

By Jeffrey C. Thomson, CMA, CAE

Committed to Growth with Confidence and Integrity



IMA® believes that employers and organizations are better served by fully qualified professionals who have studied for and passed a rigorous, robust, and comprehensive assessment.

Dear IMA members,

“A grandfather clause is a provision in which an old rule continues to apply to some existing situations while a new rule will apply to all future cases....Frequently, the exemption is limited; it may extend for a set period of time, or it may be lost under certain circumstances.”

This definition of “grandfathering” comes from one of the most popular sources—Wikipedia! Some associations will apply the grandfather clause when introducing a new certification, meaning that an individual can earn the certification based on experience or other criteria but not on an actual exam.

IMA has long held the position that to earn the prestigious CMA® (Certified Management Accountant) credential, every candidate must take an exam as well as meet education and experience requirements. We believe that employers and organizations are better served with fully qualified professionals who have studied for and passed a rigorous, robust, and comprehensive assessment. To be a

bit provocative, IMA believes that grandfathering is a shortcut to membership growth and does a disservice to the individual, the organization, and society.

We commit to you—our members and reason for being—that we will continue on our growth path but to do so with confidence (e.g., sustainable growth with a value proposition of an unwavering focus on the member) and integrity (e.g., behaving as an organization that you can trust for consistency, relevance, and the highest standards in exam credentialing). We will never grow for the sake of growth. In short, good organizations aspire to grow; great organizations aspire to grow with confidence and integrity. By now, you may have seen a public statement from IMA providing year-end growth statistics and stating that the CMA program is the leading management accounting credential in the world (www.imanet.org/PDFs/Public/Press_Releases/2014/Year%20end%20Numbers_8.12.14.pdf). The CMA is the leading management accounting certification globally, not because of the numbers and growth but because it is respected, relevant, and rigorous, and it embodies the highest standards of integrity and

trust in exam credentialing. Employers seeking to fill critical positions can have confidence that every CMA they hire has met the strictest standards of excellence.

From a global growth perspective, there are CMAs or CMA candidates in more than 100 countries. ICMA® (Institute of Certified Management Accountants) has certified approximately 43,000 CMAs to date, a special and growing group of professionals who can advance their organizations in the areas of decision insight, financial planning and analysis, and more. New CMAs have grown at a rate of more than 25% per year for the past five years, and more than 22,000 candidates are studying for the CMA exam around the world.

IMA and ICMA will continue to work together with focus and passion to enhance the value of membership and the value of your CMA in enriching careers, organizations, and the public interest. We always want each of you to view us as an organization you can trust to grow with confidence and integrity. **SF**

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Thomson, CMA, CAE
President and CEO

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