

# sage Match

## *Seven questions small-business owners should ask before hiring accounting professionals*



When a small business makes the move to hire accountants and bookkeepers, it is a momentous event. As a business owner, you will be able to breathe easy knowing that your business' finances are in skilled hands. However, before you can relax, you have to actually find the right accounting professional for the job. While some prefer to hire in house, others choose to hire an accounting firm or service to handle their business' finances. It doesn't matter what path you take; you still need to ask the right questions.

### 1. Are you a certified public accountant?

While CPAs tend to charge higher fees for their services, [Kashoo](#) reported, it's often worth it. CPAs are better educated and more experienced than non-CPA accountants and bookkeepers, meaning they will serve you well as your business grows and expands. While you don't have to have a CPA right away, at some point, you should consider hiring someone who is certified.

### 2. What do you specialize in?

Different accounting professionals specialize in separate areas of their field. As a business owner, you need to look for someone who focuses on financial accounting. According to [Accountingverse](#), these specialists focus on recording and classifying business transactions as well as handling financial statements for internal and external use. While large operations may need several different types of accountants and bookkeepers, hiring a financial accountant is usually a good place to start.

## 3. What software do you use?

According to [CPA Practice Advisor](#), some old-school accounting firms still utilize DOS. While the chances of running into this are pretty small, it just highlights the fact that there is a lot of old technology still in use. Modern accounting software—especially cloud accounting software—has many benefits. The software can not only help accounting professionals get the job done but make it easier to share reports and statements with business owners, making communicating relevant information easier than ever before. Don't be afraid to ask specific questions about their software, such as the last time it was updated.

## 4. How can you help me grow my business?

Make the accountant or accounting firm sell you on the fact that they're good at what they do. A qualified accounting professional will help a small business expand over time, according to [Entrepreneur](#). Strong financial management is one of the many stepping stones to business growth, and an honest accountant will be able to tell you how he or she plans to make that happen.

## 5. What should we communicate about regularly?

A skilled accountant working with your company will want access to the business owner and other executives. Ask them what they will want to talk with you about on a regular basis. [Entrepreneur](#) reported that your accountant should work in collaboration with you to explain what the business needs to do right now and in the future to keep expanding. You want your accountant coming to you with any reasons for concern or suggestions he or she may have.

## 6. How do you price your services?

While it would be nice to think you could afford the best accountant out there, chances are that you can't. As with everything, you have to work within a budget. Talk with accountants and bookkeepers about their price. Ask them how they determine those prices and share how much you were hoping to spend. While you don't want to base the whole discussion on the cost of accounting, it's a topic that can't be overlooked.

## 7. Ask for references

If you're not quite sold on an accountant or bookkeeper, simply ask for references, [CPA Practice Advisor](#) suggested. Once they provide you with references, follow up. You need to know how they work with customers. Talk with the references about what you're looking for, and their answers should be a good indication as to whether or not the accounting solution is the right choice. Don't be afraid to get specific. While you don't want to request too much from them, asking plenty of questions is never a bad idea.

Finding the right accounting professional is extremely important, and the more questions you ask, the easier you'll be able to determine how an accountant or bookkeeper will fit into your business.

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