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Abstract

Most college students, including accounting majors, face an important question during their collegiate years: Where will they work after graduation? Accounting students typically consider three broad types of employers when beginning their careers. Public accounting employers vary greatly in size and specialties, but these firms all offer accounting services to external clients. Whereas students beginning their career in corporate accounting can expect to perform similar work but for a single client, their employer. Governmental accounting opportunities are generally comparable to corporate accounting; however, the setting of a not-for profit enterprise is like no other. Each of these fields have both advantages and disadvantages that can sway students to one type of accounting or another. This thesis investigates changing trends in the employment of accounting professionals in each of these fields, with special attention paid to recent college graduates. Results from peer-reviewed scholarly articles on the growth of employment in each of these three broad types of accounting are summarized, but employment trends in recent graduates are sparse. In light of finding few studies or results pertaining to recent graduates, I conclude by proposing further study, including methodological suggestions, and exploration of potential alternatives for identifying and explaining changes in trends in the career choices of recent graduates.

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