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COVID-19's Impact in Audit, Tax, and Corporate Accounting

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Abstract

The nominal disease COVID-19 has forced the accounting workforce to change in ways that will have long lasting effects in the practice of accounting (e.g. maintaining social distancing in a business environment, the movement to online/remote working, the enactment of new tax laws, new methods of building relationships with clientele, the CARES Act, etc.). Those within the tax, audit, corporate, and education sectors of accounting will be affected by the pandemic in many ways. The changes that have occurred will force businesses to give accommodations to accounting professionals long after the pandemic has ended. Due to the safety and concerns of the populous in the context of COVID-19, accountants will have preferences for their work environment depending on their accounting line of service. Prior to COVID-19, businesses had not normally offered these accommodations; the pandemic gives an opportunity to adapt to the current world narrative.

Changes in the Accounting Workforce due to COVID-19

The virus COVID-19 has driven the accounting workforce to shift in ways that will outlive the lifespan of this pandemic. These effects include maintaining social distancing in a business environment, moving to online/remote working, building new tax laws which affects tax service providers, building relationships with current clients, and disclosing the risks that come with a pandemic. COVID-19 also brought about the government's passing of the CARES Act which has implications amongst all sectors of accounting.

Those in the tax services sector of accounting will need to understand the changes that arise with the CARES Act so that they can provide their clients the best tax avoidance advice given the pandemic situation. Those in the audit service sector of accounting will have to understand the different types of risks that arise because of a pandemic. Those in corporate accounting departments will need to be adaptable in the transition to working remotely while not sacrificing the quality of financial reporting. Those in accounting education will need to consider the advantages of teaching and learning virtually while maximizing their long-term effectiveness from the opportunity that COVID-19 presents.

Changes in Tax Law

Due to COVID-19, those whose primary business is in tax services have had to assist their clients in making better tax avoidance decisions and understanding the tax implications of new laws, all while maintaining and growing their client base.

Consider that most businesses have had to make changes to their normal operating procedures to ensure that they stay competitive in their niche markets. Initially it may look like they have made those changes just to remain operational; however, they have tax implications to consider. In an article by Barton (2020), more than 50 of Ernst & Young clients across the manufacturing, hospitality, and consumer products sectors publicly agreed to manufacturing line conversions to help fight COVID-19. Barton notes five areas that businesses would need to consider when doing this conversion: (1) tax implications, (2) cash flow considerations, (3) logistical concerns, (4) risk and law issues, and (5) managing people. The knowledge of tax implications is critical to how these businesses will offset costs. One of the primary things to understand is how the government assists businesses throughout this period; specifically, with the CARES Act that the government has passed.

Consideration of the tax implications of the CARES Act and the grants/loans that come with it is essential when businesses spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to remain competitive. The right tax decisions could save

the businesses thousands of dollars to be even more competitive. The CARES Act stands for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act and was passed on March 27th, 2020 (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020). The CARES Act had overwhelming support from both parties and was signed into law by President Trump providing a two trillion-dollar economic relief package to protect the masses of America from public health and economic impact of COVID-19 (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020). The CARES Act specifically affected American workers, families, and small businesses preserving jobs in American industries (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020). The CARES Act includes the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) for small businesses which is fully forgivable when seventy-five percent of the PPP loan is used for payroll costs, interest on mortgages, rent, and utilities (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020). Fully forgivable means that the PPP amount given to the small businesses do not have to be repaid.

At the Federal level, the funds from the Paycheck Protection Program are tax-free, but they may be subject to local and state taxes (Taherian, 2020). Also, not all the expenses covered by the Paycheck Protection Program are tax deductible. There is even a section in the CARES Act related to expanding the total amount of charitable deductions to twenty-five percent of taxable income. Prior to COVID-19, the limit was ten percent (Taherian, 2020). Another tax implication that occurred due to COVID-19 is the extension of the filing and payment deadlines. Businesses with a deadline of April 15th had their deadlines extended to July 15, and could have their deadline extended to October 15th (Coronavirus Tax Relief: Filing and Payment Deadlines, 2020). This extension is applicable to many tax forms which include and are not limited to the 1065, different variations of the 1120, the 8804, and more (Coronavirus Tax Relief: Filing and Payment Deadlines, 2020). Not every business had their specific tax form extended, so those who use tax information must know all the detail necessary to give sound advice. Understanding how the CARES Act can benefit businesses is imperative for tax firms and tax return preparers to give high quality service.

When tax services are provided, most would expect there to be a strong personal relationship between the tax accountant and the client. Due to COVID-19, there are far fewer face-to-face interactions. Firms with offices that employ hundreds of people are not able to keep offices open. Most firms offered their workers the opportunity to work from home, and later mandated working from home (Coronavirus: How Accounting Firms Are Adjusting Their Business Operations, 2020). State governments began to enforce mandates to close businesses that were deemed as non-essential to sustaining life (Levy et al., 2020), including CPAs and their firms.

The CPA Practice Advisor, a magazine for CPA related news, states that many offices had to create pickup/drop-off stations or car-side services to cater to clients who are not familiar with or able to access electronic documents (Coronavirus: How Accounting Firms Are Adjusting Their Business Operations, 2020). Clients began to communicate with their tax firms through many means: mail, courier services, emails, telephone calls, and virtual meetings through different services (Coronavirus: How Accounting Firms Are Adjusting Their Business Operations, 2020). Several web conferencing tools were commonly used; Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meets became the new normal for firms as they established ways for employees to collaborate with each other. The longevity of a tax firm may depend on its ability to handle working remotely, maintain strong client relationships, and understand the tax implications of the CARES Act.

COVID-19 has also created a scenario for tax service providers that can be beneficial. Many companies are looking to their tax advisors for help to navigate the rapidly changing environment concerning COVID-19; if they are prepared to handle the changes that COVID-19 has forced them to undertake, they can come out on top of this as a better, stronger accounting firm.

Changes in Audit Regulations

Changes in audit services are a similar because they are affected by the same state mandates that encourage CPAs and their firms to work from home. Audit and attest services are impacted differently from tax services, and prior completed engagements and risk assessments may not address a worldwide pandemic such as COVID-19 (FERENCE et al., 2020). If a company's year-end statements to changes in tax services are after the date that COVID-19 became a national emergency, there may be a need for more scrutiny from the auditor's point of view. Clients will need to have more judgement and estimation of the recognition of revenue and asset valuations that may be impacted by COVID-19. Reports may need modifications because they have not accounted for the pandemic.

Audit firms will have to include additional disclosures concerning the impact of the Coronavirus; this can be through ongoing concerns, risks, uncertainties, and estimations (FERENCE et al., 2020). The industry that a client operates in may have been impacted by COVID-19; this could be the specific market industry, geographical location, customer financial ability to purchase/finance, and the suppliers of that specific entity (Audit and Financial Reporting Matters Related to COVID-19, 2020). If an audit client is concerned, the auditor should release an opinion reflecting that.

Failure on the part of an audit firm to address significant issues created by the pandemic (resulting in financial statement errors) will open the firm to charges of neglect. As an example, consider a scenario where inventory needs to be counted. COVID-19 may restrict the client from conducting inventory counts and the auditor may not be able to travel to perform physical inventory verification. In these situations, the auditors must be resilient and overcome such obstacles. They may be able to reschedule for physical counts or maybe even consider the use of technology to conduct the count (Audit and Financial Reporting Matters Related to COVID-19, 2020).

There is a potential increase of fraud risk because of COVID-19, and auditors need to understand those opportunities for fraud. Consider industries that had to transition employees to working remotely and or those who had to lay off large numbers of workers such as the tourism industry. The combination of layoffs and remaining employees working remotely increases the risk of a breakdown in internal controls (Audit and Financial Reporting Matters Related to COVID-19, 2020). Auditors should prepare for these kinds of scenarios and be aware of opportunities that might lead to fraud.

Internal controls need to be tested to the fullest extent possible by the auditor. Working remotely accompanied by social distancing can make it harder for the auditor to complete testing of the internal controls. Not only will the auditor have to maintain social distancing, they may also have to work from their home instead of going to the audit location. The auditor could push for more substantive testing and understand the extent of further audit procedures in relation to the testing of internal controls. Also, asset impairment can occur because of COVID-19. Impacts of business, production, and supply chain disruptions can force the auditor to reconsider testing a company's assets for asset impairments. That can also be the case for a change in cashflows and market volatility (Audit and Financial Reporting Matters Related to COVID-19, 2020). Asset impairment can occur to goodwill, indefinite-lived intangible assets and long-lived assets; the professional auditor must determine how to properly test for impairment considering the impact of COVID-19.

In internal auditing, the auditor will have to be able to understand the collaboration with risk management and compliance alongside the response to the pandemic. New operational models and business practices can create time sensitive risks that need to be prioritized in a hierarchy of importance. An internal auditor can also try to look at the strength of data. With the shift to virtual work environments because of COVID-19, understanding the way data is connected will not only increase insights and assurance, but it will also give a good understanding to any business interruption (Maali et al., 2020).

The internal auditor must maximize accessibility to data and records while knowing how online collaboration tools can analytically affect the end of projects. The potential impact of COVID-19 needs to be communicated by the auditor to different departments, management, and the board of directors.

Clear and detailed communication from the perspective of an internal auditor to management can be critical in communicating new risks that arise and how to address those risks. If audit plans are changed, limited, or adapted due to COVID-19, that needs to be understood, communicated, and executed by the auditor (Maali et al., 2020). For internal auditors, they may find that they have excess time in the short term due to the inability to conduct certain testing because of COVID-19. PricewaterhouseCoopers suggest that they work on long-term goals such as automating and digitizing workflows, digital upscaling and training, methodology transformation of technology and data, and strategic transformations to reduce costs and improve compliance for Sarbanes Oxley (Maali et al., 2020). PricewaterhouseCoopers has a valuable insight as to how internal audit should be used:

The times are difficult, but internal audit's potential contribution is enormous: helping to provide a trusted risk perspective during these weeks and months when critical risks are both rising and changing quickly. (Maali et al., 2020)

Without the auditor's opinions, those who read the report may not know all the risks. The auditor also must consider the scope of limitations that may occur in their testing of controls. COVID-19 brings changes to the operations of a company; this may lead the auditor to test for things outside of their normal scope. The Journal of Accountancy states that the auditor should focus on whether one of these criteria exists: not confined to specific elements, accounts, or items in the financial statements; confined but also represent a material portion of the financial statements; and or fundamental to user's understanding of financial statements with disclosures (Maali et al., 2020). The International Federation of Accountants says the documentation that the auditor gathers that provides an image of the auditor's professional judgment and is vital to enforcing the quality of the auditor's opinion. Especially during a pandemic, it is essential to have a basis for the auditor's subjective judgements (Arnold, 2020).

Just like those providing tax services, auditors too will have to adapt with the change from working remotely in the terms of client relationships. Auditors will have to make sure that they are able to communicate effectively with their clients including the internal audit team. Auditors should understand the risks of participating in an engagement before it is accepted, and then

have the ability to fully commit to an engagement while knowing how limited their decisions can be depending on the state of the pandemic. Accounting firms should prepare their auditors to have the technological capabilities to work remotely, communicate effectively between other auditors and the clients, and to have that sense a teamwork; so that the auditors are prepared to complete their engagements in a quality manner (Mackintosh, 2020).

Still, even in the times of a pandemic, an auditor must be ethical. Not every risk and potential misstatement is related to COVID-19; it would be easy for any auditor to say it is when it truly is not. Regardless of the current scenario, the auditor's ethics are the foundation for their work. For reference, the International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants state that the fundamental principles are integrity, objectivity, professional competence, due care, confidentiality, and professional behavior (Thomadakis, 2020). By maintaining these pillars of ethical value, an auditor will be better equipped to form a quality opinion for their customer even during the current pandemic.

Changes in Corporate Accounting

Corporate accounting and its financial reporting need to be prepared in accordance with GAAP to ensure reliability of the financial statements. As with the other accounting areas, there has been a shift from in person to remote working.

Deloitte offers a chart that mentions direct, indirect, and longer-term impacts that comes along with a pandemic (Koster & Igoe, 2020). These potential impacts will affect those who work in the corporate accounting divisions of major companies in many ways. COVID-19 has direct impacts to profitability, liquidity, credit quality, and supply chain; indirect impacts to the financial markets, prices, idle capacity, shifts in demand; longer term impacts in digital infrastructure, flexible working models, increased uncertainty, and change in business models (Koster & Igoe, 2020).

There are several companies that have had to lay off their employees in their internal corporate accounting departments because of COVID-19. For example, when the hospitality and tourism industry was crippled due to COVID-19, companies within those industries had to adapt to a major loss of revenue. Hilton Hotels, for example, became the world's most valuable hotel brand in 2019 and has been impacted severely by COVID-19, laying off 2,100 employees (one-fifth of their corporate workforce) to boost liquidity and reduce corporate expenditures (Clarke, 2020). This has resulted in 2,100 employees being laid off to boost liquidity and reduce corporate expenditures, to offset the loss of revenue because of COVID-19. The 2,100 employees that were laid off amounted to one-fifth of their corporate workforce (Clarke, 2020).

Employees who remain in a company's corporate accounting department must do the work that was done by previous workers who were laid off or furloughed which may require restructuring of the corporate accounting division just to finish all the work that needs to be done monthly. This may be viewed as providing more experience and skills to learn for the accountants that remain, but those that have lost their jobs will have to seek work elsewhere during the crisis.

The unemployment rate during COVID-19 in the United States has soared to astronomical numbers. According to the Bureau of Labor, civilian unemployment in April 2020 was nearly fifteen percent and was a record high for the past two decades (Civilian unemployment rate, 2020).

With such a sporadically high unemployment rate, those in corporate accounting who have found themselves jobless must search for work during the employment crisis. Because of this, those at CPA Practice Advisor recommend that accountants who have been affected by COVID-19 career-wise should embrace the skills of the future (DiGennaro, 2020). They should reassess their long-term goals in accounting and consider what they can do to become competitive. This may include going back to school to acquire a master's degree to become CPA eligible, studying and taking the four CPA exams, or learning new skills in data analytics that are applicable to the constantly evolving corporate accounting field. Some may consider the switch from public accounting to private accounting or vice versa; the job market for accounting that has been affected by COVID-19 will learn to readjust itself.

Those in corporate accounting who have kept their jobs have had to adapt to working from home. This means that financial reporting needs to be done in an environment outside of the office without a sacrifice in quality. Communication is one key to ensuring that there is no sacrifice in quality of financial reporting when working from home. That means that employees should be mindful of how to communicate virtually; this involves tactfully deciding how to relay information to other employees formally and informally in the virtual environment. Each person in a company's corporate accounting division needs to have the proper technological access and knowledge to complete their portion of the company's financial reporting with competence. If a company previously did not have technological capabilities for their employees to do their work remotely, they needed to adjust to accomplish financial reporting given the government mandates.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an opportunity for many corporate accounting departments across the world. That opportunity is to reevaluate their current method of financial reporting when it comes to the employee's method of working and financial reporting. Companies should

consider the process that their business must go through when processing accounting transactions and preparing financial documents through the cloud environment (Johnson, 2020). This transition to working from home may have been more efficient for some employees to complete financial reporting than previous methods, because of improvements to their reporting methodology was found upon review of the task at hand. For example, if a team reviews their current methods of financial reporting and finds a new way to conduct them more efficiently using the cloud environment, their financial reporting process will have improved. However, that may not be the case for many accounting departments who are not familiar with the new innovative tools used in remote working. The shift to remote working can influence businesses to maintain more virtually efficient standards of financial reporting for their corporate accounting departments.

Many companies are taking advantage of the change in working remotely by allowing their workers to work from home permanently. One example of a company who has made this change is Microsoft. Microsoft is allowing their managers to approve employees to work from home permanently; in doing so, they give up their office space and must work in assigned locations if they go to the office (Keane, 2020). In providing this option, Microsoft can save on office lease expenses and cater to their employee's desire to work from home. Microsoft also allows those that choose to remain working in the office environment to work fifty percent of their time at home if needed (Keane, 2020). Microsoft is just one of the many companies that is making the switch to working remotely widely available for their employees. This significantly affects those in corporate accounting as they are given opportunities (and face challenges) to conduct financial reporting differently than from before the pandemic, where remote work opportunities were not as widely available.

Though remote working is becoming the new normal, investors still need strong information on the financial status of a company through the financial statements formulated by corporate accounting departments that support the company. Disclosures themselves will be imperative to relaying information related to COVID-19 to investors. Whether mandatory or voluntary, these disclosures are essential in communication between management and stakeholders of a company. This could be corporate disclosures that quantify cash flows, earnings, or forecasted future performance and risk (Larcker et al., 2020). The guidance that is provided by the managers of the corporate accounting sectors of a business can become vital to determining the extent to which COVID-19 has affected their financial statements. The decision by managers to share information can be highly influential to the perceived value of that company; corporate accountants have the respon-

sibility to arm the senior management with quality information for key decision-making scenarios. Accounting Today states that financial statement disclosures will be related to the preparedness and response going forward given the situation with the pandemic (Mackintosh, 2020). Just consider the sheer number of disclosures that will be mentioned about the pandemic by different companies across different industries. As the pandemic grows within the United States, disclosures related to COVID-19 became more prevalent in the beginning of 2020. The Stanford Closer Look Series dives into this specific situation. They found that in January to May 2020, the percentage of companies that disclose COVID-19 cumulatively rises from zero percent to nearly one hundred percent (Larcker et al., 2020).

Cash-flow estimates made by corporate accounting teams will have to discuss the different variables that affect their future cash-flows. COVID-19 brings unpredictable variables to the cash flow estimation process. The degree to which government mandates impact a business and how it affects the financial statements need to be understood by those in corporate accounting, and they must convey this information in their financial reporting methods. Good faith estimates that are made for cash-flows and asset valuation could result in material asset impairments, which may not be reversible in future periods (COVID-19 Accounting Considerations, 2020). Because of how COVID-19 has affected the entire market, contracts may need to be renegotiated, amended, or outright broken. This will affect those in corporate accounting because the decisions made on contracts may affect compensation arrangements when it comes to leases, employees, financial assets, and liabilities (COVID-19 Accounting Considerations, 2020). The use of United States' GAAP in relation to COVID-19 will be the catalyst for high quality financial reporting in the corporate accounting practices of companies in America (Financial Reporting Considerations Related to COVID-19 and an Economic Downturn, 2020). All available present information should be used in determining the extent to which COVID-19 affects the financial statements, and the use of GAAP with that information is important for quality, timely financial reporting.

Changes in Accounting Education

Those working in accounting education have been impacted by COVID-19 just as much as other sectors of accounting. COVID-19 has given researchers a great opportunity to analyze the effects that a pandemic can have on financial reporting and accounting methodology. The switch to learning remotely and teaching in the virtual environment is becoming more prevalent across schools worldwide.

As colleges have started to change how classes are conducted, accounting professors will have to adhere to new standards that are implemented. Social distancing, remote/online classes, in person class limits, and communication via email/learning software still are things that accounting professors must make adjustments for. Primarily due to government mandates striving to reduce the spread of COVID-19, colleges across America have had to offer their accounting courses virtually. This presents a challenge for professors who have previously never offered their teachings virtually. This includes those who have been teaching in-person accounting courses for decades and now must offer their courses online. The accounting professors who have not adapted to these changes will find themselves in a predicament where they are unable to teach their course material effectively. Professors who are inexperienced with online teaching will need to transition their accounting material to the virtual environment. They could teach their material online by creating videos tailored to the students learning the material. Accounting professors could also decide to teach their classes through hosting virtual meetings that would present the course material through video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Skype, Google Meets, and Cisco Webex.

There are pros and cons for both students and professors in accounting education when it comes to working remotely. Both the students and professor have more control over their learning because online learning and teaching accommodates everyone's own schedule. Accounting students with jobs can do their class work as their work schedule allows. Whether it is 3:00 AM in the morning or 9:00 PM at night, online courses let accounting students learn whenever they want to. Likewise, accounting professors can create and upload assignments whenever they wish. This saves a lot of time on both ends and is especially helpful for those accounting students who plan on taking an internship to gain experience and work towards their accounting degree. Online teaching is also cost effective as it saves money on the commute of both the accounting students and professors, the universities do not have to provide certain amenities to a larger amount of people, and the informational courses created can be used in future semesters for future generations (Tran, 2020).

There is a downside to teaching and learning remotely, though. Not every professor's strong suit is online; accounting professors may not teach well when in the virtual environment. At the same time, accounting students may not learn as well online as in person. There is a connection that occurs when learning in person compared to learning online which may influence the potential decision for students to pursue an accounting degree.

Bay View Analytics conducted a study on six hundred different institutions with eight hundred higher education faculty administrators on Perspectives: COVID-19, and the future of higher education. This study was made to determine whether the shift to teaching/learning remotely is disruptive to the industry. The survey found that fifty-six percent of faculty members reported using teaching methodology that they were never using in the past, forty-eight percent of faculty members reduced the expectation for the amount of work for students to complete, and thirty-two percent lowered their expectation for the student's quality of work (How Accounting Professors Have Shifted to Remote Teaching During COVID-19, 2020). The results of this survey highlight some of the changes that have been occurring in accounting education due to COVID-19.

Roger CPA interviewed Dr. Veronica Paz about her specific experience with the transition to teaching remotely. Dr. Veronica Paz is a well-qualified associate professor at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and holds CPA, CITP, CFF, and CGMA licenses. In her experience, the transition to teaching accounting material remotely has been a smooth transition; this is primarily because her curriculum was online before COVID-19 (How Accounting Professors Have Shifted to Remote Teaching During COVID-19, 2020).

Dr. Paz teaches entry level undergraduate and upper level graduate accounting courses and has several suggestions for other accounting professors making this transition. She suggests that those struggling with the transition to remote teachings should embrace technology, communicate with the students, go paperless, and become creative with their curriculum ("How Accounting Professors Have Shifted to Remote Teaching During COVID-19," 2020).

What this means is that accounting professors should create videos that their students will use to learn accounting material, consider surveying students on feedback to improve the learning process, using the cloud for grading and uploading assignments, and creating content for each student's learning style. Every accounting professor will likely use what they have used in this transitional period to offer virtual classes after the pandemic is over.

With many changes in accounting due to COVID-19 occurring, the current state of affairs is an opportunity for accounting educators to study/research the changes to better understand why they are occurring and how they will continue in the future for those pursuing a career in accounting. Not only has the shift to working from home became normal, but this is a great time to research how that may affect those in the accounting career. There are tremendous opportunities to shape the future of accounting as a profession. As an example, the CARES Act is a two trillion-dollar bill that is over eight

hundred pages long, with implications for the coming years ("The \$2 trillion CARES Act, a response to COVID-19, is equivalent to 45% of all 2019 federal spending," 2020). As mentioned before, the CARES Act has tax and audit implications that need to be considered. Given that, those in accounting education are given ample opportunity to research how accounting firms, accounting methodology, and companies' financial statements are affected by the CARES Act and COVID-19.

Colleges that offer accounting degrees understand that this shift to learning and teaching remotely has not been as smooth for everyone. Several colleges have offered accommodations for students who have not been adapting to the transition, including accounting students. One such example is the University of Memphis's Credit/No Credit option for classes in the Spring 2020 semester. Choosing to take advanced courses when there is a Credit/No Credit grade option (instead of the normal letter grades) allows students to meet requirements for the degree while also protecting their GPA from possible low letter grades. Although this is a temporary advantage for students, this will not be a permanent solution to the challenges that remote learning brings. As students adapt to learning virtually, this offer may not be given by universities in the future.

The need for accounting students to learn virtually will become normal in the future for aspiring accountants. COVID-19 brings a myriad of opportunities to conduct research into teaching methodology. Degrees will be earned in the virtual environment and accounting professors of the future will understand the necessity of teaching virtually. Because of COVID-19, the way that accounting is taught will include the virtual environment as a permanent alternative.

Conclusion

COVID-19 is a pandemic that is changing the way the world operates, including those in the accounting workforce. Working remotely will be something that stays long after this pandemic ends. The switch to using technological tools such as cloud-based technology like Dropbox, and web conferencing tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams, will become a part of the normal culture in accounting. The COVID-19 pandemic brings both an obstacle and an opportunity to the accounting workforce. With the release of the CARES Act, there are opportunities for firms to discover the tax implications related to the two trillion-dollar bill, and how to assist their current and new clients in making tax decisions during this tough time.

Those in the audit line of service will now have to include the risks that come from the COVID-19 pandemic and must adjust their current engage-

ments as needed. Adjusting to financial reporting in the virtual environment and learning new skills to become more competitive in the industry. The number of disclosures that are related to the pandemic is increasing and must be included in financial reporting. The students and professors in accounting education have had to adjust to teaching and learning remotely and will need to stay abreast of new laws/bills that will be passed due to COVID-19. These will all become embedded in industry standard as assessments of risk and the impact of new regulations are evaluated and understood. Going forward, companies and firms will have to understand the changes that occurred because of COVID-19 and offer their employees accommodations that reflect the new normal. In conclusion, the pandemic has created new variables to be considered for accounting purposes and has changed the way accounting information is shared.

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