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**FIRM MANAGEMENT**

# **Shayna Chapman, CPA.CITP – 2014 Most Powerful Women in Accounting**

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# Shayna Chapman, CPA.CITP

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Education: BBA in Accounting, Marshall University

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of the 2014 “Most Powerful Women  
in Accounting” awards.

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1. What advice would you give to female college students about the opportunities for women in the accounting profession?

When talking to female college students, I tell them there are so many opportunities in accounting. The one thing about an accounting degree that you can't say about most other degrees is that it opens the door to so many possibilities both in careers and in work schedules. I recognize women have such diverse roles in our society. Some want to climb to the top of companies as partners or CEOs and others want to stay home with their children and work a more flexible schedule. An accounting degree provides the background and knowledge to fit your career to your lifestyle. You can be whatever you put the effort into being.

2. What advice would you give accounting firms on things they could do to better retain and advance more qualified female staff?

Accounting firms have traditionally been managed by men and have very set ideas on work hours and the way work is done. As more women become partners and lead firms into the future, I'd ask that they think about more quality of life issues. Just because a firm provides a better atmosphere and a little flexibility for quality of life for women doesn't mean the quality of the work drops. With cloud computing, the ability to have 24-7 access, and proper management, I think firms will find they will retain better employees who will work harder to provide quality output to work for those firms that recognize a home life is important, too.

3. Do you think that there is still a glass ceiling in accounting firm senior management and partner levels, or that the profession has moved to a mostly gender neutral state?

This may very well depend on your region. I think the profession is moving in the right direction. Men and women play a role in making the profession more gender neutral.

4. How have you managed to balance your professional and personal life obligations, whether that includes family, etc?

The best thing I did was become self-employed. I spend so much time on family and community activities. Being self-employed has allowed me to make my own rules without sacrificing my career. As technology has advanced, this has made the balancing so much easier.

5. How mobile are you regarding your work? How have mobile devices and apps impacted your productivity and work-life balance?

My phone, my ipad, and now my Surface Pro 3 have made life so much easier. I have constant access to most of my office. Using Office 365, online storage, and Thomson's SaaS based tax suites, I can access what I need at any time. Throw in amortization, to-do, e-signature, tax research, note-taking apps, and I am a walking office. This is what allows me to go to my child's school play instead of sitting in the office. This also has become something you have to really get a hold of or you can work all of the time and never take a mental break. Sometimes, we have to put the mobility down, close our eyes, and relax.

6. What single piece of technology could you absolutely not live without, and why?

Ok, I can't lie. As my Twitter bio says: I'm addicted to my iPhone. For all of the reasons I listed about mobility. It's the one piece of technology I can always have with me and enables me to move anywhere I want to go when I want to go there.

7. What is your favorite professional mobile app, and why?

You want me to pick just one?? Probably CCH Mobile. Having my Master Tax Guide and tax research at my fingertips all of the time, whether at work, at a clients, or on a phone call is such a time saver. I can look something up and get back to the client immediately no matter where I am.

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