

Dear Uncle Mike:
Here are a few questions that I would like you to answer for a school project ~~due~~ in math due December 19.

- ① What made you decide to be an accountant?
- ② How do you use mathematics in your job?
- ③ Did you always have an interest in math when you went to school?
- ④ When (as in what point in school) did you decide your career?
- ⑤ Do you like your job as much as you did when you first started it?
- ⑥ How many and what were the courses that helped you to prepare for being an accountant?
- ⑦ How do you use math in everyday life?

Thank you, I appreciate your participation in this project!

P.S. Being that you're my favorite Uncle, Godfather, and CPA, I have chosen accounting for the subject of this project. This project is going to be the equivalent of 2 test grades. Thank you again!

Love,

Erin

QUESTION #1

What made you decide to be an accountant?

That's a good question, Corrin. I don't know if your Dad ever told you but I didn't major in accounting in college so that when I got out of college I still hadn't figured out what I wanted to do. I knew only one thing - that I liked business and I was very interested in what made business work. I then assumed that like a house, where the key to a good house is a good foundation, that the foundation of business was whether you knew how to make a profit and to understand that you must understand accounting - so off I went back to school for accounting!

QUESTION #2

How do you use mathematics in your job?

I'm sending you an article from the New York Times where a famous mathematician says that "mathematics is less than related to accounting than it is to philosophy". Having said that, I think he is only partially correct. Understanding numerical concepts and relationships is very important in our business. It is not a process of just understanding "math facts" as they say in the schools today. Understanding that a word problem can be stated in terms of an equation which can help create the solution to a problem is very important. Of course, if you can't then explain the "mathematical solution" in plain English so people can understand it you haven't accomplished anything. Mathematics, in my view, is just another language - it's a way to state a problem - not in English, French or Spanish but in "Mathematics". I think one of the greatest math mistakes was the one made by Malthus. Do you know who he is? It is another example of how mathematics, philosophy and economics all go together.

QUESTION #3

Did you always have an interest in math when you went to school?
I was quick in "Math facts" but less than quick at "Math problems".
But as I got older and worked with numbers more and more I realized
that I could speak the language of mathematics. That is, putting
a problem into the language of an equation. I must say also that
working with the computer using spread sheets and formulas forces
you to think in the language of mathematics.

QUESTION #4

When (as in what point in school) did you decide your career?

See answer in Question #1.

QUESTION #5

Do you like your job as much as you did when you first started it?
I "LOVE" my job. I like it as much or more now than I did before.
As I get older I see the fruits of my labor. I see how we help
people with their financial questions. I see how we help employees
become proficient in their career choice. I get great satisfaction
in seeing the intellectual growth spurt in both clients and
employees. It's a lot like what your Dad does. At the end of the
day he can look up and say I made that and I like what I did. I
can do the same thing everyday and I can see that when we solve a
problem for a client and they are happy - I'm happy.

QUESTION #6

How many and what were the courses that helped you to prepare for being an accountant?

Being an accountant is much more than knowing numbers as I mentioned in question #3. When I have a student out of college it is just as important they they know how to read, write, and speak as well as know accounting. A good liberal arts education is important. Along with taking Marketing, Economics, Finance and Accounting courses, some of my favorites were Philosophy, English, and History.

QUESTION #7

How do you use math in everyday life?

As I said before, I see math as a language - so I think in terms of "equations" more than I realize. I don't necessarily put everything down into an equation but I know I think that way when I'm reading about a problem. Also, when dealing with "math facts" I must make sure that the answer makes sense when I see a number or a relationship of numbers that my staff gives to me. It's a lot like golf. Ask your Dad and he will tell you that he can "visualize" the putt that he is going to make. I can sense the answer and then I look at the details to make sure my "sense" is correct.