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Isaac M. O'Bannon • Apr. 15, 2014

According to recent surveys by the [American Institute of CPAs](#), there has been a noteworthy increase in the number of traditional minority members and partners at U.S. public accounting firms. According to a new study by accounting association [BKR International](#), however, that change has been slow.

Minorities comprised 25 percent of employees at public accounting firms in 2013, according to BKR, which is up from 21 percent during the 2012 AICPA survey. Minority representation at the partner level increased to 10 percent, up from the 6 percent reported in the last survey.

There are practical business reasons to encourage minority recruitment and career development, according to BKR International, one of the top 10 global accounting associations. Here are five that make good business sense:

Demographic Change – The US Census of 2010 shows that minorities will be the majority in the United States by 2042. Minorities make up about 35 percent of the population, which includes 46 percent of children under the age of 15.

Minority Business Ownership – Approximately 21 percent of US small businesses are considered minority owned – classified as ethnic or racial minorities by the US Census Bureau. Data was based on information gathered in 2008 and 2009. New survey results will be released in 2015, with the anticipation of much higher minority business ownership.

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each region and approved by the World Board.

Global Opportunity – To work in a global business environment, accounting firms should reflect the global environment. As more companies have a need for US tax consulting, they will choose firms that resemble their own teams. BKR International, for example, just added member accounting firms in China and Nigeria. Those connections lead to connections for US-based accounting firms, noted Maureen Schwartz, BKR International executive director. “Mid-sized accounting firms will experience increasing globalization among their clients to navigate tax law and business practices in different countries.”

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