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profession, it is inspiring to look to those who have attained those ranks ahead of them. The AICPA and CPA Practice Advisor partner each year to honor ...

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Lara Abrash, CPA

2022 Most Powerful Women in Accounting

Chair and Chief Executive Officer

Deloitte & Touche LLP

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TRAITS OF AWARD WINNERS

1. She has been the driving force to create a culture of excellence, innovation, and inclusion. If she is a vendor, she has helped to develop the technologies and solutions that will empower organizations to be more productive and profitable.

2. She is one of the top leaders in the accounting profession and her leadership has

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What do you feel is the most important issue facing the accounting profession today?

The accounting profession is at a pivotal moment. Our profession will undergo more transformational change in the next five years than in the past 50 years.

Transformation is key to our profession's continued success. At Deloitte, we are embracing new behaviors, new processes, new technologies, and new talent models, all while sustaining quality as assessed by our regulators. Specifically relating to audits, the audit of the future will (1) be delivered in real-time, (2) connect seamlessly, (3) leverage big data, and (4) support cognitive, digital, and automation technologies. The result – an audit that is no longer viewed as an obligation but as an opportunity. The audit of the future is agile and adapts ahead of change and helps turn what appears to be complex and unrelenting into something understood, in control, and will result in even higher quality audits.

However, we cannot perform the audits of the future without the right people. Diversity, equity, and inclusion play a significant role in the future of the accounting profession. A diverse workforce means more perspectives, more ideas to bring innovative solutions to clients, broader empathy and understanding of the impact of emerging events—all of which are critical to the success of organizations and, ultimately, moving our economy and society forward. Deloitte announced the establishment of **MADE** (Making Accounting Diverse and Equitable), a \$75 million commitment to generate more advisory, auditing, and tax career opportunities and leadership pathways for the next generation of certified public accountants. MADE combines both financial support and the depth of resources an organization of Deloitte's size can bring to attract diverse individuals into the accounting field and support them as they chart their pathway from high school to business professional to leadership in the profession. Through MADE, I know we will be able to change the

future of the accounting profession and racial and ethnic diversity is an essential part

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controls, but they will also need to be able to apply data analytics and use advanced technologies – all while applying professional judgement and skepticism. The accountant of the future requires balancing the digital and cognitive proficiencies with the social and emotional skills required of today.

What one skill or experience would you recommend that young women getting started in the accounting profession master?

The accounting profession is one with endless possibilities – our profession is filled with creative, innovative, brilliant professionals and offers amazing economic and career mobility. While relevant for anyone, I reinforce professions to ***be bold***. Specifically, I encourage professionals to own their career and take risks. A few years ago, I raised my hand and led a significant audit transformation effort for our business. At the time “audit” and “innovation” were not words that commonly appeared together. I was asked to create a new vision from scratch and bring it to life. It was one of the biggest risks of my career, but also one of the moments that gives me the most pride. Owning your career and taking risks that highlight your strengths is necessary for success.

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Read more about the [2022 Most Powerful Women in Accounting Winners](#).

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