

## My Lifelong Learning

By Eric A. Kreuter, CMA, CFM, CPA



**Eric A. Kreuter, CMA, CFM, CPA, CGMA, CFE, MAFF, CCA, CCP, SPHR, Ph.D., is a partner with Marks Paneth LLP in New York, N.Y. He also is a member of IMA's Westchester Gateway Chapter. You can contact Eric at [ekreuter@markspaneth.com](mailto:ekreuter@markspaneth.com).**

I joined IMA® more than 25 years ago. Even though I started my career as a fledgling CPA (Certified Public Accountant), I was interested in managerial accounting as it related to financial controls and how businesses should be run as well as how distressed businesses managed their difficulties, especially those in bankruptcy. After visiting offices and factories of many industry types, I developed a deeper appreciation for the work of the management accountant.

As part of my role at a small CPA firm, I regularly mentored staff. After a number of years, I found myself repeatedly issuing guidance to CPA candidates concerning study methods and why passing the exam was important. It occurred to me that it had been years since I went through the same process, earning my CPA in 1983. To test my study theories and because I was enamored with the field of managerial accounting, I embarked on a mission of self-study for the CMA® (Certified Management Accountant) exam. I passed and earned my CMA in 1987. After that, I decided to pursue the CFM (Certified Financial Manager). Achieving those credentials not only boosted my confidence to coach others, but it brought me deeper into the world of managerial accounting, something that has become invaluable in my career.

I've always maintained a lifelong interest in furthering my education, so I expanded my training from audit/tax to managerial accounting, forensics, and litigation sup-

port. I also sought out the SPHR (Senior Professional in Human Resources) designation. I joined multiple organizations, presented seminars, and wrote books and numerous articles. Continuing my academic career, I pursued a master's degree in industrial psychology as a way of learning about the world of work and how to better manage a workforce. I also eventually earned a doctorate in clinical psychology. It has helped me understand human nature and the complexities of group dynamics.

I began a practice segment within my accounting firm that serves lenders performing due diligence examinations for a wide variety of borrowers. These engagements involve reviewing records and controls and evaluating general business issues in a wide variety of industries throughout the United States and Canada.

Today I use this knowledge in my litigation and forensic work and in my role participating in business valuation, acquisition due diligence, and fraud-risk assessments for audit clients. Also, I conduct internal control reviews and develop fraud deterrence plans, having increased my confidence from additional years of study.

Being a part of IMA, I've realized that the organization is dynamic and offers numerous resources to the practitioner. While it seems that a quarter-century has passed very quickly, I feel fortunate that I was able to hold various positions in multiple fields while keeping my interest in managerial accounting. **SF**