

# Magazine Article



## ACCA 100 Members

**Karl George MBE**  
managing director  
Andersons KRS  
UK

The principal thing that ACCA membership has brought Karl is the credibility that comes with having an international qualification. In addition, he says: 'The breadth of the syllabus gave me the grounding that has enabled me to move from industry to practice, and offer my clients added value and services. There is no question, ACCA membership has opened doors for me as a recognised professional.'

Karl's advice to those who are embarking on their ACCA studies is that, although the journey can take over your life the benefits when you get to the end are immeasurable. The important thing is, don't procrastinate, knockle down and get it done.

'Excellent communications skills are vital to a modern finance professional, to enable you to talk appropriately to different people at all levels from board to clients,' he says. 'Up-to-date technical knowledge is a prerequisite culturally, but to be effective you need to have a balanced, holistic view of other disciplines, such as marketing and IT systems.'

Karl started his career at Bockhouse as a wages clerk and ended up fulfilling the role of acting FD after the company was acquired. Unable to get another FD job at 23, he decided to start his own consultancy business. He was also asked to lecture on examination techniques and the ACCA syllabus, which then developed into training non-finance managers. The business developed through the next 12 years, when he merged with a local firm to create a new limited company, Andersons KRS, in which he took on the MD role. That was two years ago, and the company now employs 25 people. 'I have always had a strong vision and have known exactly what I wanted to achieve,' says Karl. 'My personal aim for the next five years is to turn my business into a top 50 accounting practice offering multi-disciplinary financial services to SMEs in the West Midlands.'

In addition to his career achievements, Karl has received many other accolades, including a gold medal in public speaking from IAMBA, Businessman of the Year for Black Business in Birmingham, Birmingham Young Professional of the Year 2002 and Carlton TV's Business Midlander of the Year 2003 and most recently, an MBE for his work in the community with youth and business. His first book *About People Only: The J.M.B.A. Story* was published last year. 'Winning the Young Professional of the Year gave me a great sense of achievement - particularly since I was up against accountants from much larger firms, including the Big Four firms.'

Karl set up the first UK chapter of the international organisation '100 Black Men' which aims to mentor and encourage young Afro-Caribbean boys and prevent them from under-achieving. 'I am doing it because I feel there is a need to give back to the community. Afro-Caribbean boys from poor areas, the kind in which I grew up, face enormous problems. If we don't do this work, they are going to be left out. There is a social issue and a business issue.'

Karl sees the future of the accountancy profession as being in the provision of added-value services. Over the last ten years, there has been a shift. Clients are demanding a wider range of services and are often more resourced business people themselves. Developing communications skills and ensuring all employees are equally commercially aware is vitally important.

'The challenge for the accountants in the years ahead is differentiating themselves as the professions begin to merge. Accountants are no longer specifically finance-focused but much more broad-based. Responsibility in accounting is about integrity, guarding credibility, and transforming the operations of big corporations and small to medium businesses alike.'

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## ACCA 100 Members Book