



Value of hiring a CPA

Reviewed November 2020



Life is complicated.

- You may encounter several financial milestones during your lifetime:
 - Marriage
 - Children
 - Divorce
 - College
 - Retirement
- One significant recurring financial event is your annual tax return, which often is overlooked as a resource for planning.



Tax planning is more than just April 15.

- Most financial events — significant and routine — have tax consequences.
- Most people only think about their taxes leading up to the due date.
- CPAs are trusted advisers who assist with a variety of financial issues and their tax consequences year-round.



A CPA's approach

- Take a holistic view of financial concerns and opportunities, using your tax return as a guide.
- Integrate tax considerations into your entire financial picture.
- Consider how certain financial decisions affect other areas of life — retirement, paying for college, aging parents, etc.
- Implement strategies to resolve immediate issues and proactively identify opportunities for the long term.
- Apply objectivity, integrity and diligence you expect from a CPA.



Navigating the tax services marketplace

- Factors to differentiate between various tax return preparers:
 - Training/experience
 - License
 - References
 - Approach
- Where CPAs provide additional value



The CPA credential

- College degree (150 semester hours)
- Rigorous four-part Uniform CPA Examination (14 hours)
- 40 hours of continuing professional education each year

How are CPAs different from other tax preparers?

- Licensed by state board of accountancy

How is a CPA different from an unlicensed preparer?

Key areas of difference:

- **Practice rights** — CPAs have **unlimited** practice rights before the IRS.
- **Oversight** — Neither a state board nor the IRS regulate other preparers (except enrolled agents and attorneys).
- **Ethical rules** — CPAs who belong to the AICPA are also bound by its Code of Conduct and Statements on Standards for Tax Services (in addition to other rules).



Value of a CPA

- Assistance understanding complex tax law (including recent changes)
- Long-term tax planning (and saving)
- A broad base of knowledge with specialized training
- Holistic approach to client's finances

Beyond tax season

- Year-round financial planning services around tax, retirement, estate, risk management and investments
- Can assist with major life changes in a wide variety of ways
- Provides a single point of contact for all a client's financial needs
- Honesty and integrity — keystones of the profession



Thank you