Which is the best place to do CA articleship?

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Chartered Accountancy course is undoubtedly one of the most prestigious courses a commerce student can opt for. It's a very difficult task to choose among the various CA firms for joining articleship. After the results of CA-IPCC are announced, every student who qualify for at least the group-1 is eligible for doing their articleship. But it's very difficult to choose a best place that fits your purpose of articleship. But the development of technology and tremendous changes in the field of internet made this process some easier than earlier.

Articleship is the golden period of a CA Student’s career. How a trainee undergoes it, would have an impact on what type of CA he/she is destined to become. Taking Articleship lightly would have an adverse impact on training and overall learning experience.
Just like utmost care is taken by the parents to decide which school/college should the child study in, the decision of selecting a place to do articleship must be decided with utmost care too. This decision should not be taken based on the convenience that would be available to the student during his articleship, but should be based on the quality of the work that the student intends to learn. Guidance/opinion can be sought from various seniors or students who have already done their articleship or are in process of completing it.

Many a times the students decide to get registered for the articleship training under a known/relative practising CA and chose not to actually undergo training. (Dummy Articles). This doesn't help to gain any practical knowledge, this activity is not permissible by the institute and can cost the student his entire career.

Here I'm going to discuss how many types of ca firms are there and how they provide an opportunity to the trainees to learn and essential Tips for any student to consider for choosing the correct Article-ship.

1. **Set your Career Objective**:

A simple thumb rule is that if the objective of Article is to go for employment after qualifying, then they should go for Bigger firm, and join the particular department in which one wants to make a career. In contrast, for those who want to go for Practice it is preferable that they join a mid-size firm where one can get diversity of exposure.

2. **Plan your Goals**

Before you do any outside search, the first thing is to ask a few very clear questions to yourself.

**Questions like Why I chose to be CA?**

Whether I will be into practice or Job or Entrepreneurship? (Don't defer the answer to this question, say it loud and clear to yourself from Day One, Tell your mind in clear terms that you are clear & decisive, you can always revisit your choices as time goes on).

**Which type of work fascinates me more?**

Do I like traveling more or vice versa? Etc. The moment these questions are put up to you, be rest assured the answers will not be easy. But at last you will succeed if you exercise your will. Key thing is to create a vision (Call it 'CA Blue Print' & Document it) in your mind. “Just like a River gives birth to so many tributaries, it’s your vision which will create your choices”.

3. **Explore CA Firms**

These days the information is available easily on profile on any company or a CA Firm. Collect as many information about the firms, maintain firm-wise list in a excel sheet seeking their core areas of works and reviews received from your friends/peers about the firm and these information can easily be obtain from internet.
4. Don’t Change your mind with other’s review rather develop your own views.

Generally every person has a different perception about different things. Yes, reviews of insiders and associated colleagues are important, but they should not be your sole deciding factor. Even if you consider them, make sure that you have collected a few opinions and then decided instead of hearing to one or two of them.

"suno sabki, karo apne mann ki"

Most of the students choose CA Firm on the basis that his/her best friend is also an article in that firm. You are going to become a professional so you must be careful regarding choosing the right CA Firm for you instead of just going to same CA firm where your best friend works.

5. Tax Firm Vs Audit Firm

This clearly is dependent on what's your style of working. In some cases you might not have a choice to decide your type of work in the beginning but with time and grit you can start to get involved in your type of work in any firm (Subject to the fact that the CA Firm has your type of work!!). If you are planning a career in practice, you should have good exposure to both audit as well as taxation besides others.

6. Big Four vs. Medium CA firms vs. Small CA firms

After clearing the first confusion as stated above time comes to choose between Top 50 CA Firms and Average CA Firms. For your information Top 50 firms are located mainly in big cities. So if you belong to a small city then you have to move from your native place to big cities.

Say, you plan a career in transfer pricing after qualifying CA. Fortunately, if you get selected in TP Division of any Big Four then it shall be a great value add-on. What you must understand is that BIG Fours or any professional firm shall have some level of compartmentalization to ensure quality of service and competency. So in case if you are allotted with a division not in line with your vision you might not be a happy guy in or after the journey.

First of all you have to take a life changing decision for yourself. Because this decision will change your remaining CA Student life. So if you choose to clear CA in very easily and will concentrate on practical knowledge later then you must choose a CA Firm with not that much work. It may be under a ACA itself who has just started his/her office.

Secondly, If you want to go for quality training then you should try for the Firms which will provide you the better knowledge and better career options.

If you want more than moderate work pressure and keen on concentrating more on your studies and desirous of work exposure in all areas like Auditing, Tax, Assurance etc... then I would suggested medium sized reputed audit firms. Not to mention that you are sure to face extended hours of work during peak seasons like July, September etc... as it is the
period of returns filing. In terms of value addition the rating is good. Again balancing studies and work is one’s onus, but a bit easier compared to working in Big 4s.

In Top CA Firms you will be provided a fixed job for the whole 3 year period. You are not allowed to change your field, area during your articleship. As a result you will be master of your area but you lack general knowledge regarding other areas. On the contrary, in average CA Firms you will be provided number of tasks pertaining to different fields. After three years you will have JACK OF ALL FIELDS BUT NONE OF EXPERTISE. This type of job requirement is available in mostly medium and small companies.

In Crux, if you get what you are seeking in Big four then undoubtedly go for it. If you are not getting so, better to choose several other good CA Firms where eventually you will get hands on your ‘Interest Zone’ work.

7. Stipend is not a parameter for decision

It cannot be denied that the higher stipend is always an add-on. But importantly it is well accepted truth that a capable CA is earning many times more than others and several times more than stipend. It is highly crucial that academic and practical parameters are the sole referring points for your decision making and expanding skill / capability zones. If you have any specific financial hardships you can talk to your principal very openly and clearly.

8. Proper leave for exam Preparation

This is the most critical call for every one. One must not forget that everybody requires leave for preparation of exams. If you are not able to clear your exams in your first attempt then none of the best articleship will help you to get your CA Degree.

So I recommend you to first decide regarding holiday package for examination with your Principal

9. Always keep option of changing articleship within one year

ICAI keeps on changing the rules of transfer from time to time. However, for the student, it is often a good thing if they work in more than one firm in their span of articleship duration. This is because, this gives them exposure of working of different firms, and also exposes them to different temperaments of CAs. This is quite helpful for them in their career.

ICAI has introduced this option against those chartered Accountants who do not allow their Articles to transfer articleship due to various reasons. So choose a Chartered Accountant who will freely agree on transfer of articleship anytime

10. Explore your PR. (Public Relation / Friends / Relatives / Circles)

Explore your PR as much as can be done. Try to find out who’s working where. Find out what are general interview patterns for a particular CA firm. How is the market reputation of the firm? What are core areas of the firm?
For example say a firm ABC & Associates are known as core in Internal Audits and you are seeking a career into Internal Audit / Fraud Accounting / SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) Implementation, in such a case that is an ideal choice instead of choosing a tax executive position in any firm (be it a Big Four also!).

11. Value addition to your Resume

If you want very good exposure, heavy value addition to your Resume (provided you take your assignments seriously and work sincerely without whiling away your time and use the platform given to you) not to forget the long hours of work required, you can choose to join Big audit firms (Deloitte, Kpmg, EY, PWC). However, it's imperative that you are good at managing work and studies together. Another important aspect to be kept in mind is you would be working in the same department for your entire tenure. Variety of work exposure is quite difficult in Big fours.

12. City of Articleship:

In general, the economic scene in India is pretty much skewed. And CA (in most cases) being a localised profession, the kind of jobs that come to CAs are mostly of the time local. So a company in say Hyderabad would not go to get its audit done from a Kolkata firm. This leads to a situation, that in cities where there is lots of business the work available is more. So in Metros and mini Metros, there is often a better chance of good exposure than doing articleship from other towns. Another thing is that often in a city where there is a High Court, the Tax related works are to be found with Lawyers. This is because, Lawyers can represent their clients in Tribunals and also High Court and Supreme Court. Whereas, the CA cannot represent the client in HC or SC. (And till date NTT has not come into existence). So in such cities while the Tax audit work would come to CA, in many cases, the tax work would remain with the Lawyer.

*Crux of all gyanbazi stated above are given herein below:*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1st year</th>
<th>Get into a Big4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd year</td>
<td>Continue or take a transfer to Mid size</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Transfer for Industrial Training</td>
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**1st year of articleship: -**

Taking experience in the most sought after, any of the Big Fours or a Mid Size firm (where you are allowed to take transfer). They say you get a specialized experience mainly in Audit and you get to travel to client places (In or outside the city). You have hectic schedules if your visits are at far off places and you might have long days during quarterly closing etc. However, you have one advantage, you still have two years at hand for your CA Final attempt (now reduced to one year according to the new notification). You have sufficient time and if you get an opportunity, why not earn a little more than your friends with that extra special tag of doing articleship in a big firm. ;) The only disadvantage will be of missing classes (generally only weekends) during outstation audits, but that is if you have joined classes.
2nd Year of articleship:-

Take transfer from the Big firm and choose a firm (without out station audits) mainly with Direct and Indirect taxation, ROC, TDS etc. basically a sole proprietorship. Choose a firm that saves your time to study and allows Industrial Training in the 3rd year. Since, your attempt will be only after a year, you need to start focusing. Join weekend classes and take experience in areas other those you already have. Nearby firm will give more or similar amount of stipend (maybe lower) but that’s okay in comparison to the amount of time you will have for yourself with those big modules of CA Final.

3rd Year of articleship:-

By now you will have some idea on what industry you wish to join after becoming a Chartered Accountant. Take industry experience in the area of interest and yes, set yourself free from the usual articleship attitude and atmosphere. Be careful in choosing the company for Industrial training as prime importance should be given to the months of leave that will be granted before CA final exams and the daily time schedule of the company.

**FUN**

**Difference between Small CA firm and Big Four:**

**Small CA Firm:**

I will drive the car from point A to point B. Fee: Rs 500

**Big 4:**

We will take charge of front seat, handle the steering, shift gear simultaneously using clutch and accelerator to increase, decrease or control speed and apply breaks wherever necessary. Yes in addition to ensure clearly visibility in darker times we will switch on the head lights and wiper when raining. We will ensure that our all actions complies with local laws such as understanding signal and gesture protocols of traffic cops and seat belt application. Fees: Rs 5000

**Disclaimer:** We don't undertake responsibility of you reaching the destination as the same is subject to directions given by you.

Hope this helped. All the best. Do tell us what you have decided.

Kindly refer the below mentioned links relevant for upcoming exams.

1) "Success Mantra for CA Exam. .!!"
2) “Preparation Strategy for CA Final Financial Reporting. .!!"
3) “Preparation Strategy for CA Final Strategic Financial Management i.e. SFM. .!!”
4) “Preparation Strategy for CA Final Audit. .!!”
5) “Preparation Strategy for CA Final Law. .!!”
6) “Preparation Strategy for CA Final Cost. .!!”
7) “13 Reasons why CA students are facing failure in exam? ”

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