is a big differential, not only in the accounting environment, but also in the advisory environment. Secondly, we do things differently – we step into the student’s world. It’s about understanding them and the fact that they are probably as busy as a partner in our firm. For us, it’s about turning the old reactive recruitment process into a proactive, personalised experience, e.g. applications by SMS.

The respondents in our annual survey have a high regard for an inspiring management team. Does KPMG have any mentoring programmes in place which cater to this ideal?

Richard: We have actually gone beyond mentoring programmes and are expanding our professional coaching programmes to include our trainees (most organisations only provide coaching at executive level). In addition, as our people qualify, there are formal training programmes available to help them transition into a managerial role.

KPMG is an international company; does this provide room for employees to travel and work internationally?

Richard: We have nine different programmes that range from short term, busy season assistance to longer term programmes that facilitate practice development in emerging markets. There are also programmes that look at personal career development in an international arena.

What is your role within the company, and how did you manage this in conjunction with participating in the Academy programme?

Refilwe: While enrolled at the Academy, I was completing my second year articles. Being able to attend Saturday classes and having a study group helped a lot. I learnt to manage my time at work and compassionate managers helped to create a compromise between studies and time spent working. Lastly, the winter and spring schools meant a week of intense studying while study leave was granted to sit my exams.

How does KPMG promote an environment with increasingly challenging tasks?

Refilwe: I am exposed to many different types of clients and industries and I have learned to work with these differences to our advantage. KPMG provides training programmes from the first day you walk through the door. Every year you are also promoted to a more challenging task whilst auditing, but there is still a support structure in place.

What advice would you offer to any graduates hoping to work for KPMG?

Refilwe: Apply for vacation jobs at the firm while you’re still studying. This allows you to experience the KPMG culture. Work hard at being the best.

Name: Richard Warren-Tangney

Job Title: KPMG partner for Recruiting & Global Mobility

Educational Background: CA (SA), BComm Honours (Accounting) (Wits)

First Job: Audit trainee with KPMG.

Today I shall: ...continue to be positive about the future.

Name: Refilwe Taeli

Job Title: Senior accountant

Educational Background: BComm Honours (Accounting) - UNISA

First Job: Audit trainee with KPMG.

Today I shall: ...return to the only place of power: the present moment.

KPMG

Number of Employees: 3 100

Employee Profile: We value diversity in our people – diversity of gender, ethnicity, ideas, lifestyles, professional insights and personal perspectives.

How to Apply: Recruitment takes place throughout the year, with no closing dates for applications. However, in order to take advantage of our vacation experience, it is advised that you apply early in your studies.

Send your CV to: careers@kpmg.co.za or visit www.kpmg.co.za.

Rhodes scholar interviews KPMG partner

Name: Gavin Groenmeyer

Job Title: Student

Educational Background: BComm, final year

First Job: Mystery shopper for shopping malls.

Today I shall: ...try and understand these accounting concepts!



Gavin Groenmeyer, a final-year student at Rhodes University, questions Richard Warren-Tangney about the KPMG Academy.

Congratulations on the success of the KPMG Academy. You’ve reported a phenomenal pass rate!

The pass rate last year was almost 60%. This is at least double that of similar programmes in the market. This year, we have significantly increased our Academy intake to 134 students and we have targeted a pass rate of 65%.

I’m in my final year now. It is incredibly tough! Can you offer any advice?

I think the key is to understand that final year is a major challenge!

Not only is the complexity of the work tough to wrap your mind around, but the volume is enormous. The best advice I can give you is to commit to your studies each and every day. By breaking the work down into manageable chunks and focussing on putting in some hours on these chunks every day, you will find the challenge easier to bear. You also need to ensure that you set aside time every week for rest and relaxation.

What sparked your interest in establishing the Academy?

The shortage of students obtaining their honours and entering our firm ready to write the QE, together with a realisation that the profession as a whole was losing talented students who could not afford to continue studying for another year at university when they

were unsuccessful in their final year the first time round. We wanted to do something that significantly improved the pass rate of those students studying part-time while employed at KPMG and we wanted to address the skills shortage within the country.

How can I secure a place on the Academy?

By applying to the firm for a training contract! Simply SMS the word “apply” to 32176 and we’ll call you back processing your application over the phone. No forms, no online applications, just 15 minutes with us on the phone.