

Connexions #26-27

Challenges and teams
of tomorrow's chartered accountant



RECRUITING & TRAINING

How can we support change?

CROWE FRANCE

Consulting at the core of business

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Accounting firms and AI

Smart decisions. Lasting value.

Will tomorrow's accountancy firm be different from today's?



Provocatively, I'd say that tomorrow's chartered accountant, or tomorrow's firm, won't be fundamentally different from today's...

Some readers will probably think that I'm clinging to the past and refusing to embrace modernity.

Well, I'm not! On the contrary, «it was better before» sends shivers down my spine.

Going back to the days of the plague in the 14th century, which decimated half the population of Europe in less than 5 years, while in the 21st century it only took us a few months to find a vaccine against Covid 19. Hell no!

So why say that?

For the simple reason that technical progress has always disempowered mankind, and the same will certainly be true with digitalization and Artificial Intelligence.

As early as the beginning of the 19th century, the British economist David Ricardo, along with other philosophers of his time, envisaged that machines could replace man.

Is this digital and intelligent (r)evolution stronger than the invention of writing, which did away with oral memory? Is it stronger than the invention of printing, which enabled knowledge to be transmitted?

In my opinion, no, as long as the human being remains at the core.

It will simply be a new way of growing, sharing, investing and, above all, caring. These are our values at Crowe.

Let's give people time to bring Artificial Intelligence into line with their own intelligence and human sensitivity.

It's only a matter of form, and «form is the substance that rises to the surface», as Victor Hugo once said.

Jean-Charles François
CEO of Crowe Dupouy
President of Crowe France

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XERFI SURVEY CROWE France: How is the network developing?



Crowe is one of France's top 20 auditing, chartered accountancy, statutory auditing and consulting networks and structures, with sales of €131 million in 2021-2022. Growth has reached 12% over 4 years, below the market average (1).

Public accountancy generates around half of Crowe's sales. However, the social/payroll and consulting/other activities are the most dynamic over the medium term (+47% over 3 years). They are thus increasing their weight in the Group's total revenues, to the detriment of auditing and statutory auditing (-4 points over 3 years).

In recent years, Crowe has outperformed the market (2) in regulated activities (auditing and chartered accountancy), generating average sales per head of €112.4K (3), compared with €95.4K for the profession as a whole (2).

With a workforce of 1,247 by 2022-2023, Crowe will post average sales per head of 112.8 K€, up 7% over 3 years.

With 65 offices in France, Crowe posted average sales per office of €2.2 million, up 7% over 3 years. de 6,1 M\$.

(1) Based on data from the 22 main networks and structures, excluding PwC and In Extenso / (2) Based on data from 250 firms with sales in excess of €3m / (3) Based on data from 9 Crowe France firms (Avvens, Cifralex, Cogefis Associés, Dupouy et Associés, Ficorec, Fideliance, Fidelio, Groupe Rocard and RSA).

Increase in number of offices and average sales per head

	Offices	Average sales per office	Average headcount per office	Average sales per employee
Number / Amount	65	2,2 M€	19	112,8 K€
Change over 1 year	+7%	+1%	-2%	+3%
Change over 3 years	+23%	-3%	-9%	+7%

Increased weighting of HR & consulting activities

Services	Audit	Chartered accountants	HR & Payroll	Advice/others	Total
Number / Amount	32 M€	69 M€	17 M€	22 M€	140 M€
Change over 1 year	+9%	+5%	+24%	+20%	+8%
Change over 3 years	+7%	+25%	+47%	+47%	+19%
Weight	23%	49%	12%	16%	100%
Change over 3 years	-4 pts	0 pt	+2 pts	+2 pts	-

Growing importance of administrative and support activities

Services	Firm partners	Employee	Administrative and support activities	Total
Headcount	116	1 008	123	1 247
Change over 1 year	+6%	+7%	-12%	+5%
Change over 3 years	+7%	+11%	+26%	+12%
Weight	9%	81%	10%	100%
Change over 3 years	-1 pt	0 pt	+1 pt	-

Crowe outperforms in regulated business

Weight of services	Statutory audit	Accounting	Total	Average sales per head
Crowe France	19%	81%	100%	112,4 K€
Change over 4 years in value	+17%	+37%	+33%	+8%
Change over 4 years (%)	-3 pts	+3 pts	0 pt	-
Total market	26%	74%	100%	95,4 K€
Change over 4 years in value	-8%	+24%	+13%	-1%
Change over 4 years (%)	-6 pts	+6 pts	0 pt	-

Crowe France, one of the country's Top 20 networks and structures

Brand name	Sales	Headcount	Brand name	Sales	Headcount
KPMG	1 370 M€	11 000	Exco	207 M€	nd
Fiducial	1 343 M€	nd	BDO	203 M€	1 900
EY	1 259 M€	6 710	Cogep	188 M€	1 665
Deloitte	1 039 M€	7 700	Baker Tilly	161 M€	1 411
PwC (1)	955 M€	3 344	Nexia France	143 M€	1 257
Cerfrance	883 M€	nd	RSM	136 M€	1 250
In Extenso	495 M€	4 650	Walter France	132 M€	1 312
Mazars	451 M€	3 800	Crowe France	131 M€	1 190
HLB France	283 M€	nd	Groupe Alpha	130 M€	874

Ranked 9th in terms of workforce growth over 4 years

Brand name	2021-2022 (1 years)	2018-2022 (4 years)	Brand name	2021-2022 (1 years)	2018-2022 (4 years)
Cogep	+8%	+61%	KPMG	+10%	+15%
Nexia France	+12%	+42%	Mazars	+3%	+10%
Grant Thornton	+16%	+40%	Deloitte	+10%	+8%
BDO	+46%	+34%	EY	0%	+7%
Baker Tilly	+7%	+32%	In Extenso	-3%	nd
TGS France	-6%	+27%	Cerfrance	nd	nd
Walter France	+3%	+23%	Exco	nd	nd
RSM	+4%	+21%	Fiducial	nd	nd
Crowe France	-15%	+14%	HLB France	nd	nd
Groupe Alpha	-2%	+8%	PwC	nd	+2%

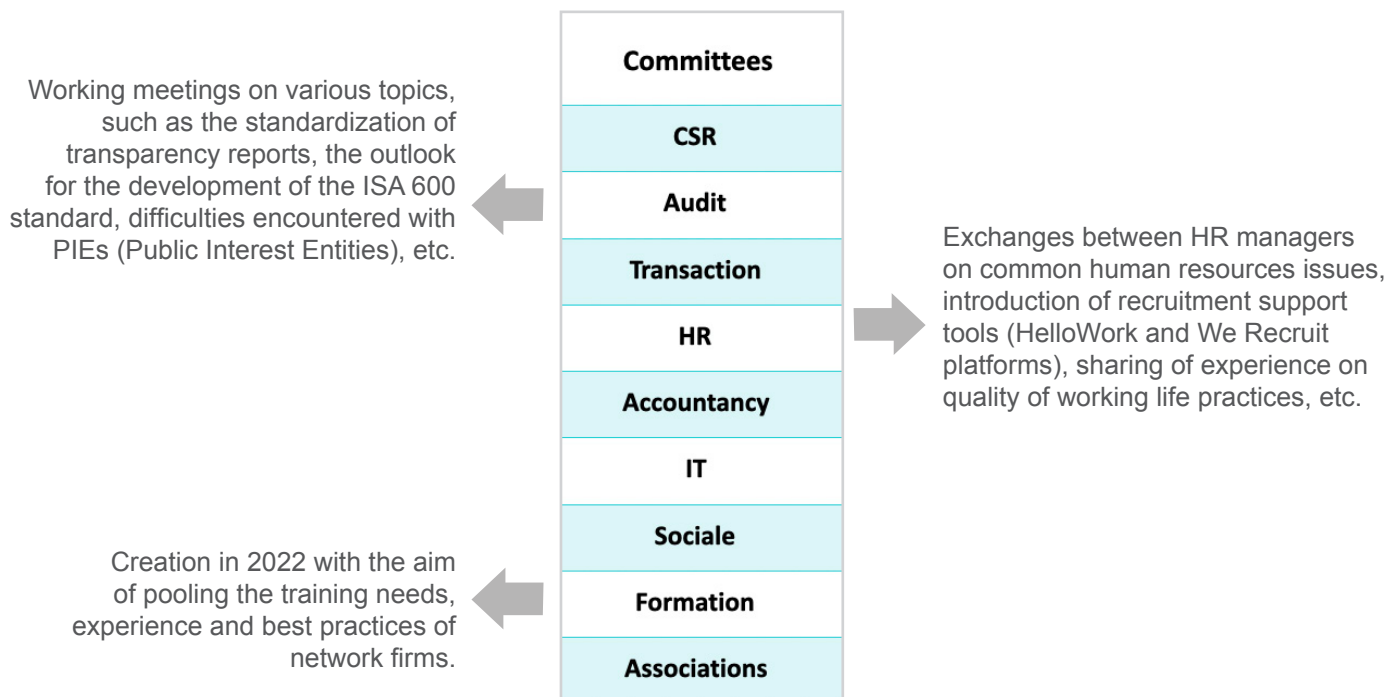
	2021-2022 (4 years)	2018-2022 (4 years)
Total market	+6%	+19%

1. Grouping of accounting firms	The aim of merging firms is to optimize profitability and boost market share, by benefiting from synergies and the pooling of certain support functions or digital tools, among other things, but also by leveraging a brand to increase its visibility and attractiveness to customers.
2. Recruiting and retaining employees	A number of levers are being activated to meet HR challenges (age pyramid imbalance, lack of attractiveness, high staff turnover, etc.): closer ties with new generations, strengthening the employer brand, building career opportunities, making work organization more flexible, etc.
3. Digitizing and automating activities	Digitization should enable productivity gains thanks to the automation of repetitive tasks (and thus allow staff to be allocated to higher value-added missions), improve the customer experience, and develop new services.
Diversifying services	Expanding skills is an opportunity to position ourselves in new growth drivers, for several reasons: making traditional accounting assignments commonplace, the possibility of recreating value to attract new customers, repositioning on high value-added assignments, etc.

Grouping of accounting firms within Crowe (Axis 1)

Crowe is a non-integrated network in which firms are grouped around a common brand. Exchanges are an important driving force behind the network, helping to identify needs in terms of quality, technique, business development and so on. The development of common processes,

partnerships and mutualization agreements with suppliers are all the result of exchanges and consensual decision-making by network members. To this end, Crowe France has set up committees to determine common strategies on various topics: CSR, training, associations, etc.



Recruiting and retaining employees (Axis 2)

A great deal of work is being done by the various bodies (National Council of Chartered Accountant and National Association of Statutory Auditors) to highlight the benefits of working in an accounting firm. This communication must be backed up by our actions in the field. That's why we're committed to working closely with young people, focusing on discovery and learning. We rely and the links we forge with schools. Some can even benefit from financial aid thanks to the endowment fund created by Crowe France. Crowe Becouze has also created its own endowment fund, in order to coordinate its corporate philanthropy actions and the impact of its actions on the local community.



Sylvélie Renoux, HR Manager at Crowe Becouze

Digitizing and automating activities (Axis 3)

As far as our professions are concerned, the (re) organization of information systems has two facets: the first is specific to our clients, and the second is internal to accounting firms, the two being intimately linked.

Marc Luccioni, Partner Crowe Avvens

Our primary objective is to respond to market demand: questions relating to our organization and profitability follow... The first strategy to be developed at

the firm level is to capture as much relevant data as possible, which goes far beyond the issues of electronic invoicing and interfaces between systems. Indeed, the power of new databases, coupled with the implementation of AI-based analyses, will spearhead the definition of our business in the future. On the basis of these tools, we will confirm our status as a partner to the company, capable of analyzing its situation and providing in-depth assistance in its organization and processes, before delivering a financial presentation.

Diversifying services (Axis 4): An example from See-Far IT

A member of Crowe, See-Far IT is an IT audit and consultancy firm, created from 4 network firms: Avvens, Dupouy, Groupe Rocard and RSA. See-Far IT covers several fields of expertise: IT audit as part of the statutory audit, cybersecurity, RGPD, IT governance audit, cloud office, contractual compliance with software licensing terms, digital transition, complex data analysis and more.

As **Christian Valery, Managing Partner**, explains: «The See-Far IT adventure began in 2019, when 4 firms in the Crowe network decided to invest in a joint subsidiary, able to carry out the due diligence required by the H3C in the context of statutory auditing. See-Far IT is a fine example of mutualization between member firms, with the vocation of serving not only its 4 partners and their clients, but also any other firms in the Crowe France network who so wish. To this end, we are investing in offerings such as cybersecurity, RGPD and more recently electronic invoicing, for which we can support firms on IT topics, and in particular mass data review thanks to our data analytics skills.»

The chartered accountant at the heart of an uncertain economy

Our twofold challenge is to meet the new demands of companies, and to have the right HR resources to do so.



THE ECONOMY AS A DRIVING FORCE

The economy, increasingly interdependent on political decisions, impacted by successive crises, is today made up of uncertainties. And the more uncertain the economy, the more the chartered accountant has a central role to play: deciphering, advising, supporting...

During the Covid crisis, for example, our profession provided decisive support to companies, working with them to put in place all possible measures and mechanisms. Generally speaking, today's companies have the reflex to seek the support of their chartered accountant in most of their decision-making processes, well beyond basic accounting.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Companies are facing two major changes simultaneously. One is digital, the other environmental. These are two huge issues, both difficult to manage, especially for smaller companies. Chartered accountants are at the heart of these issues.

As a professional accountant, he is a trusted partner. He can encourage companies that are too «wait-and-see», by supporting them in their transformation.

WHAT ARE THE 'BENEFITS'?

The chartered accountant is both a practitioner and a strategic player, who can help his clients measure the benefits of their changes. A practical example? In environmental matters: the CSR and de-carbonization report. All companies, including the smallest, could now carry out this type of assessment, possibly in a simplified form. It's a tool for raising awareness, motivating managers and teams, enhancing customer value, and so on.

OUR PROFESSION'S CHALLENGES?

The role of chartered accountants is to help companies transform. While continuing to carry out their traditional missions, they are increasingly called upon to provide support and advice. That's why our challenge is recruitment. To make our professions more attractive again, we need to emphasize the values that form our DNA: trust, ethics and humanity. Our potential employees belong to a new generation in search of meaning, and in a time when everything is measured, we can make the difference between ourselves and other consultants!

FOCUS ON CROWE?

CROWE is both a recognized brand and a network on a human scale, equipped to meet the expectations of customers and employees alike. It's up to us to emphasize and promote our skills!

Consulting is the strategic focus of our development

Our firm of tomorrow, more customer-focused than ever, will place value-added consulting at the heart of its business.



HOW DO YOU SEE THE TREND?

Our DNA is structured around auditing and consulting, with the determination to be at the cutting edge of our know-how, at the level of expertise our customers expect. Our strategy is based on excellence, to constantly improve the quality of our services in each of our 8 areas of expertise*. This is a prerequisite for generating growth and developing our credibility. Competitive intensity in the global business consulting market is increasing, with «pure players» in every segment. The fact that we have historically been professionals in the field of figures brings reassurance to our customers, but beyond the level of expertise, they expect our teams to be available, agile and attentive, and to have the capacity to propose and implement «tailor-made» services.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT DEVELOPMENT?

Becouze (under the BCZ brand today), has been in existence for 40 years and currently comprises 18 partners and 200 employees, with a wide range of backgrounds. From the outset, our company has been driven by affectio societatis and a high level of commitment from our partners and teams. We have grown organically, remaining focused on our core business, adding experience and recruiting talent in an entrepreneurial spirit. Our clients range from medium-sized to large companies and organizations, and we offer consulting services across all our service lines.

As for our auditing expertise, today we deploy it not only in financial auditing, but also in new areas such as CSR, information systems (IT) or compliance in the broadest sense.

WHAT DOES AI CHANGE?

Our activities are undergoing gradual change, with software absorbing basic tasks and practices becoming increasingly digital, but the fundamentals remain the same: to offer a high level of expertise, adapted to the contexts and needs of our customers, to develop trusting human relationships and to enable each individual to flourish, thanks to team spirit and the attractiveness of the assignments our customers entrust to us.

SO, IN YOUR OPINION, NO REVOLUTION?

If we're experiencing a revolution, it's the diversity of the talents we recruit to develop our businesses. We always recruit young employees who continue their training through experience, but we also recruit «expert» employees who work in a specific field (CSR, IT, Consolidation, Valuation, etc.). Our current challenge is to be identified as a benchmark employer, with a real promise: to enable everyone to express themselves, progress and flourish through varied assignments. This is what will enable us to grow a great team, offer the best service to our customers, and attract new ones.

* Accounting and tax expertise, Audit and compliance, HR and payroll consulting, Consolidation, Transaction, Financial valuation, CSR and IT/DATA.

The accounting firm of tomorrow: challenges and teams

Our future lies in providing advice and support to companies, which is changing our approach and involving us in new «professions». This will have a strategic and human impact on our firms.



Why go beyond historical expertise?

Tomorrow's chartered accountant will position himself as an operational partner to managers, rather than a mere «know-it-all». For companies, the chartered accountant's services related to all their reporting obligations no longer offer much added value. Instead, they are looking for support in a range of strategic areas (HR, legal, digital, CSR, etc.), well beyond the preparation and certification of their accounts.

Our firms therefore need to focus on high value-added consulting assignments and develop new skills. In my view, this is not a constraint, but an opportunity. Dare I quote one of my favorite maxims? «When the wind picks up, some build windbreaks, others build windmills».

What are the practical consequences?

To effectively support companies as they change, it's no longer enough for us to be «a posteriori» reactive to their demands. We need to anticipate their changes, by creating strong interactions! This requires us to be more present than ever with our customers, to know them in all their facets and to understand their needs for change. In this innovative context, the pre-eminence of technology paradoxically makes it essential to be close to our customers, and even to be present on their premises.

What about the teams?

Uniting talents, creating partnerships and associations, using the possibilities offered by interdisciplinarity - these are the new winds that will carry our firms into the future. At Rocard, for example, three of our eleven partners are already «non-CPAs», something that would have been unthinkable just a few years ago. We hope to go even further, notably by recruiting new staff (IT specialists, logisticians, etc.) and diversifying our training courses, as well as integrating other regulated professions.

The challenge will be to motivate and federate composite teams, around a shared vision and common values, while tackling new fields of action.

What's your final word?

For our employees (especially our new recruits, who are driven by a need for autonomy and innovation), this development gives meaning to the business. They appreciate being able to develop a constructive and rewarding relationship with customers, interacting with all sectors of the company, and with a view to sustainable development.

How can we make sense of digital and involve employees in cross-functional projects? Ludo van der Heyden, professor at INSEAD, answers: «By making a rule of collaboration, not only within silos, but also between silos. In the digital world, the customer is king. Producing value for them is a necessity, before worrying about keeping part of that value for themselves. Employees are united in this goal, and the tightest-knit teams win.»

Our new « playgrounds » : 6 examples of targeted solutions

As service providers and consultants to our customers, we support and assist them in all their needs. We go far beyond the scope of our legal missions, to offer a more global approach to financial reporting.



1. Valuation: More and more often, we carry out valuation assignments as part of mergers and acquisitions, divestments, etc. This activity enables us to integrate new skills within the firm, motivate our teams and provide a value-added service to our clients.

2. Debt collection: This service is particularly useful for our customers with high working capital requirements, for whom debt collection is the «crux of the problem»!

3. Delegation: We can integrate a CFO, CFO, management controller, manager, etc. (in the event of restructuring, change of information system or ERP, long-term leave, creation of a holding company, etc.).

4. Cross-functional offerings: We invest in a number of key areas to differentiate ourselves, offering our customers a cross-functional offering. This is a global response to the diversity of their needs in their day-to-day management (accounting, social, tax, legal, etc.) as well as at key moments in the life of their company (M&A, valuation, consolidation, etc.), integrating all the specific services linked to their business (e.g. real estate, training, etc.).

5. CSR : Our customers expect us to adopt a global, innovative approach. In this case, we have formed partnerships with a university, to be at the cutting edge.

6. Electronic invoicing: This is an area in which all organizations need support (including SMEs and international groups). The chartered accountant has a key role to play, and must not allow other, less experienced consultants to take over.

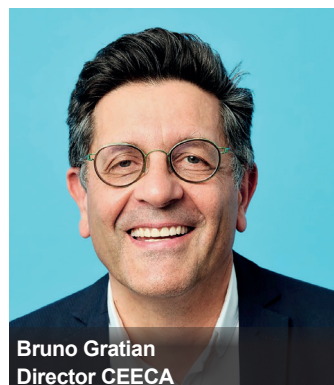
The integration of new activities responds to our customers' expectations and must take into account their evolving needs.

As professionals in figures and financial information, we aim to provide solutions to their management and development issues, integrating a global vision. These new activities are an opportunity for us to strengthen our advisory role and our support capacity, by positioning ourselves as the preferred partner of company managers.

This enables us to integrate new profiles and skills into our teams. In this way, we can offer them a greater variety of assignments and opportunities for development. We take great care not to compartmentalize our employees, so that they become adaptable and autonomous experts, without feeling locked into a particular specialty.

How to grow teams?

Training helps to develop skills and teams in the face of changes in the accounting professions. It opens the door to new approaches, «cultures» and subjects.



For decades, training was a matter of «immediate need». For accountants, it constituted an efficient and rapid response to the needs arising from the latest technical developments in the profession, as well as its legal obligations. What's new is that we're entering a system of skills development. Training tends to be a tool for transformation. A case in point? If, in order to win the loyalty of its entrepreneurial clients, a firm decides to provide asset management services, a specific «extra-accounting» training course could help develop this skill within the team. In another case, cross-disciplinary training in diagnostics and consulting can give junior staff the opportunity to manage assignments.

MOBILITY & AGILITY

Transformation coaching means helping people to evolve. Because the organizational agility of tomorrow's firms will require increasingly «hybrid» profiles and teams. In addition to their technical knowledge, all employees will need interpersonal and even commercial skills. Depending on their skills, they will also be able to focus on digital, CSR, compliance, development and other areas.

WORKING TOGETHER

The challenge is to train people to improve their skills, while teaching them to work better together. Here again, accounting firms are innovators. For several years now, in addition to targeted training (tax, social security, etc.), they have been encouraging their staff to structure their working methods and their approach to customer relations. Today, the focus is on optimizing teamwork, through relationship-building, empathy and listening. Firm management is tending to abandon the hierarchical approach in favor of team leadership. Each employee is encouraged to develop his or her technical skills, autonomy and emotional intelligence. This range of training courses enables them to act as both «captain» and «team member» on a given assignment. And the traditional role of tutor, providing individual support, is replaced by that of leader, leading a team around a project.

FOCUS ON DIGITAL

Digital technology can create a cultural problem, insofar as, thanks to AI, we have the knowledge... but not necessarily the know-how! As data becomes more and more important, digital transformation takes its course. This is leading some younger profiles to become project managers. More often than not, these are people who combine cutting-edge skills with natural leadership. To conclude in my own field of training, digital technology has enabled us to create more attractive multimedia formats. In short, to adapt them to our professions!



How to match our values with what we want to become?

Jean-Charles François, President of Crowe France, emphasizes that transmission and training are key to transformation, in line with the values of our Network: « Caring, Sharing, Investing, Growing. »

Like a puzzle piece, everyone plays an important role and must find their place! Our teams are made up of individuals from different backgrounds, all of them different: from the same diploma, diverse personalities are shaped. What's important for our shared success is that they move forward at their own pace, in line with their aspirations, while remaining attuned to a changing world and in tune with others. In our profession as accountants, as in any responsible liberal profession (doctor, architect, etc.), you have to start by being good at your technique. It's only later, after many years of work and perfecting one's skills, that you can become a manager, and pass on your technique in turn.

A great company is one that builds harmonious, supportive teams with a high level of technical expertise. Training contributes to this, by creating synergies through exchange and sharing, against a backdrop of professional practices and ethics. As for the oldest among us, those at the head of the firms, their role is to contribute to the learning and progress of the rising generations, in order to ensure their continuity. As business leaders, they have a social and societal responsibility to adapt to ever-increasing change. They must show themselves capable of trusting, delegating and passing on, in order to help others grow... and pass on the baton to our partners and managers of tomorrow.

The outlook for the French training market

Source: XERFI study



- Shortage of certain key profiles, making training a strategic HR lever
- Profound adjustment of in-house skills: business models shaken by ecological, digital and demographic transitions
- Improved image of training organizations in recent years
- Strong support for training and apprenticeship from public institutions



- Government spending restrictions (budget deficit)
- New quality standards, leading to a decrease in the number of organizations
- Creation of an «out-of-pocket» contribution for beneficiaries of personal training credits
- Reduced corporate spending (economic downturn)
- Other means of building know-how (recruitment, in-house training, etc.)

A transformation with multiple challenges

Demand continues to grow, both nationally and internationally, with increasingly varied profiles and requirements. Training must reinvent itself!



Supporting change

Professional, generational and organizational contexts are changing. It's important to keep pace with social change and anticipate the issues at stake, such as the rapid evolution of professions and skills, the changing expectations of working people and the needs of businesses. Private and public training players therefore play an essential role in meeting the challenges of ecological, digital and societal transitions, while adapting to new economic development models..

Identify new markets with varied needs

Faced with a highly competitive and evolving market, training players need to identify and conquer new markets, and respond to companies who are often looking for specific training linked to their skills needs, to individuals who are looking for training to improve their skills in their field of work or to change careers, and to students as they enter working life.

A diversification strategy

To stand out from the crowd and remain competitive, these players need to adopt effective strategies and meet a number of challenges. They need to diversify their training offerings and integrate new products that offer qualifications, certifications and diplomas in continuing education,

initial training or work-study programs. International development is also becoming a competitive advantage, enabling them to broaden their customer base, boost their visibility and appeal, attract the best students and teachers and achieve excellence.

Integrate new technologies

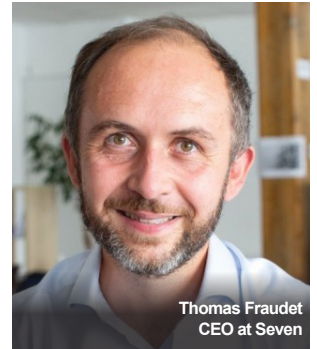
New technologies have also transformed many aspects of our lives, including training, offering numerous advantages for organizations and individuals seeking to acquire new skills and improve their performance. Training is thus becoming more accessible, more interactive and more effective by blending learning modalities, allowing for remote group work and a more interactive, personalized learning experience.

The role of CFOs

Faced with these challenges, Finance Departments must support transformation and act as catalysts for the overall efficiency and performance of organizations. Supported by their various partners and advisors (accountants in particular), they must constantly adjust the business model in the face of funding tensions, optimize and maximize the use of resources to ensure development, accelerate the securing and perpetuation of activities while creating value and adopting a responsible, committed and civic-minded attitude.

6 reasons to invest in employee experience

Training is the key to boosting employee skills. You have to devote time to them and pay the price to make them more efficient. Why do we do this?



Increase sales productivity

As well as earning their loyalty, you'll be offering your employees good working conditions, and therefore the chance to be more productive.

Try out the equation 1+1 = 3

A well-trained, autonomous employee with a strategic vision can in turn be a trainer, and so on. A competent employee who trains another is ultimately a third competent employee (if not more).

A lasting trust

You'll gradually build a bond of mutual trust. The employee will appreciate your open-mindedness and non-judgment. As for you, it's only when you see his or her progress that you'll have the confidence to let him or her stand on his or her own two feet.

Reveal talent!

Accompanying your employees, pushing them to go further, to develop new skills, will potentially reveal unsuspected talents. So dare to be surprised!

Develop individual autonomy

Employees acquire cross-functional skills, enabling them to manage complex situations and make strategic decisions.

According to an IFOP survey, «being autonomous» is the second most sought-after soft skill among French managers, after adaptability.

A loyal workforce

The more experience they gain, the greater their motivation and sense of belonging to the company. As a result, they are more likely to stay longer, which is a considerable advantage for any manager.

We often choose to go for the most efficient solution and look for immediate results. Is this a guarantee of efficiency? Admittedly, adopting a short-termist vision saves managers time. But in the long term, the company's productivity is not necessarily greater. Thinking in terms of future benefits is the way to gain efficiency.

That's why it's so important to think about what pays off in the short term, and what pays off in the long term: investing in your employees.

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A structured network for sharing expertise

The fast development of AI is revolutionising our profession, with Accounting 4.0. Let's not see this phenomenon as a threat, but as an opportunity!

Technology is the only solution if we are to continue to develop our practices, while maintaining the quality of our services in line with the volumes we deliver today. This is all the more true given that it is becoming difficult to recruit, particularly in Europe: we have a shortage of junior staff. AI tools represent a real opportunity, relieving accountants of a whole range of basic, time-consuming tasks.

But the consequence of these advances is that cooperation within our network, including at an international level, is increasingly essential. For an individual firm, it is difficult to achieve the necessary progress and transformation on its own.

As well as sharing costs, the pooling of technologies enables an exchange of practices and professional experience. 4 years ago, we launched a «Snow Ball» project. As the name suggests, its aim is to develop our businesses together through a «snowball effect». A sub-group dedicated to technology is currently being set up. Why is this? Because ad hoc, informal discussions are not enough.

To make real progress, we need a framework where decisions are taken in a concrete way, leading to regular progress. This is what enables network members to decide on their investments and measure the benefits.



Let's be aware that when it comes to technology, our competitors are Microsoft and Google!



Christian Fielding
Managing Partner at Crowe in Poland,
Czechia and Slovakia

