

# CPA Profile

## Fionnuala Keary



**Title:**  
Senior Financial Analyst

**Company:**  
TD Global Finance Unlimited  
Company

**Qualifications:**  
CPA, QFA, GDPO, AAT

### Why did you decide to start out in a career in accountancy?

It wasn't a conscious decision to choose accountancy but more an obvious one. On completion of a graphic art and design course, financed by my employer, (a finance house), the CFO then asked me to complete a course of his choosing.

Always having a very strong liking for logic and figures, the Accounting Technician course was a perfect fit. Following its completion, and when considering further study, the opportunities afforded by an accountancy qualification made this a definitive career choice.

### Why did you choose CPA Ireland as your qualification route?

CPA provided the opportunity to take either the industry or practice route and also recognised the AAT qualification. The flexibility afforded by CPA, enabled me to manage full time employment and rearing a young family. Also, many colleagues had obtained the qualification and highly recommended it.

### Please provide a brief history of your career.

I started off as assistant accountant in Hamilton Leasing, progressing to management accountant when the firm was acquired by Woodchester Bank.

This business continued to grow, by way of natural growth and mergers & acquisitions, thus providing the opportunity to move internally. This led to working as a business analyst being involved in the integration of the many and varied inherited financial and IT systems, resulting from these acquisitions.

Perhaps one of the most interesting roles was that of an information analyst. Having a strong understanding of the financials, the many systems and the underlining data, this role provided support for strategic decision making by senior management.

As the era of regulation and compliance really came into force, I got the opportunity to move into this world.

The firm was acquired by Investec Bank plc and afforded me another opportunity to step back and set up my own firm offering financial services to individuals, and regulatory expertise on a contractual basis to Investec. Following the financial crash, I took this role on a fulltime basis. I have since moved to a similar role in TD with the potential to further encompass data analytics and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

### What one word describes what your CPA qualification has given you?

Diversification.

### What has been your biggest career achievement?

The ability to hold many varied and challenging roles, which maintaining a strong work life balance.

### What or who inspires you most in business?

Chuck Feeney was a tremendous inspiration. As a very successful businessman, he never lost sight of those in more difficult circumstances, as evidenced by his extraordinary philanthropy. A person who was a "giver" to society, anonymously. It's great to see an increasing number of organisations proactively embracing Corporate Social Responsibility policies.

### What advice would you give to those recently qualified or currently studying for their CPA qualification?

Don't be afraid to ask questions and stay curious. Never stop learning, it's a lifelong adventure! Embrace technology; it continues to evolve, and it will enhance / impact all aspects of life.

### How do you unwind?

Having reared my family, I am now enjoying participating in hockey, golf, walking and bridge – enabling me to engage both body and brain on a different level.

### What traits do you admire in others?

Openness, honesty, positive attitude with a wiliness to listen, learn and share.

