

CPA Profile

Geraldine Ruane



Title: Founder

Company: Gallatina

Qualifications: FCPA, CDIR, MA



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

Coming from a business background I enjoyed being involved at an early age in the whole aspect of business and people interaction. Business and Mathematics were two subjects I really enjoyed in school, and I believed would be advantageous when pursuing a career in Accountancy. I felt that a career in Accountancy would offer me a blend of diverse career paths, growth prospects and allow me to make a meaningful contribution to the business world.

Why did you choose CPA Ireland as your qualification route?

The CPA route suited me very well as the course duration and structure allowed me to work in industry while undertaking my exams and qualifying as a Certified Public Accountant. I believe the CPA qualification has a broader focus on business management, including financial planning, strategy and consulting and this offered me a lot of different pathways and flexibility to build the career I have today.

Please provide a brief history of your career.

I began my career qualifying as a Certified Public Accountant in 1989 while working as Finance Manager of Mallinckrodt Pharma Group. I later became Finance Director in Novartis Pharma Group and CEO of Chanelle Pharma Group.

My entry into the public sector from 2003 allowed me to use my global leadership experience and expertise in transforming Irish institutional organisations established from the 15th century into modern, efficient, high performing organisations which included CEO of Ordnance Survey

Ireland, COO of Trinity College and CEO of the RDS. I have contributed as Chair and NED to Trinity College Enterprise Campus, Science Foundation Ireland and Genio, a not-for-profit foundation. I also gained the qualification of Chartered Director from the Directors Institute of Ireland.

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

Flexibility.

The CPA qualification provided me with a solid foundation for continuous learning and growth. It allowed me to develop my career and achieve leadership positions within both the corporate and public sectors.

What has been your biggest career achievement?

I have been fortunate to have led some wonderful organisations in both the corporate and public sectors. The role as Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Trinity College is certainly a key highlight of my career.

As COO I led a strategic vision that revamped operational dynamics to meet 21st-century demands. As a key contributor to the Executive team and Board I played a significant role in shaping and executing groundbreaking strategic plans, philanthropic campaigns, and large-scale capital projects.

I chaired the Steering Committee of Trinity College Technology Enterprise Campus from 2018-2021, a €1billion transformative development project for the new second campus of Trinity College Dublin.

What or who inspires you most in business?

I admire Siobhan Talbot as a business leader. As the former Director of Glanbia, Ireland's largest food group, with her accounting background she has risen through various senior positions and was appointed as the group managing director in 2013. I believe her combination of strong leadership; strategic thinking, industry expertise and stakeholder management has been instrumental in Glanbia's significant growth and success.

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

Aim to foster a culture of learning and development within your team. Attend industry events, conferences, and seminars to network with other professionals. Developing relationships can lead to job opportunities, mentorship, and valuable insights. Continuous learning is crucial as the accounting field is evolving rapidly due to technological advancements like artificial intelligence and robotic process automation.

How do you unwind?

In my downtime I love outdoor pursuits which includes playing golf and attending sporting events here and abroad. I enjoy music, listening to my favourite podcasts and relaxing with family and friends.

What traits do you admire in others?

Kindness, being friendly, generous, and considerate to yourself and to others. I also admire Resilience, the ability to bounce back from adversity and maintain a positive outlook.