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### **Financial Expert Says more Accountants to Become Executives than Ever Before**

**Los Angeles, CA, August 2, 2007**— Today's accountants are going to make a larger percentage of tomorrow's executives, and financial expert Gene Siciliano says that aspiring accountants need to know that companies are looking for candidates who can do much more than crunch numbers.

"The first thing accountants need to do is learn how to speak effectively, whether it's in front of one person or in front of 50," said Siciliano who is the author of *Finance for Non-Financial Managers* (McGraw-Hill, 2003) and owner of the trademarked "Your CFO for Rent" brand. "I would advise any accountant to go to Toastmasters or to take a speech class. Accountants today need to send the message early on that they are made of the right stuff."

Historically, top executives and leaders were taken from sales and marketing or production ranks, but today's emphasis on financial success is not going away. A candidate with financial background, who can also communicate effectively and think outside the box is worth his or her weight in gold.

"There are people who are natural leaders, but if they don't know finance there is no way that they can manage or lead for a sustained period of time," said Heather Leah-Smith, director of IT for a large healthcare organization whose career began in public accounting. "Accountants tend to focus on last year, last month--accounting, so to speak, for the past--but if an accountant really wants to be a leader, he or she needs to think creatively and look to the future by understanding the business operations that the numbers correlate to."

Although some accountants graduate from school knowing they want to be accountants, there is a growing percentage that aspires to leadership positions, using accounting as a platform for other roles. Job descriptions are now including desired skill sets such as "excellent communication skills" and "upbeat and motivated and possessing a good sense of humor." The stereotypical "dry and dull" accountant is out, and the "upbeat and eloquent" one is in.

Yet Siciliano cites three skill sets as being life and death prerequisites for success. "The ability to communicate both orally and in writing, the ability to think outside the box strategically and organizationally, and the ability to manage time and resources effectively, yours and your team's," said Siciliano. "These three capabilities will really make someone stand out in a crowd." Simply put, accountants who desire a career path beyond accounting need to know how to market themselves from the start. A candidate who can communicate effectively and who possesses financial acumen is unstoppable.

For more information, please contact Jenai Engelhard at (617) 840-4689 or email [jenai@ictusinitiative.com](mailto:jenai@ictusinitiative.com).

#### About Gene Siciliano

An award-winning member of the National Speakers Association, Gene has spoken at hundreds of business associations and companies across the country, including Warner Bros, National Tour Association, National Pool & Spa Association, Young Entrepreneurs Organization, Credit Managers Association of California, American Society of Association Executives. His articles on financial management and cost control have appeared nationally in *Management World Magazine*, *Professional Speaker*, *Sharing Ideas*, *Free Enterprise* and his firm's newsletter "Management Update™".