

CPA Profile

Paul O'Connell



Title:
Managing Partner

Company:
Quintas

Qualifications:
BBS, Business Studies
from UCC, CPA

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

I've always had a flair for numbers since my early school days. I studied accountancy for my Leaving Certificate and with it also forming a key part of my degree in UCC, it was a natural enough progression to start a career in accountancy.

Why did you choose CPA Ireland as your qualification route?

When I started in my trainee accountancy role, the practice was affiliated with CPA Ireland and all of my fellow trainees were at various stages on the road to a CPA qualification. All spoke very highly of their experiences with CPA Ireland which guided me towards choosing CPA Ireland as my qualification route.

Please provide a brief history of your career.

I've been lucky in my career as it's been a fantastic journey to-date and I've enjoyed every part of it. When I left UCC in 1998, I initially started working with AIB, which is where I stayed until 2001. But I always wanted to do my professional accountancy exams and felt that a move into practice would be the best one for me. I interviewed for a trainee accounting role with O'Reilly McCarthy, which became Quintas some years later.

After completing my exams in 2003, within twelve months of qualifying I was appointed as a manager within the firm. As the business continued to grow and maintained an upward growth trajectory, opportunities opened up for me to further progress. And, over a number of years I went from Director to Partner and to my current position as Managing Partner – a role I assumed in 2021.

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

Assuredness.

What has been your biggest career achievement?

I have had some career highlights including securing my trainee accountancy position with Quintas. I remember going for the interview and being very enthusiastic about joining the firm. But I am particularly proud of taking up the Managing Partner role at an exciting time. Quintas is a very progressive firm, and we have excellent people working here. We have built an inclusive and collaborative culture where every member of the team contributes to our clients' success and the success of Quintas.

What or who inspires you most in business?

From a career perspective my greatest inspirations would certainly be the partners and leaders within the firm – throughout my career I have always admired their enthusiasm, drive and ambition. One stand-out person of inspiration would have to be Tim McCarthy, who I have recently taken over from as Managing Partner. Tim always provided me with fantastic opportunities throughout the course of my career for further learning and development. He has supported me in every step of my career whilst challenging me to be the best that I could be.

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

Get to know the people that you are working with and put your hand

up at any given opportunity. Taking responsibility can be a game-changer for anyone's career. When you take on responsibility and you succeed, it gives you the confidence to take on the next step and you win the confidence of those around you. But at the same time, don't be shy about putting your hand up to seek some help when it's needed.

How do you unwind?

I enjoy playing golf when I can and I am also heavily involved in my local GAA club where I currently manage both our adult hurling and football teams, all be it that it might be a stretch to say that it helps me to unwind!!

I thoroughly enjoy spending time with my family and get a real buzz and energy from our four kids.

There's never a dull moment in our house however there's something invigorating seeing the world through their eyes.

What traits do you admire in others?

Honesty and respect – these are two of my core values in life. Being honest with people and showing them respect are the foundations for long lasting relationships, both personal and professional.

