



## 2013 Salary Forecast and Hiring Outlook

Starting salaries in accounting and finance are expected to increase an average of 3.3 percent in 2013, according to the [2013 Salary Guide](#) from Robert Half. In addition to comprehensive compensation figures, the annual guide features an in-depth look at today's top hiring and employment trends. Here are some of our key findings:

### **It's a Tale of Two Job Markets**

Browsing the Web for news of the employment market hasn't been what you might call pleasant reading in recent years. So here's some welcome news: While general unemployment remains high, it's a different story for college-degreed workers with specialized skills. Unemployment rates in areas such as accounting and auditing and financial analysis are well below the national average.

The bottom line: The need for skilled accounting and finance professionals is strong, resulting in greater career opportunities and improved starting salaries.

### **As Recruiting Challenges Rise, So Does Compensation**

Employers report having difficulty finding the talent they need. Many companies are expediting the hiring process when they identify the right person for the job. To compete for the best and brightest, organizations are providing more competitive compensation (and sweetening the pot with bonuses, professional development opportunities and flexible schedules).

Here's a sampling of some salary projections:

\* In corporate accounting, a general accountant at a large company with up to one year of experience is forecast to receive a 3.9 percent increase in base compensation, to a range of \$41,000 to \$51,750.

\* In public accounting, a professional with up to one year of experience in tax services at a midsize firm can anticipate a 3.2 percent boost, to between \$46,500 and \$58,750.

\* In financial services, a financial analyst's starting salary is expected to go up to a range of \$50,500 to \$73,500, a 3.5 percent increase.

### **Opportunities Expanding for Recent Graduates**

Entry-level hiring is picking up as employers show renewed interest in those in the early stages of their careers. The hope is that talented recent graduates will grow with the organization and can be groomed for advancement.

Highlighting practical experience acquired through internships or part-time jobs is critical. In a survey by our firm, 91 percent of chief financial officers said it's at least somewhat important for entry-level accounting and finance professionals to have gained experience in the field while in college.

## **Temp Arrangements Increasingly Popular**

Time is money to employers. Making a bad hire can lead to losses of both when things don't work out. To avoid hiring mistakes, more organizations are connecting with specialized staffing firms and utilizing temporary professionals.

Interim arrangements, which can serve as a foot in the door for those who perform well, are leading to permanent job offers in some cases. Having the opportunity to observe a prospective employee's performance and work ethic firsthand gives managers invaluable insights that can't be obtained from a resume, reference letter or interview.

The *2013 Salary Guide* includes starting salary range projections for more than 350 accounting and finance positions that can be customized for 135-plus U.S. markets. Use our [Salary Calculator](#) to compute average starting salaries for positions in your city.

*This article is provided courtesy of Robert Half, parent company of [Accountemps](#), [Robert Half Finance & Accounting](#) and [Robert Half Management Resources](#). Robert Half is the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm placing accounting and finance professionals on a temporary, full-time and project basis.*