

The CMA in China

By Joanna Zhuang, CMA



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I currently work for an investment company in Beijing, China. My major responsibilities include financial analysis and strategy development support. When I was a little girl, my mother worked at a large commercial bank. I always visited her while she was at work, and the sight of her busy coworkers preparing the month-end and year-end closings sparked my interest in becoming an accountant. Watching them perform their duties, I thought how interesting it would be if I were one of them. Although I didn't understand what they were doing at the time, I now realize how busy—but fun—accounting can be.

In August 1999, I began a career as a cashier in a foreign trade company in Shanghai. This job made me really happy. I returned to Beijing in 2000 after the company closed and joined FedEx shortly after. During my 12 years there, I climbed the corporate ladder from a frontline employee to a leader of the management team because of my outstanding performance.

Because FedEx implemented function centralization, I had the opportunity for upward mobility. I learned different things in each position I worked in. As time progressed, however, I realized I needed to keep up with the training that each job required. In November 2011, after I left FedEx, I decided to pursue a professional certification such as the CPA (Certified Public Accountant), ACCA membership, CMA® (Certified Management Accountant), or

others. My friend, a CFO of a construction company, recommended the CMA program. After consulting the authorized training institutions, I found that the CMA was the best certification for me because of my experience in the financial field. I started the journey toward CMA certification one month later.

The CMA courses covered aspects of accounting, macroeconomics, and organization operating management. Furthermore, through studying for the exam, I found that most of the operating practices take root in the corresponding theory of the CMA. Compared to other professional certifications, the CMA exam requires an open mind for solving problems, and that attracted me the most. It's important to be open-minded in the workplace, which is why the CMA is so valuable and significant.

I found studying for the CMA exam to be difficult, but it got easier after I found a study group in which we were able to discuss and share our thoughts. My group also has stayed good friends after finishing the exams. They have made me realize that my life was too focused on boring things. I had to change. Now I dress nicer, wear makeup, and regularly go out with friends. Not only has the CMA enhanced my professional knowledge to a higher and deeper level, but it also has made my personal life more diverse and colorful. I strive to lead a quality-oriented life now. I'm more confident and optimistic than before. **SF**