

# Education Times

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TOWARDS TOMORROW

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## A SUPPORT AT THE TOP

**Suresh Chandra Mohanty**, president, Institute of Cost Accountants of India, outlines the opportunities in cost accountancy today

The distinction between cost accounting and management accounting has faded away. Therefore, the profession today is called cost and management accountancy (CMA). The business environment in India is highly volatile and uncertain. Companies strive to achieve sustainable competitive advantage by formulating appropriate strategies, which management accountants support the top management to formulate and implement. Moreover, the focus of the national agenda today is on developing cost competitiveness and pushing inclusive and sustainable growth.

### >> INDUSTRY SCENARIO

Cost accountants measure and report information to support decision-making. This involves selecting from among alternative opportunities and monitoring performance on a real-time basis. The profession's primary contribution is to create value by eliminating and reducing waste from each activity, and thus, improving the productivity of resources used in different

sectors of the economy. A cost and management accountant (CMA) provides professional services in the areas of planning, monitoring and controlling costs. The requirements of CMAs have increased manifold due to growing complexities and competition in the corporate sector. A CMA is trained to understand the business model and analyse data to support decisions. In today's world, the profession of conventional accounting and auditing has taken a back seat. Cost accountants are increasingly contributing towards efficient utilisation of men, machines and material. This has opened up huge employment opportunities for them in India and abroad.

### >> COURSE CONNECT

The cost accountancy course has an appropriate mix of subjects and topics as part of the curriculum,



Cost accountants report information for decision-making



Suresh Chandra Mohanty

which emphasises learning through case studies. It comprises two stages: intermediate and final. The student is required to undergo mandatory training, too, for three years for real-life experience in an organisation.

### >> WHAT YOU NEED

CMAs should possess conceptual and analytical skills including skills to operate in an advanced IT environment. They should have good communication skills and possess the ability to analyse situations and issues and come up with innovative solutions. Therefore, the course does not need prior knowledge of commerce and accounting.

### >> CAREER OPTIONS

Practitioners can work in the domains of cost accounting, financial/business analysis, internal audit, direct and indirect taxation, process analysis, systems analysis and strategy. They have employment opportunities in public, private sectors, regulatory bodies, educational institutes, among others.

### >> PAY PACKAGE

The average salary package offered to fresh CMAs through the campus placement programme was Rs 6.5 lakh in 2013.

- As told to Rahat Bano