

## Successful graduate

# Doing the hard ways

Simon Yeung worked his way up to an ideal job in a Big Four firm – with help from QP.

### Starting small

Simon Yeung, who is now working as finance manager for sourcing, distribution and retailing giant Li & Fung. He has worked hard for years before landing a coveted job at PricewaterhouseCoopers; and the pivotal stage on the way to getting that job was studying for and graduating from QP.

Yeung studied accountancy at university after finding out early in life that he had an aptitude for the subject. "When I was in secondary school, I got top marks in an aptitude test for accountants, so I decided to choose accountancy for my career in the future," he says.

He studied accountancy at Hong Kong Baptist University, graduating in 2000. He worked for two small local audit firms, and obtained his CPA professional qualification while he was there. Yeung was among the first batch of young accountants to study for QP when the programme was launched in 1999.

"The Institute promotes QP very well, and the programme is widely recognized by a lot of leading overseas professional accountancy bodies. Hence, I thought it would be good for me to get my professional qualification through QP," he says. "QP also has some very useful and practical features, especially the workshops – you need to communicate and work well with other parties to discuss case problems and suggest possible solutions in class rather than just studying by yourself at home. The training provides a very good platform for me to improve my communication and analytical skills. And," he adds, "the open-book examinations, which advocate knowledge application, are good – I do not want to learn by rote. Indeed, QP has done a lot of good things for me."

### Making it big

After passing his QP examination, Yeung felt confident about applying for a job at a Big Four firm. He hit his personal jackpot in 2004 when he was offered a job by PricewaterhouseCoopers. He worked there until last year. "I worked there for six years because working for a Big Four firm was my dream," he says. "I met many talented people there, they treated me very well, and I learned not only technical skills but also personal and communication skills. They taught me how to be a professional and ethical person."

"I think the firm's culture there is very good. It was good for my future career, so I tried to work there as long as possible, even though the working hours were quite long." Yeung left the firm because he wanted to try something new and go for another milestone in his career.

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#### Graduate profile

Name	: Simon Yeung
QP graduation	: December 2002
Education	: Bachelor of business administration in accounting, Hong Kong Baptist University
Job title	: Finance manager
Company	: Li & Fung (1937) Management Limited
Past experience	: Assurance manager, PricewaterhouseCoopers
Hobbies	: Photography and hiking

At Li & Fung, he has that, working at the corporate level for the group's parent company, Li & Fung (1937) Management Limited, covering all three main areas of business in a department of 10 people. He is responsible for arranging the financing of the group's day-to-day operations – providing him with the balance he was looking for. He finds that QP skills are transferrable and gives him life-long benefits. "The QP skills that I acquired are always useful. On top of equipping students with an understanding of solid technical knowledge, during the interactive workshops, you also have lots of opportunities to exchange ideas with different participants who have different opinions. We have to learn how to support our own ideas with rationales. Sometimes even need to influence others. Those soft skills have helped me adapt to a new environment."

### What should young accountants look for in a prospective employer?

- Consider the career prospects and how they enrich the staff's job portfolio.
- A willingness to share their knowledge and experience with new recruits and encourage team work.
- An open-minded approach to new ideas and be adaptable to rapid market changes.



Interview and reporting by Richard Lord