

A member's view: Tim Palmer

Briefings



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Tax consultant, Arram Berlyn Gardner

Tim lectures on tax extensively all over the UK and is a tax consultant with chartered

accountants Arram Berlyn Gardner, London. He is also a CTA and ATT member.

How did you build your career in tax?

My father, who was an accountant, always assumed and expected me to follow him into the profession, and he recommended that I should eventually specialise in tax. He had a very big practice, with offices all around Essex. I worked for him in the school holidays, aged 10 upwards! While other kids were riding their bikes, I was completing tax returns!

I left dad's firm to join a bigger practice in the 1970s, Ball Baker Carnaby Deed in Holborn, London. I then spent a spell in industry, working in the in-house tax department of the P&O Shipping Group, which was marvellous experience for me. P&O, at that stage, owned the Bovis Group, so that's where my interest in construction industry tax started. When I was at P&O, I passed my Institute of Tax exams, and then went back into the profession. I was approached to start tax lecturing as well, and it all snowballed from there.

What do people outside the sector not realise about a career in tax?

At a social gathering, if somebody asks me what I do, and I say that I am in tax, I get the impression that some people think that it is incredibly boring! Nothing could be further from the truth. I find tax very fascinating and challenging, and I like having to keep up to date, both for my lectures and also to assist my tax planning for clients. I have recommended many younger people into the tax profession, and it has been very rewarding to watch them grow and develop within it.

How would you describe yourself in three words?

At work – studious, determined and gregarious.

What advice would you give to someone thinking of doing the CTA qualification?

The CTA is the 'gold star' tax qualification; however, these are very tough exams. If you are serious about passing them, you will have to make a considerable

commitment into studying, but it will be well worth it in the end. Once you have passed these exams, it will be a major boost to your career!

When I was teaching the CIOT exams, I had a delegate on my course named Chris Jones. He was exceptional and subsequently became a close friend. As you are aware, he later became President of the CIOT. His early death was truly tragic.

What advice would you give your future self?

Plan ahead! I think that a spell in industry is a very good career move as well. I think that it is important to enjoy your work and keep challenging yourself to constantly improve and gain more tax knowledge.

Tell me something about yourself that others may be surprised to know about you.

I am a fanatical Tottenham Hotspur fan! I am also very interested in anything to do with Winston Churchill. I thought the film relating to him, 'The Darkest Hour', was one of the best films I have ever seen!

Contact

If you would like to take part in A Member's View, please contact Jo Herman at: jherman@ciot.org.uk