

# CPA Profile

## Jimmy Sheehan



**Title:**  
Managing Director

**Company:**  
Teams PLUS

**Qualifications:**  
FCPA, FIATA

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

It wasn't an active decision to be an accountant per se. After school I started working in hospitality. I lived in several different countries and had a lot of fun and had some amazing life experiences. In my mid 20's I realised this wasn't a lifestyle that I would want in my 40's so I started the Accounting Technician qualification. It was just a two-year course, so I knew even if I didn't like it, time would pass quickly and at the end I'd still have a well-recognised and respected business qualification.

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

CPA Ireland has been very supportive to me throughout my career, both in my time as a student and member. As an ATI graduate, I found that CPA Ireland recognised the value of being an ATI and provided the most flexible options in terms of education delivery, career aspirations in that I could work in Industry or Practice and training as I wasn't tied into a contract.

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

I'm currently Managing Director of Teams PLUS, and its parent company, Contracting PLUS. Teams PLUS is the exact business I needed when I was in practice and was struggling with finding and retaining good staff, trying to reduce work in progress and drive profitability. Accountants and finance teams using this service now have the advantage I was looking for 10 years ago. Along the way I've worked in practice and industry. I've been Financial Controller, Auditor, Practice Owner, Consultant. I've worked with small teams and in Top10 firms. I'm a firm believer in doing what you enjoy, and when you don't enjoy it anymore, try something different.

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

Options! An accountancy qualification alone doesn't give you good business experience, but it gives you the permission to put yourself forward for opportunities where you might not otherwise be considered.

### What has been your biggest career achievement?

I think if we look for career defining moments, we'll always be striving for something out of reach and that's not good for self-morale. It's perfectly acceptable to have goals to drive you, to give you a sense of purpose and challenge you. I'm very happy with my career to date, but I don't see any one thing as being the biggest achievement. I prefer to look at where I am now and learn from the journey so far and apply the smart choices I've made into my plans for the future.

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

My Grandad taught me my first lesson in business when I was 6 or 7. Know your customer. Everything else stems from that. I enjoy reading business books. We can all find inspiration in learning from others. I'm currently reading Tools of Titans (Tim Ferris), Atomic Habits (James Clear) and am re-reading Oversubscribed by Daniel Priestly.

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

Always put your hand up. If an opportunity arises to be involved in a project or area where you have no experience, take it. Accountancy is changing. In Atomic Habits, James Clear uses an analogy of an ice-cube

sitting on a table in a room. It's -5 degrees. Your goal is to melt the ice cube. So, you warm up the room by one degree and nothing happens to the ice cube. You warm the room by one degree again, and again until it's now 0 degrees Celsius. All that effort, all those little changes and still you can't get the ice-cube to melt. But then, you raise the temperature by just one more degree and now the ice-cube starts to melt – changes happen. What you've been trying to achieve, happens. It wasn't the one degree change on its own, but rather the combined effort of all the little changes over time.

That's what is happening with accountancy. We're adopting all these innovations and soon that one degree of change will totally transform how accountants work.

### How do you unwind?

I have young kids. One tends to jump from being busy at work to being busy at home. Each is a welcome distraction and break from the other... but unwinding.... there are a few years left before I can think about that type of luxury!!

### What traits do you admire in others?

Rolling your sleeves up. You don't have to be the best at anything. Often those who are the best put themselves under so much pressure, and have external pressures on them, that they are miserable. Try and be happy. Do something you enjoy. Let's be honest, we'd all love to win the lotto and not have to work. But when you get bored of lying on the beach, what's going to 'pull you back in'?

If you can marry work you enjoy with your innate ability, and add a little bit of giddy-up, you'll have success.