

# Practice Transformation: SMPs Embracing Change

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An IFAC Content Series

**PREPARING FUTURE-READY PROFESSIONALS**

# Welcome to the Fast Future

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# A ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE

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# Practice Transformation

- Focused on SMPs becoming “future-ready”
  - Embrace change
  - Leveraging technology
  - Talent management
  - Evolving the firm operating model and building advisory services
- Dedicated practice transformation webpage – examples of PAO support and SMP case studies



# Key Themes and Insights

## Prioritize

Prioritize the health and safety of employees, facilitate virtual operations and support staff's flexible working.

## Ensure

Ensure there is regular communication with clients to identify their needs and demands.

## Maximize

Maximize their close client relationships and in-depth knowledge to provide relevant services, demonstrating the ability to diversify service offerings.

## Utilize

Utilize technology to provide insights and enable clients to understand their financial circumstances and take informed and appropriate actions and decisions.



# Staffing Trends

- Some regions are experiencing “The Great Resignation”
- Many staff are demanding flexibility, better compensation, and greater opportunities for advancement
- Some are leaving the accounting industry altogether for other pursuits
- Many SMPs have more work but less people to do it
- Firms are getting creative in how they attract and retain talent
- Some firms are using contractors, interns, and other short-term type of solutions to fill the gaps

# Innovative Practitioners Initiative

- Showcasing Innovative Practitioners
  - The Fast Future With IFAC Podcast Series
  - So far, we have launched 3 podcasts
  - Each is focused on a different practitioner with a focus on evolving business models and use of technology
  - Plan is to launch a new podcast each month



# Key Themes and Insights Gained to Date- Technology

- Firms that were already in the cloud seemed to have less trouble converting to a remote work environment
- Even the smallest of firms are relying more heavily on technology
- Many firms use outside providers to assist with cybersecurity, although many cloud solutions have some of that built in
- When firms use technology to do some of the number crunching and analytics, they can spend more time advising and guiding their clients

# Some of the Tools Being Used

QB Online

Xero

Cloud  
Accounting  
tools

Microsoft  
Teams

Dext

FYI Docs

BGL

Futrli

Slack

Zapier

Canva

NetZero

Bill.com

SurePrep

TaxCaddy

Social Media  
Platforms

Dashboard  
applications





# Overall Insights and Advice for Others

- Utilizing automated tools and technology on audits reduces cost and allows a focus on the more significant risk areas
- The pandemic has been somewhat of a catalyst for embracing new technology
- Younger staff tend to really embrace new technologies, tap into them for ideas
- Firm networks/associations/alliances can be of great value
- Identification of new services and niches to identify best technology and tools
- Focus on your firm's strengths

# ESG and Sustainability

## New Services & Opportunities

- Thought Leadership: *Sustainability Information for Small Businesses: The Opportunity for Practitioners*
  - *Advisory on having readily available, relevant and reliable sustainability information*
  - *Reporting*
  - *AUP and Assurance Engagements*
- Event – Featuring practitioners providing sustainability services



# Knowledge Gateway

## Recent Gateway articles include:

- [Insights on Small Firm Specialization with an Enhanced Focus on Business Advisory Services](#)
- [Crucial Today and Tomorrow: Professional Accountancy Organizations' Support for SMPs](#)
- [Gig Economy Trends and Impact on Small and Medium Practices](#)
- [Don't Forget! IAASB Revised AUP Standard Becomes Effective as of January 1, 2022](#)
- [Professional Accountants: Now is the Time to Embrace our Role as Agents of Change](#)
- [Ethical Leadership in the Digital Age](#)
- [Doing Different Things: Approaching Sustainability with Confidence, and Your Existing Skillset](#)
- [Keeping up with Changes to the International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants: A Primer for SMPs and SMEs](#)
- [How Can Your Firm Harness the Potential of Gen Z in the Workplace?](#)
- [Key Factors to Consider in Designing Partner Compensation Models](#)
- [Value Pricing- An Update with Ron Baker](#)



July

Questions