

# Undercover accountant

**F**rom external audit to operational management, Norman Tsoi's 18-year career has spanned many practices and industries. Now, he's found a company that allows him to apply his skills in an exciting and ever-changing environment.

Tsoi works for Kroll, an investigation firm that advises many of the world's largest corporations on all aspects of risk, including fraud, security and operational threats. In Asia, one of Kroll's most popular services is pre-transactional due diligence; their services give investors the peace of mind to strike up new ventures in markets such as China.

Trained in accountancy in the United Kingdom, Tsoi headed home to Hong Kong in the 1990s, to work as an auditor for KPMG. The attention to detail and exposure to different industries gained at this time gave him a platform for management roles at British American Tobacco, FPD Savills and Time Life Publishing.

Since joining Kroll, Tsoi has helped their growth across Asia, taking a stint as regional managing director for Greater China and then setting up new offices in China and Korea. "Getting the right mix of sound management and commercial flair has been a key consideration as we expand," he reflects.

As COO, an even bigger challenge facing Tsoi is to identify and nurture the unique abilities of the company's staff. "Kroll is a melting pot of talents," he says. "We hire people from all backgrounds. The challenge is to deploy people effectively; for example how to get an accountant, someone with a law enforcement background and an IT specialist working together on a project. Our job is to motivate them by offering them exciting work and real opportunities for career development."

Take the company's computer forensic teams, which can recover data from any kind of disk or damaged hardware. "It doesn't matter if your computer has been in a fire or if you dropped it in the bath," says Tsoi. "We'll be able to recover that information. And if a company suspects an employee of data theft, we can act quickly and discreetly, so the employee doesn't even realise they're being monitored."

Kroll's team of forensic accountants – many of them CPAs – conduct fraud investigations around the region. "A significant area of their investigatory business on the Mainland is in the area of supply chain fraud," notes Tsoi. "The main advantage of Kroll is that we can combine the technical and analytical capabilities of our accountants with on-the-ground surveillance and intelligence. It's not only fascinating work, it can make a difference to the survival of entire companies – and the livelihoods of all their staff." A+



▶ Norman Tsoi  
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