



## How to get the most out of your accountant

### What to look for in an Accountant

- Have they got a personality?
- Are they like-minded and are their values similar to yours?
- Do they keep in contact and show initiative?
- Do they think outside the box?
- Who do they work for – you or IRD?
- Do they keep up to date with new initiatives and legislation?
- Are they approachable and available for meetings?
- Will they tailor their service to your needs?
- Have they worked in the 'real world'?
- Are they interested in your long term goals and where you're going or are they only worried about the past and how much tax you have to pay?
- Can they give you a price up front for the work you want them to do?
- Are they technologically savvy?
- Understand the difference between a bookkeeper and an accountant

**Tip 1:** Like any relationship, the relationship with your accountant needs to be actively managed

### Points to consider:

- Do I get on well with my accountant?
- Instead of saying my accountant never contacts me, ask how often do I contact my accountant?
- Do I consider my accountant a necessary evil or an essential member of my team?
- Does my accountant know what my expectations are? Do I set deadlines?

**Tip 2:** Use the collective talents, skills and wisdom of the whole firm

### Points to consider:

- The day of the generalist is over – we can't be good at everything
- Using only one person means you get only that person's point of view, expertise and experience
- Do I know about all the services my accountant offers or is skilled in?
- Am I using any or all of the services as needed?

**Tip 3:** Be clear about your expectations and understand what your accountant may need from you

### Points to consider:

- Remember, your accountant doesn't have ESP – ask questions and keep them informed regularly of where things are at
- Let your accountant know what you expect – be prepared to discuss your expectations and modify them as appropriate

- Don't assume someone else will take care of it – make sure you know who's responsible – you or the accountant
- Fix issues as you go – don't just leave them until the end of the year when it may be more difficult or costly to resolve

**Tip 4: It is not only finding the right accountant, it is being the right client**

**Points to consider:**

- Are you an easy client or a difficult client?
- Give all information requested in one go, not over a period of time.
- Most accountants don't mind questions and some actually thrive on them and appreciate it when you do ask them
- Do you like to be paid on time when you supply goods or services? So, pay your accounts on time. In fact, paying quickly after receiving the bill is a great way to get priority over others.
- Accountants are people too and if you constantly make life difficult for them, your work might end up in the 'wish they would leave' basket