# A member’s view: Tim Palmer

Briefings



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**Tax consultant, Arram Berlyn Gardner**

Tim lectures on tax extensively all over the UK and is a tax consultant with chartered

accountants Arram Berlyn Gardner, London. He is also a CTA and ATT member.

## How did you build your career in tax?

My father, who was an accountant, always assumed and expected me to follow him into the profession, and he recommended that I should eventually specialise in tax. He had a very big practice, with offices all around Essex. I worked for him in the school holidays, aged 10 upwards! While other kids were riding their bikes, I was completing tax returns!

I left dad's firm to join a bigger practice in the 1970s, Ball Baker Carnaby Deed in Holborn, London. I then spent a spell in industry, working in the in-house tax department of the P&O Shipping Group, which was marvellous experience for me. P&O, at that stage, owned the Bovis Group, so that's where my interest in construction industry tax started. When I was at P&O, I passed my Institute of Tax exams, and then went back into the profession. I was approached to start tax lecturing as well, and it all snowballed from there.

## What do people outside the sector not realise about a career in tax?

At a social gathering, if somebody asks me what I do, and I say that I am in tax, I get the impression that some people think that it is incredibly boring! Nothing could be further from the truth. I find tax very fascinating and challenging, and I like having to keep up to date, both for my lectures and also to assist my tax planning for clients. I have recommended many younger people into the tax profession, and it has been very rewarding to watch them grow and develop within it.

## How would you describe yourself in three words?

At work – studious, determined and gregarious.

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

The CTA is the 'gold star' tax qualification; however, these are very tough exams. If you are serious about passing them, you will have to make a considerable

commitment into studying, but it will be well worth it in the end. Once you have passed these exams, it will be a major boost to your career!

When I was teaching the CIOT exams, I had a delegate on my course named Chris Jones. He was exceptional and subsequently became a close friend. As you are aware, he later became President of the CIOT. His early death was truly tragic.

## What advice would you give your future self?

Plan ahead! I think that a spell in industry is a very good career move as well. I think that it is important to enjoy your work and keep challenging yourself to constantly improve and gain more tax knowledge.

## Tell me something about yourself that others may be surprised to know about you.

I am a fanatical Tottenham Hotspur fan! I am also very interested in anything to do with Winston Churchill. I thought the film relating to him, ‘The Darkest Hour’, was one of the best films I have ever seen!

**Contact**

If you would like to take part in A Member's View, please contact Jo Herman at: jherman@ciot.org.uk