

About Chimezirim Tochukwu Echendu

Chimezirim Tochukwu Echendu,
Deal Advisory Tax Assistant
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Interview

How did you find out about a career in tax?

I got interested in tax after seeing some of my university alumni take up roles in the local and overseas offices of the 'Big Four' accounting firms as tax advisers upon completion of their undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

Why is the CIOT qualification important?

The UK tax laws are voluminous and complex and without a guide it is easy to 'get lost in the woods' when dealing with some parts of the legislation. The CIOT qualification provides this guide through a carefully curated curriculum and a brilliant and easy to understand study material tailored to accelerate understanding of the UK tax system. I think it is the best option available for anyone seeking a foundational understanding of the UK tax system.

Why did you pursue a career in tax?

I love challenges. Tax had a reputation of being the most difficult and challenging of my law degree electives, and so I decided to take up the challenge. I enjoyed it so much that I decided to pursue a career in tax.

How would you describe yourself in three words?

Self-motivated, dependable and curious

Who has influenced you in your career so far?

I have met amazing people in my years studying and working in tax, but my uncle, a chartered accountant, mentored me as I took my baby steps in the tax profession and influenced my building a career in it.

What advice would you give to someone thinking of doing the CIOT qualification?

Don't be discouraged. You have been told it is demanding, and it is, but it is surmountable. Devise a study pattern and pace that suits your schedule and work through the study material and past questions. Procure your study material as early as you can if within your control. One of the tuition providers, as part of the study pack they make available, provide access to their website – it had a bank of lecture videos and audios that could be downloaded. Downloading and playing the lectures regularly was something I found helpful.

What are your predictions for tax advisers and the tax industry in the future?

I believe that tax advisers will become even more specialised in the coming years with advisers focusing on very specific areas of tax. Industry wide, I see a few more private equity-backed acquisitions of tax and accounting firms.

What advice would you give to your future self?

Continue being selfless and humble, and always see the picture from the lens of other people. Honour and respect others, care about them genuinely and do not be self-centred.

Tell me something about yourself that others may not know about you.

I self-studied for my CTA qualification (direct route pathway) and passed my four papers in the two consecutive exam periods (November and then the following May) while working full time. This is not me advocating for this, as it makes a difficult qualification even more challenging!

