



SDSU Student Accounting Society

Meeting Minutes: FBI Forensic Accounting

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Presenters:

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Presentation:

FBI Mission and Priorities

- Mission: To protect the American People and uphold the Constitution of the United States
- Priorities
 - Protect the US:
 - From Terrorist Attack
 - Against foreign intelligence, espionage and cyber operations
 - Combat:
 - Significant cyber criminal activity
 - Public corruption at all level
 - Transnational criminal enterprises
 - Significant white-collar crime
 - Significant violent Crime

What We Investigate

- Counterintelligence
 - Identify and neutralize ongoing natural security threats from foreign intelligence
- Counterterrorism
 - Combat extremist groups worldwide, domestic and international
- Cyber Crime
- Organized Crime
- Public Corruption
- Violent Crime
- White-Collar Crime

Forensic Accounting: What is it?

- A combination of accounting and investigative techniques used to discover financial crime and to analyze these financial info for use in legal proceedings

Forensic Accountants in teh FBI

- Forensic Accountant Program (FAP): created within the Criminal Investigative Division in March 2009
- FBI Forensic Accountants:
 - Understand overall “big” picture of the case
 - Work directly with Special Agents, as a core member of the investigative team
 - Know/suspect what the crime is, dig through evidence to determine ways to prove the crime
 - Identify suspicious transactions/entities/activities
 - Use our accounting background to determine what is not a normal business transactions
 - Package the financial facts for the law enforcement and judicial counterparts and, if necessary, provide testimony on our findings
 - Put together a flow chart so the flow of funds is easy to identify
- Key characteristics: Intuition and Curiosity
 - We possess knowledge to go through the records to assist the special agents
 - Must have a drive to continue to pursue the case!

What We Do

- Investigate
 - Case planning, data gathering, etc.
- Examine
 - Conduce forensic financial analysis of business/personal records--follow the money
- Communicate and Testify
 - Compile findings/conclusions in reports and exhibits
 - Testify as fact or expert witness
- Collaborate

How Did We Get Here

- Mai: Tax/Accounting for over 15 years.
 - Worked for a private company, left, and got called back two years later to investigate the issue of their new accounting manager embezzling funds
 - Found a love for investigative work, combining tax and accounting knowledge
- Tai: Before FBI, litigation accountant
 - Wanted to combine law and accountancy in a profession, per results of a career quiz!

Qualificatios

- Minimum Education
 - Undergraduate degree in accounting or a degree in a related field.

- Supplemented by 24 accounting semester hours (Units)
- Preferred Professional Experience
 - Forensic Accounting
 - Public Accounting
 - Litigation Support/Dispute Services
 - Government Accounting/Auditing
 - Financial Services Industry
 - Corporate Accounting/Internal Auditing
- Certifications Preferred
 - Certified Public Accounting (CPA)
 - Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE)
 - Certified Financial Forensics (CFF)

<https://www.fbijobs.gov/careers>****not done with url

Hot Topics

- Crimes on the Rise:
 - Romance Scams
 - Fake profiles on dating profiles, people gain users' trust and gain access to their entire retirement
 - Money Mules
 - Sending money on behalf of another person
 - Elder Fraud
 - Scams targeting those who are not skilled with technology
 - Ransomware
 - Accidentally open an email attachment, give sender access to sensitive data through malware
 - Cryptocurrency
 - Deregulated, meaning that crypto is being used for crimes. Hard to track since you can move large amounts of money quickly without being caught.
 - If you are interested in investigating cryptocurrency, learn about how it works! Invest \$10-\$20 even, just to observe the movements.
 - Cryptocurrency can involve human trafficking, drug scandals, etc. Not just bank account cyber activity.
 - Covid-19 Scams
 - "Employer" would ask for donations for Covid-19, is actually a scam
- Oftentimes those who embezzle money use it for personal gain, for shopping for gifts. Bookkeepers are often the culprits.

Conclusion

- What does it take to become a FORENSIC ACCOUNTANT?
 - Accounting/auditing skills
 - Detail oriented
 - Think creatively

- Common business sense
- Computer proficiency
- Excellent communication skills
- Self starter
- Organized
- Forensic Accountants do not just sit behind a desk. They go to the sites of the cases, search for evidence that can help connect the dots.
 - Bring your unique sets of skills, everything from elite business knowledge to languages spoken.

Trivia

1. In what year was the FBI founded? 1908
2. What was the original name of the FBI? Bureau of INvestigation (BOI)
3. Who was the first director of the FBI? Stanley W. Finch
4. The FBI has this many field offices: 56 (not counting international)
5. What is the FBI's Motto: Fidelity, Bravery, and Integrity
6. Which company was involved in the largest White Collar Crime the FBI has ever investigated?: Enron
7. Special Agents from which field office helped arrest the Unabomber Ted Kaczynski?: Salt Lake City
8. When building the FBI, what three kinds of professions did J. Edgar Hoover look for?: Lawyers, Accountants, Reporters (Know the law, know how to follow the money, and know how to communicate well)

Questions

Do you go case by case, or take multiple cases at once?

We don't actually sit together. They will work on cases within a squad, and focus on cases with their squad's topic. A lot of times certain cases will be slow, so you work on other cases when you are waiting for information for a certain case. Just need to figure out how to manager your time.

- If there are more types of crimes than accounting personnel, there will be more exposure to different types of cases.
- Communication and time management is important. Know your priorities, and talk to your case managers to figure out where to put your time.

What is the opportunity for advancement?

When you come in on a violation, the only person above you is your supervisor. You can get a supervisor position if you are interested, but other than that your job consists of serving squads.. If the squad does not fit you, you are able to request being reassigned to another squad. You can also aid cases overseas.

Do you need physical training to work in the FBI?

Professional staff do not need physical training, and do not carry weapons

Are the offices open to hiring more accountants?

The issue is that the process takes a long time, so it is difficult to hire staff. Both of our background check processes took thirteen months. If you fail the polygraph test, it takes you a few years to reapply.

Do background checks take so long because they have to check where you've lived, where you've gone to school, etc.?

The younger you are, the less time it checks. They'll check where you've lived, they'll interview your employers, neighbors. If you've been traveling a lot or have family outside the country, the longer your process might take.

If you pass the background check once and then apply for the job later, would you have to do it again?

Depending on the time. If you did the background check and then went through two years of professional experience before returning, then there will probably be a few things to touch up on but not the whole thing. If it's been longer, your process might be the same as normal.

What is time commitment like?

It depends on the case. I do work long hours, sometimes working on weekends. But, there is also downtime.

Regarding safety, how are you secure when you are doing your job?

They work with SDPD, SDSO, a lot of local agencies to get the information that we need. There are a lot of people on the team working together.

Do you get training to work in the field?

If it's a document search warrant, no, we know what we're looking for. We get what we need, and we get back to the office. We will work with the case agents after the premise has been secured, going in afterwards. However, if you would like to have other roles in the bureau, there are opportunities to secure positions that do require training.