

Hey! What's New? 2026-52

The Capability Accountants Need to Build Career Resilience

According to an article in a recent issue of *INTHEBLACK*, “as the role of accounting and finance professionals continues to expand, they are increasingly being asked to solve problems they have not encountered before — from navigating new regulations to advising on emerging technologies.”

Author Nicola Heath quotes Bruce Vivian, head of education at the International Federation of Accountants, as saying that “in this climate of continual change, intellectual curiosity is an essential attribute that equips professionals to handle unanticipated setbacks and challenges. “As accountants, we are being asked to do a whole lot of things we never trained on, that we have never done before. The skill of intellectual curiosity sets us up as lifelong learners — people who are constantly developing, growing and trying new things.”

Vivian describes intellectual curiosity not as “a posture” or an abstract idea, but as a skill that can be practised. Building this capability can take a variety of forms, he says. “It might mean asking probing questions in meetings or, instead of accepting the status quo or relying on business-as-usual processes, making a habit of becoming an active participant in decision-making and the way things are done in the workplace.”

Individuals can expand their intellectual curiosity through formal learning and professional development opportunities such as courses, workshops and webinars, as well as events such as conferences. According to Sarah Craig, learning and development manager at CPA Australia, “a conference is a great way to exercise intellectual curiosity. You are exposed to speakers, professionals and experts from so many different areas. It is a place to really spark ideas, set thought in motion and learn about new concepts that you might be able to apply in your own workplace and role.”

Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a new frontier that is reshaping the workplace in dramatic and unanticipated ways. Heath notes that Craig believes curiosity about AI is integral. “It is here. There is no winding it back, and it changes so quickly. The tools that we have today will have multiplied tomorrow. The features, systems and things that we can do with AI will continue to change, so it is not a ‘set and forget’ area where you can do one course or learn a few techniques and rely on that. You need to stay curious about how AI can work in your career and in your role.”

Leaders and managers can demonstrate curiosity by asking questions and showing a willingness to try new processes or products. “Be curious about the people within your teams as human beings,” Craig says. A curious leader develops strong relationships “that can have a positive correlation with good mental and emotional health. It is encouraging open dialogue ... and encouraging people to share their ideas, to question things openly and create an environment of psychological safety where curiosity is seen as a strong and welcome attribute of a team and of a workplace.”

Heath points out that fostering a culture of curiosity leads to better client outcomes through the creation of solutions-focused teams. “When you see a problem, you do not say, ‘Oh, I have

never seen this before. I do not know what to do. You say, ‘I do not know how to do this, but I am going to investigate. I am going to talk to people in my network. I am going to use AI to see if I can find some solutions. I am going to read up on different literature. I am going to do whatever it takes to get those answers.’ As I do that, I am going to be helping my client, but I am also going to be learning and developing myself.”

Intellectual curiosity can also improve problem-solving and collaboration, notes Heath, again quoting Craig: “Doing things in new ways, challenging assumptions and coming up with creative solutions to old problems increases innovation. It is easy to raise a problem or identify an issue, but being curious can help you dive deeper and look at opportunities to come up with creative solutions.”

For more, check out [The capability accountants need to build career resilience | INTHEBLACK](#).