Everything you need to know about

choosing an accountant

that's going to help your business grow

Written by

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ACCOUNTANTS

One of the North West's leading accountants for growing businesses

How to choose a *great accountant*

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Here at JDA, we do what we do not because we like numbers and spreadsheets
(although, we do a little bit!).

We do it because we really love helping entrepreneurs get the most out of their businesses and reach their personal goals.

Many people ask us:

Are you the right accountant for us?

Maybe we are, maybe we're not.

It's the same for everything – people want and need different things. And this changes over time.

However, we believe that every business, no matter the size, deserves a great accountant that's right for them.

Right now, you are looking for an accountant and we're conscious it's really important that you get the right advice at the start.

Therefore, we thought it would be useful to put together this short guide to help you pick the right accountant.

If that accountant is us, great! If not, that is okay too.

The most important thing is that you find this guide useful and pick an accountant who can help you and your business reach your goals.

Thanks for reading

Jon Davies
Founder, Jon Davies Accountants

What should a
great accountant
do for you?

Choosing the right accountant means choosing the ***best accountant for your needs.***

It's important to know what to expect.

Researching what accountants do and don't do is one of the first steps when picking your new accountant.

So, what does a good accountant do?

At its core, an accountant will help a business owner prepare accounts and tax returns for the business. These are legal requirements.

If you're a limited company, you need to do these once each year – you need to file a set of accounts at Companies House and a Corporation Tax return with HMRC within nine months of your year end.

If you're a sole trader, the accounts and tax return are filed annually for the year ended 5 April and you get until the following 31 January to file them and pay any taxes.

At its simplest, an accountant helps you do just that. However, a good accountant can help you do so much more.

A good accountant will be there for you when you need them – for financial advice, to help you grow your business, and to help to keep your tax bill as low as legally possible.

Many accountants will offer many different services, and it's up to you to choose which are most appropriate for you and your business.

Here's our list of ***8 fundamental services*** that a great accountant should offer:

Launching Your Business

An accountant can help you launch your start up. There's a lot of administration around that.

An accountant can help you set the business up, form a limited company, introduce you to a bank for a bank account, and also just make sure you have a solid foundation.

Compliance Services

When you start out, it may be that you do want just the basics – what some accountants call Compliance Services.

This would be a set of accounts, a tax return, VAT returns (if you are registered for VAT), and also running a payroll. Often this would also include your personal tax return, either as the sole trader or as the director of a limited company.

These services keep you legally compliant.

Bookkeeping

Accountants can also help with the bookkeeping. The bookkeeping is taking your financial records and turning that into a set of accounts. You might have, for example, paper purchase invoices, bank statements, and sales invoices. Your accountant can process them and turn them into a set of accounts.

These days, much of this is done using cloud software. So, rather than typing in purchase invoices, you'll take a photo or scan an email of the invoice and the software will process it. Similarly, cloud software can talk to your bank account and pull the bank statements in directly without the need for any paper. You can raise your sales invoices in the software and email them to your customers, and also chase them for payment as and when you need.

Whatever the starting point, a bookkeeper will turn these into accounting records to track your finances.

Saving Tax

A good accountant will always help you save tax. They'll know what you can and can't claim tax relief on. They'll also know all the rules that can help cut your tax bill and make sure you take advantage of these.

A good accountant will save you a lot of Googling or listening to your mate down the pub!

Saving tax can also be achieved by meeting you regularly and planning – by understanding your circumstances and talking to you. Although some tax reductions can be done after the fact, many need to be done in advance.

Management Accounts

As you grow, you might need much more than the basic services.

A lot of business owners find it useful to have management accounts throughout the year. These are prepared on a regular basis, and actually give you a small set of accounts at regular intervals, so you can track your business and see how it's doing.

Many management accounts will also include non-financial key performance indicators as well. That might be the number of customers, the number of new sales, your reviews or customer satisfaction – all of the figures that are important to you to help keep your business on track and make sure you're getting your business to where you want it to be – to help you meet your business and personal goals.

Budgets and Forecasts

Some of the other services that accountants can provide include budgets and forecasts.

When you start your business, you want a business plan. An accountant can help you with that and also help with the numbers to support it.

But then it's useful to keep preparing budgets and forecasts each year to keep tracking your progress and to make sure you reach your goals.

Cash Flow

It's really important to keep on top of your cash flow. The impact of coronavirus on many businesses really brought that home to a lot of business owners.

As well as preparing cash flow forecasts, this means actually working with you on how best to manage your cash.

Your accountant can give you lots of advice on the speed you pay your creditors, or helping you get paid quicker by your customers. Accountants do this all the time and they can work with you to help you put more cash in your bank account.

Support

A lot of our clients say that, sometimes, the fact we're there to listen and to support them is one of the best things they get from our service.

A client of ours used to say that having us there was like speaking to a counsellor because it can be a lonely place running a business.

If your friends and family don't run businesses, they don't understand what it actually means and what it entails.

So, having someone to talk to who gets it can be really important. An accountant gives you that.

An accountant can help with so many things from the core functions of keeping you legally compliant, making sure your accounts are done correctly and on time, to saving you tax, to supporting you, to helping your business grow, and making sure you meet all of your business and personal goals.

Choose wisely.

Meet Our ***JDA Team***

“I love working for JDA as the team are like a work family for me. Not being from Liverpool, the team have become a family and support for me and really helped me settle after leaving my military life. The JDA office really is an amazing, happy place to work and there honestly never is a dull moment. I also love that the team are so talented and passionate about what they do. They really care and are always striving to improve and be the best (which they are)! We all genuinely want the best for our customers and will always try our utmost to deliver the best service.

Megan Fenney | Office Supervisor at JDA

“I love that there is so much to learn to expand my knowledge and the opportunity to complete a variety of tasks. Also, everyone in the team is so welcoming and helpful!”

Amy Ladd | Accountant at JDA

*How do I choose a **great accountant?***

A good accountant should be a ***vital part of your business,*** helping day to day operations, as well as long-term growth strategy.

The right accountant for your business will help you understand all the numbers, what these mean for your business and what can be done to grow your business.

They should be working with you throughout the year so that they can understand your business situation and what can be done to plan to facilitate growth.

It is important that you choose the right accountant for your business as doing so will help relieve some of the stresses and strains of managing a business.

But what do you need to think about when picking your accountant?

Here are the ***6 main questions*** when choosing your new accountant

What is the size of the accountancy firm?

Firstly, you must take time to consider the size of firm. There are all kinds of sizes of accountancy firms, and not all will be right for your business. Jon and many of the team have worked for global, national, and local firms.

Most of the time it is a good idea to work with the firm that is a similar size to yours. Accountants of a similar size to your business will mean that they understand what a business of that size needs.

However, you must be sure that the firm will be able to grow with you.

A larger accountant may charge higher fees, but they will also have the resources and capabilities to grow with your business. On the other hand, a smaller firm may give you more time with directors and partners.

There is no right, or wrong answer. It's important to just pick what feels right for your business.

It depends on what you need and the goals you have set yourself and the business.

What is your sector?

There can be a real advantage if your accountant has experience with working with other businesses in your sector, or one that is similar. If they have then it is likely that they will know the specific rules that might apply to your business.

For example, a company that offers building services will have different tax rules to a restaurant.

If you want to know if an accountant specialises in a specific sector, then check their website. If nothing is there, then check their testimonial page. Are they getting reviews from businesses like yours?

If you can't find anything useful, then ask them. It will quickly become apparent if the accountant has the experience to deal with your business.

What qualifications do they have?

There are no legal rules over who can set up an accountancy firm. Anyone can do it.

However, that doesn't mean they can actually do the job.

Therefore, it is important to check the qualifications the accountant has.

The main qualifications are:

- **ACA or FCA**
  This means they are a Chartered Accountant as a member or Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

- **ACCA or FCCA**
  A Certified Accountant as a member or Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

- **CIMA**
  A member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

These are all recognised accountancy bodies that signify a certain degree of knowledge or experience.

This also gives you somewhere to go if you have a bad experience with an accountant.

What reviews and testimonials do they have?

It is also a good idea to read any reviews or recommendations on the company's website, or on Google and Facebook. Even better - if you know someone that has used an accountant, ask them about their experiences.

You can also ask the accountant to put you in contact with one of their clients, preferably one that is similar size and sector to that of your business. This will be a good indication of the suitability of the accountant for your business.

What price can you afford?

Of course, price is always important. But a cheap accountant can cost you more money in the future, for example from missed tax savings or through fines from missing deadlines.

When choosing an accountant, price should be just one of the many things that you consider. One of the most important things to do is to check what is included in the price given. Does the quote include phone calls when you need them, and will they charge for any advice that you might need along the way?

Rather than charging an hourly rate, most accountants will charge a fixed fee, either annually or on a per task basis.

Ultimately, you want an accountant that does everything that you need them to do. Consider this as an investment with the output being reaching your goals and improving your financial standing.

Price should be secondary over quality.

Will you get along?

This is key. You should have a close relationship with your accountant, so you do need to get on with them.

You don't have to be best friends, but there has to be a rapport there.

This also makes it important to be clear on who you're dealing with. It's no use having a great relationship with the partner if you end up dealing with someone else .

Meet Our ***JDA Team***

“It’s the people that make Jon Davies Accountants a great place to work. I feel like I’ve settled in really quickly as everyone has been so welcoming and helpful. I feel like we are really valued and looked after as employees, and I’ve got my love for the job back since joining JDA.”

Serena Hall ACCA | Senior Accountant at JDA

“Coming into an accounting practice as a marketing intern, I was very anxious and apprehensive as I was worried that I would be out of my depth or would not fit in. I was totally wrong! The team at JDA is like one big family and they couldn’t have made me feel more welcome. Everybody in the team has such a positive energy and is so enthusiastic about their job and providing the best possible service to their clients. It’s inspiring! I also love working at JDA because of the opportunities Jon has given me to expand my own knowledge and build the foundations to support my career in marketing.”

Fern Robinson | Marketing Assistant at JDA

What is ***Cloud Accounting?***

One of the first things you will likely be told by someone that is a ***21st century accountant*** is that they use cloud accounting software such as Xero or QuickBooks.

Cloud accounting comes with a lot of benefits!

Traditional bookkeeping is infamous for consuming large amounts of time for business owners and accountants. Cloud accounting saves both time and money, and is much more convenient for users of all kinds.

So, what is the cloud all about?

Think about when you use internet banking. Every time you access this data, you're using the cloud. The cloud is a platform to make data and software accessible online anytime, anywhere, from any device. Your hard drive isn't needed.

How do ***JDA*** help you with the cloud?

We are a Gold Partner with Xero, showing our expertise and experience with the platform.

We can manage businesses with existing Xero accounts, and also help you move over and get started.

We're also experts with QuickBooks! All our team have been certified as Elite ProAdvisors, meaning they have a great deal of training and experience with the program.

All in all, we're well placed to help any business with cloud software.

Some of the ***issues of traditional accounts software*** include:

1. ***There's a time lag –*** the data isn't up to date and neither is the software.

2. ***It only works on one computer*** and data bounces around from place to place, for example by email or on a USB drive. This isn't secure or reliable.

3. I***t's a hassle to backup the data.*** And it can be expensive.

4. ***The software always needs upgrading –*** this can be difficult, time consuming and expensive. And it can lead to issues over compatibility with your advisers.

5. ***Only one person has user access.*** Key people can't access financial and customer details.

Why are the cloud and accounting software a perfect match?

You can use cloud-based software from any device with an internet connection – computer, phone or tablet.

Online accounting means you stay connected to your data and your accountant. It's cost-effective and easy to use. And it can link in to loads of other applications.

If you use cloud accounting software, you'll no longer need to install and run applications over a desktop computer. You pay a monthly subscription for the software and upgrades are done automatically in the background.

Is it secure?

As a business owner, you might be worried about the security of your data. But the cloud is actually one of the most secure ways to store information. The software and the data no longer live on your hard drive.

This means that, for example, if you lose your laptop, no one can access your data unless they have a login to the online account.

If there's a fire in the office, all your information is safely and securely stored off site. As long as you have internet access, you're back up and running immediately.

In addition to this, you can control the level of access that you give to any other users, whether they're staff or external advisers. This is far more secure than the old-fashioned way of emailing your files or sending out a USB stick with your data on it.

Cloud-based software companies ensure that security and privacy of data is always airtight. If you use online banking, then you're already primed to use cloud accounting.

Work flexibly and smarter

The best thing about the cloud is the flexibility it gives you to run your business from work, home, or on the go. You can be sure that you have an up-to-date picture of how your business is doing, anytime and anyplace.

Software updates can be delivered quicker and more easily in the cloud. This means you don't need to worry about constantly installing new versions. You also get access to new features instantly.

With cloud accounting software, you have the option to run your business remotely, from anywhere in the world. When data is fluid and accessible, the possibilities are endless.

Here are ***5 ways*** that cloud accounting can ***benefit your business***

1. ***You're on top of the numbers.*** You have a real-time, clear overview of your financial position, available on your phone or tablet as well as your computer.

2. ***It saves you lots of time –*** the software automatically uploads your bank statements and matches invoices to receipts/payments.

3. I***t's easy to collaborate online*** **with your team and advisers** – lots of users can log-in at the same time.

4. ***It's all online –*** you don't have to install it, you just log-in. And everything is backed up automatically. Upgrades and maintenance are done automatically and in the background... and for free!

5. ***There are no upfront fees.*** The software is paid through a monthly subscription.

July
August

How much should a ***good accountant cost?***

Well the simple answer is “less than a bad one”. A good accountant will help you ***avoid fines or help you boost your profits*** and will help you proactively reduce your tax bill.

In reality, of course, it just depends.

It’s like buying a car - you can buy a secondhand car for £1,000 or spend £100,000 on a sports car. Fundamentally, they do the same thing. It’s just how they do it.

Sometimes the difficulty as a business owner is that few accountants actually show their prices on the websites and that’s because they do vary so much, even within the same firm.

For example, our fees are based on the size of your business and the structure of your business - are you a sole trader or a limited company?

Then there’s the records you keep - are you bringing us in a big pile of paper that we need to process or have you already done the bookkeeping?

And then the level of service you want. As an example, do you want VAT returns prepared for you? Do you want a payroll run for you, or personal tax returns prepared? Or perhaps you want management accounts and meetings throughout the year.

And of course, the fee can come down to your budget.

What should I expect to pay for a great accountant?

Well it does depend on what you want and need.

We have a client who came to us, and his wife actually pays £200 a year to an accountant. That's because she has a very small business - it's almost a hobby, really. It doesn't make much profit and there's no tax to pay. So, she adds up all her own figures, gives them to the accountant and all they do is take those figures and put them into a tax return. That £200 gets her everything she wants and needs.

However, her husband uses JDA for his business and pays over 10 times as much as that because he has quite a sizable business and he wants advice throughout the year.

Someone cleverer than us though, actually came up with a great rule of thumb. He said that you should look to pay about 2% of your turnover for your finance function - to include your accountant and perhaps a bookkeeper.

As you grow, that 2% might include an internal finance person as well, because it reflects the fact you're going to need more support.

So, if your sales for the year are £100,000, you're looking at probably £2,000 in accountancy fees. If your sales go up to £1 million, you pay about £20,000 in accountancy fees or for your internal finance people.

I do think that's a really good rule of thumb that gives you an idea of what you should pay.

Of course, it does depend on the exact service you need, but hopefully that helps you get an idea of what you'll pay.

Meet Our ***JDA Team***

“Working among such professionals pushes me to take on new challenges and opportunities constantly. I am given daily encouragement and reassurance that they believe in me - I feel greatly respected and valued working at JDA. I love being able to dive into all areas of accounting, growing my knowledge and skills every day! And the JDA office is a warm, friendly and chatty place where we are bound to have tears from laughing. It’s not all boring being an accountant!”

Billie Arnold | Senior Accountant at JDA

“I really enjoy working for JDA as the team is so close-knit and helpful. I love how the office is always a happy and fun place to learn and there is never a dull moment! The job offers so many different opportunities to expand my knowledge and I am always learning, which I love. It’s great how we work as a team alongside the clients and I find it extremely rewarding.”

Taylor Graham | Accountant at JDA

Choose your
investment *wisely*

Accountancy fees vary considerably between accountants. ***And that's because the service offered varies so much.***

We focus on providing a quality service for all our clients.

That means we're not the cheapest. We're not the most expensive, either, but we want to charge a fee that allows us to spend enough time on your accounts to fully understand your business and give great advice to grow your business, reduce your tax bill, and help you reach your goals.

We do know that not everyone wants a quality service. As outlined above, for some people £200 per year is plenty to get what they want and need. But for others it's £2,000 per year as they have a larger business and want advice throughout the year.

We also have clients that pay us £2,000 per month, because they're larger clients and they want strategic advice, monthly management accounts and meetings.

Fixed fees and transparent fees

We set a fee at the start of each year. We prepare a detailed proposal that is easy to understand and includes transparent pricing – it explains each service that we're providing and the fee for each service.

To an extent, we provide a menu of services and you can pick which you do and don't want.

As you can imagine, our pricing software is cloud-based and ensures consistency in our pricing.

The amounts for the annual services, e.g. Accounts and Tax Returns, are fixed for the year and paid in 12 monthly instalments.

Fees for other monthly services, e.g. payroll or management accounts, can be added or removed throughout the year.

How is our fee calculated?

It comes down to a few things. The main factors are:

- **The size of the business**
  A £100,000 turnover business needs less work than a £1,000,000 turnover business, which needs less work than a £10,000,000 turnover business
- **The structure of the business**
  Is it a sole trader, a partnership, or a limited company? Each has different legal requirements for accounts and tax
- **What will the record keeping be like?**
  Are you going to bring us a big stack of paper, or are you more organized and do your own bookkeeping?

Then it's all about what level of service you want. Do you need payroll or VAT returns? Do you want management accounts and regular meetings?

To give you an idea of our fees, here are some examples of how a start-up might grow with us and need different services.

Minimum fee

If we're working with a limited company, our absolute minimum fee is **£79+VAT** per month. These businesses are usually operated by one person with annual sales under £30,000.

We do have a number of clients on this fee and we're very happy to have them.

Our service covers the legal requirements for the business and the owner.

Small or start-up business

A one-person consultancy business might have sales of around £100,000 and simply need our Business Service that includes:

- Accounts and Corporation Tax for the company
- Quarterly VAT returns
- Monthly payroll for the owner including all submissions to HMRC
- Annual confirmation statement
- Self-Assessment Tax Returns for the director
- Xero software to allow them to do their own bookkeeping

For this service, we currently charge **£177+VAT** per month for 12 months. This service also includes ad-hoc advice as well, and a meeting to talk about those accounts and what they mean to you and your business.

ACCELERATOR
AUTUMN 2022
BUSINESS OWNERS WHO ARE DEDICATED TO SUCCESS
ON DAVIES
ACCOUNTANTS

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Growing business

Sales of the business grow to £400,000 per year, and the business takes on an extra two staff members.

To continue the Business Service, the fee would then go up to **£280+VAT** per month. The increase reflects the increase in complexity as the business grows.

However, when some of our clients have grown to this size, they decide to upgrade to our Premier Service.

Here, we look beyond just the business accounts and also look at other key performance indicators within the business, discussing these with you every 3 months to really keep you on track and give you a lot more ideas of how to grow the business and reduce your tax bill.

So, as well as the services provided for the Business Service, we'll add:

- Quarterly Management Accounts and Review Meetings
- Tax Planning Review two months before the year end to proactively reduce your tax bill where possible
- Fee protection insurance to cover any fees if you ever have any HMRC investigations

Our fee for this becomes **£543+VAT** per month.

Larger business

If your sales increase to £1.5m and you take on another 10 employees, you might choose to stick with the Premier Service. As sales are higher and there's more employees, the work that we have to do is more complex. Our fee would increase to **£835+VAT** per month.

At this point, we might suggest that you upgrade to Monthly Management Accounts and Review Meetings.

To do this, i.e. going from quarterly to monthly, would increase the fee to **£1,438+VAT** per month.

These are real prices! But they are just examples – it depends on the size of the business, as well as what you want and need.

You can add services and take them away to get the price that fits your budget and strategy.

We have clients at all levels, and every client gets a top quality service from a top quality team.

The best way to understand prices is to meet with us, so we can understand your business and goals. Then we can agree on how we help you to get there.

JDA Packages

	Minimum Fee	Start-Up Business
Turnover	< £30k	£100k
Staff	Owner	Owner
Accounts	✓	✓
Corporation Tax	✓	✓
Payroll	✓	✓
Confirmation Statement	✓	✓
Self-Assessment	✓	✓
Ad hoc queries	✓	✓
Dedicated Client Manager	✓	✓
Video Library	✓	✓
Weekly Tax Tips	✓	✓
Xero		✓
Management Accounts & Meetings		
Tax Planning Review		
Fee Protection Insurance		
	£79+VAT	£177+VAT

Growing Business	Growing Business+	Larger Businesses	Larger Businesses+
£400k	£400k	£1.5m	£1.5m
3	3	13	13
✔	✔	✔	✔
✔	✔	✔	✔
✔	✔	✔	✔
✔	✔	✔	✔
✔	✔	✔	✔
✔	✔	✔	✔
✔	✔	✔	✔
✔	✔	✔	✔
✔	✔	✔	✔
✔	✔	✔	✔
✔	✔	✔	✔
	Quarterly	Quarterly	Monthly
	✔	✔	✔
	✔	✔	✔
***£280**+VAT*	***£543**+VAT*	***£835**+VAT*	***£1,438**+VAT*

*Is it easy to **switch accountants?***

Your new accountant is always going to say it's easy to switch, and your old accountant will likely say that it's hard!

The truth is that it is somewhere in the middle.

It's not too difficult but there is a process to follow, for legal and ethical reasons.

For the most part, the two accountants will do all the hard work, but do take care to check over the work that they do.

Speak to your new accountant

Your new accountant will want to know everything about your business. This is so that they can ease the transition and understand how your business operates.

This can be useful, as a fresh pair of eyes can sometimes lead to savings in tax, growth opportunities and much more.

Your old accountant's duties

Your old accountant will be ethically required by their accounting body to help your new accountant move everything over.

The nicest thing to do would be to let the old accountant know what your plans are. What would you expect one of your long-standing customers to do if they were leaving you?

Treat your accountant in the same way. Sometimes, just a little bit of common courtesy is really appreciated. Likewise, your old accountant will do their best to help ease the transition.

Your old accountant is ethically obliged to provide as much information to your new accountant as they can. So, there are no worries about things going missing.

Professional Clearance Letter

Step one is that your new accountant must send a Professional Clearance Letter to your old accountant.

Here, the old accountant can let the new accountant know if they should not accept you as a client. This is rare, however, as it is usually to do with illegal activity, such as fraud. This is not anything to worry about and the check is in place to protect all parties involved.

Monies owed

If you owe money to your old accountant, they can withhold some information, and will not send back the clearance letter to your new accountant.

Your new accountant won't get involved in the negotiations. It will be up to you to sort out, so everyone can leave on amicable terms.

How will ***JDA*** help me move?

At JDA, we want to make things easy for you.

We want to make things easy when you are our client so, to start with, we'll make it easy for you to move.

We'll take care of the hard work. We'll liaise with your old accountant to get the Professional Clearance.

In getting this Professional Clearance, we'll also get as much information as we can from the old accountant - things like your login codes for Companies House, your tax references for HMRC, and all the details and backup work from your last accounts and tax returns.

All this is done without you having to get involved.

Now, there will be some admin for you because we will need some info from you to do an Anti-Money Laundering check, which is a legal requirement - we will need photo ID and proof of address.

We will also need you to sign an Engagement Letter, i.e. the contract between you and us, but this is done electronically when you sign off the proposal.

We'll also need some simple information like your date of birth and National Insurance number.

But we'll be there to explain it clearly to you and to make it as easy as possible.

JON DAVIES
ACCOUNTANTS
ICAEW
CHARTERED
ACCOUNTANT

WELCOME TO
JON DAVIES
ACCOUNTANTS

Who should be my ***main contact at an accountancy practice?***

It all depends on the accountant, and what type of services you will need. This is always an important question to ask.

Some accountants will place clients that pay lesser fees with less experienced members of the team.

If you're picking your accountant based on the person you met at a proposal meeting, make sure they're the person you'll be dealing with going forwards.

Who will you deal with at ***JDA***?

Getting along with your accountant and the team around them is so important.

That's why we place emphasis on our Client Manager structure. Every client has a named Client Manager who will organise our team internally to get all of the work done. Our Client Managers are fully qualified accountants with many years of experience.

You'll always know who to turn to. Your Client Manager will always be available for queries – they can sort out anything you need and ensure no question goes unanswered. Your Client Manager will arrange all of the work for you, delegating within the JDA team as appropriate.

The good thing about our team is that we have a good balance of skills - for any task we consider who is best suited to complete it. Everyone works together to achieve the best outcome, and to check and challenge each other's work.

It is nice to get things right first time but having multiple pairs of eyes means that our team can go above and beyond in helping you reach your goals.

We'll regularly be in contact to see how you are getting on, and always be around if you have any issues.

Relationships are important, particularly when it comes to your business. We're here to help you reach your goals and the only way we can do that is through honesty, communication and trust from day one.

8 reasons
why you should choose JDA

Many people think all accountants are boring.

And, you know what? Many are!

That's a bit harsh but, more importantly, too many accountants are still just doing the minimum legal requirements – a set of accounts and a tax return. There is a value in that – everyone needs to be compliant. But are they making your business and life better?

Jon spent over a decade working in global accountancy firms. Hitting a deadline and getting the figures "correct" was a given. With Jon Davies Accountants, he wanted to do something extra.

Think of us like a Non-Executive Director to you and your business – a sounding board for you and your ideas and a source of wisdom, guidance and experience – all designed to improve your business and your profits.

We work alongside you throughout the year. We understand your goals and help you achieve them. We provide regular input and information to help you get to where you want to be.

We work with you to grow your business while keeping your tax bill as low as possible.

1. We look forward, not backwards

That's one of the problems with traditional accountants – everything is about looking at last year's figures. We know that you want to look more at the present, and at the future, so that's what we focus on.

2. We're tech savvy

We use Cloud software to make your life easier and give you access to your numbers anywhere and anytime. And we're doing our best to get rid of having paper records everywhere – these days you can take photos of your receipts and automatically upload them into our software.

3. We bring global experience to local businesses

A number of our team members have worked in global firms. Applying global firm knowledge to small business allows you to benefit from our experience and systems.

4. **We use lots of tools to give you far more relevant numbers than a legal set of accounts**
   For example, our management accounts can include your website data as our software speaks directly to Google. And we can present your figures in graphs and diagrams to make them easier to understand and to see the trends over time. When did you last see that in a set of accounts?

5. **We also like to challenge the way things are done – in our business and in yours.**
   For example, we're always looking at new software and systems that help us do our job, and help your business too. We'll challenge you too – we'll sometimes ask tricky questions that will change the way you think about your business!

6. **We charge a fixed fee that includes ad hoc advice**
   You don't need to worry about being charged if you have a query. In fact, we actually want queries – we prefer to advise you before any major decision so that you can make the best decision.

7. **We also don't want to ever, ever be thought of as stuffy and boring.**
   We want you to look forward to coming to see us – it should be fun. (Well, almost!) We do believe that you'll get a warm, friendly greeting and, after any meeting with us, you should leave feeling pleased that we've really helped you with your business

8. **We have all the right qualifications**
   We are proud that the firm is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales. A number of the team members are qualified Chartered Accountants or Chartered Certified Accountants.

Meet Our ***JDA Team***

"Having worked in different accountancy roles over the years, I can honestly say that no job I have had gives me the same satisfaction as working at JDA. I love the variety of the clients, developing strong working relationships with them, and feeling that I have contributed in some way to their successes or helped them when they encounter difficulties. And then there's the team – we're not just colleagues, we're friends, and there is always someone to offer support, help or advice (work or otherwise!) when it's needed."

Louise Davies FCA | Client Manager at JDA

"I enjoy working with Jon – he gives great advice and guidance when it comes to me learning and developing in my role. The team here is also great – I enjoy working with them day to day."

Sarah Owens ACCA | Senior Accountant at JDA

*Are we the **right** **accountant** for you?*

Maybe not!

We only work with entrepreneurs who understand that the value they get from us far outweighs their investment.

We're ***not*** the right accountant for you if:

✖ You see accounts and tax as a necessary evil

A set of forms that you need to do for legal reasons. Of course, we can do the accounts and tax – we're very good at it. We even guarantee to hit all deadlines – if we ever miss one, we'll pay the fine and £100 to you for the inconvenience. But we want you to value our input and advice – we're here to help you get more from your business.

✖ You want a cheap accountant

Our fees are set to give us enough time to do a good job and think of ideas to help you make more money. Cheap fees lead to a rushed job. It's perfectly OK to pay £1,000 per year to get your accounts and tax done, but you do need to pay more if you're serious about business growth and want an accountant who will be with you every step of the way. After all, you can pay more for good advice, or pay less for no advice!

✖ You like to leave everything to the last minute.

We plan so we hit all the deadlines and can give you timely information. But we need your help, too.

We ***are*** the right accountant for you if:

✔ You want more than the basic accounts and tax stuff.

It's a given that we do this, and do it well. But we provide much, much more. Our Non-Executive Director service provides regular meetings to provide proactive advice, and to challenge you to reach your targets.

✔ You're ambitious and want to grow your business.

We can work with you to help you meet your business and personal goals. We use the numbers as a foundation, but our advice goes much wider to cover the whole business.

✔ You want to reduce your tax bill by planning.

You don't want an accountant who says "you should have done….." after the event. You want an accountant who tells you, in advance, the best way to structure your finances and save tax.

✔ You want to feel in control of the numbers and your business.

Having your business numbers at your fingertips, and fully understanding them, gives you complete control of where your business is now, and where it's going.

✔ You want fresh thinking and ideas from your accountant that go beyond "just" the numbers.

You want someone to bounce ideas off – don't just think of us as accountants, we're entrepreneurs too.

✔ You want fixed monthly fees, agreed in advance, to allow you to budget for your business.

Our fixed price includes ad hoc advice, so you won't get any nasty surprise invoices.

How will we
work with you?

Here at JDA, ***we always do our best to help our clients as much as possible.*** We offer all of the above services, and more.

We take many steps to give our clients a positive experience, such as:

Client Charter

We have a charter that sets out what you can expect from us… and what we expect for you. For example, we guarantee to respond to you within 24 hours.

It's usually much quicker but we guarantee the 24 hours as sometimes we're tied up in meetings.

Plan in advance

Our priority at JDA is ensuring all of our clients remain compliant. Meeting legal deadlines for important documents is critical.

Our dedicated team of qualified accountants and client managers plan months in advance to ensure no difficulties arise. We're so confident we won't miss a deadline that, if we do, we pledge to pay the fine and provide £100 compensation.

Identify your goals and help you to achieve them

Everyone has their personal and business goals. And, the right accountant will be there when you need them the most, helping you to grow your business and reach your potential.

We like to get to know our clients and their business as much as possible. This means knowing what the goals of each client are, both personally and for the business.

From here, everything we do is tailored specifically towards achieving these goals, maximizing the chance of reaching these very important milestones.

Tailor our service

Saving money and tax where you can is a real bonus to any business. But this won't be done in the same way for every business.

We strive to understand your business.

We'll always want to come and meet your team, see your premises and learn more about how you operate. We'll also take time to understand your personal circumstances as these will affect the advice we give.

This will help us plan for the future and save you money!

Keep things simple

We know that not everyone knows the science behind the numbers. Or wants to know!

We'll always explain everything in plain English – no jargon!

Communicate

It's no secret we love biscuits, a cup of tea and a chat at JDA.

We hope to create a relationship that means all of our clients feel comfortable approaching us with anything on their mind. Knowing your family circumstances also helps us to tailor our advice. We're here to listen. It helps us understand what we need to do to help you achieve your goals.

So, we'll always offer face-to- face meetings, video and phone calls - whatever suits you and is most convenient.

How do we compare to a standard accountant?

	Standard Accountant	Jon Davies Accountants
Accounts	✓	✓
Tax	✓	✓
Payroll	✓	✓
Bookkeeping	✓	✓
VAT	✓	✓
Management Accounts	✓	✓
Work with anyone	✓	✗
Aim for the cheapest price	✓	✗
Accountant is a necessary evil	✓	✗
Desktop based software	✓	✗
Cloud based software accessible anywhere	✗	✓
Xero Gold Partner & QuickBooks Platinum Pro Advisor	✗	✓
Cash Flow Statements	✗	✓
Accountant cares about your business growth	✗	✓
Added value in the relationship	✗	✓
Fixed fee, agreed in advance	✗	✓
Fee payable in 12 monthly instalments	✗	✓
Guaranteed to hit deadlines… or we pay the fine plus £100 for the inconvenience	✗	✓
Free access to our library of training videos including courses on: Microsoft Office 365, G-Mail and G-Suite, Mental Health in the Workplace, Customer Service and Leadership	✗	✓
Weekly tax tips and business advice	✗	✓
Quarterly Printed Newsletter full of tax and business tips	✗	✓
Tax card and Budget summary	✗	✓
Unlimited ad hoc support during the year	✗	✓
Massive value in the relationship	✗	✓
Only work with entrepreneurs who want to build a better business	✗	✓
Specialise in working with small and medium-sized businesses [Start-up to £10m]	✗	✓

If you'd like a chat about your accountancy needs,
please ring us on **0151 665 0900** or email us at **growth@jondaviesaccountants.co.uk**

What our ***clients say***

We absolutely love when a client wants to give us some feedback.
Not just the good kind either! If something isn't working, we want to know why.

Here at JDA, we always strive to get it right first time round. But, we're never too afraid to adapt to our clients when needed.

As we mentioned, it's good to read reviews and testimonials when you're choosing an accountant. Below we've included some of the ones that we have recently received.

Our first testimonial comes from Tim Leigh, Director at The Pillow With A Hole Limited. The company operates globally, and Tim defines how JDA helps him to deal with those tricky numbers!

"I couldn't operate without JDA! Our business is such a global complex business, and I am not a numbers guy. I find it so relaxing that I have accountants that are so knowledgeable and care about my accounts. All the team are extremely helpful, and I feel they enjoy what they do. Jon Davies Accountants help me with everything from my book-keeping to my management accounts. I really find the regular management account meetings extremely helpful as they offer me an informative and knowledgeable service in a way that I can understand. It allows me more time to focus on my business knowing the numbers are sorted as I have professionals on my side!"

Tim Leigh, Director | The Pillow With A Hole Limited

The following testimonial is from Natalie Brown, Financial Controller for the Smaller Earth Group. Smaller Earth are an international group of companies, that provides students with international travel opportunities. We helped them move all of the group companies from Excel to Xero, and now provide ongoing accounts and tax support.

"We have worked with Jon Davies Accountants since 2018. The transition was very smooth and we have found them extremely professional. They have supported us more than we could ever ask for with setting up our financial infrastructure here at Smaller Earth through Xero and our internal financial controls.

No task is ever too much trouble for the JDA team and they always respond very quickly and take a genuine interest in our cultural exchange business, which helps with understanding the financial complexities surrounding our Global business. I would recommend Jon Davies Accountants to any of our business partners or any company looking for professional services but with a personal tailored touch and looking to build a strong working relationship".

Natalie Brown, Financial Controller | Smaller Earth Group

The Anfield Wrap is an award-winning media company, primarily focused on Liverpool Football Club but also producing content for a number of global businesses. As well as the annual accounts, we prepare monthly management accounts and lead the financial input at the monthly board meetings.

"JDA are magnificent in providing our accountancy service, management accounts and analysis, and payroll services. We are now beginning to look at the strategic direction with JDA to keep us on track!"

Emma Johnson, Operations Manager | The Anfield Wrap

Rob Gill of The More Team Ltd, a Project Management business, defined our values of treating each client and their business uniquely:

"I've always felt valued as a customer and I've recommended JDA to my colleagues. I recommended them because they sorted out a mess from my last accountant, spent ages on the phone sorting out payroll queries, and gave me my lowest ever tax bill, both personally and for the company. What's more, they are always there on the end of a phone, or email."

Rob Gill, Director | The More Team Ltd

Hilary Collins from Grafton Nursery Limited commented on the level of analysis she receives from JDA and how she feels more confident in her business because of this.

"We have Management Accounts included in our package from JDA. It has been a real breath of fresh air for me. We've had 6 previous accountants, but nobody buys into what we do like JDA do. They are lucky number 7! They provide the type of analysis that we've wanted for years. The feedback and comments we receive give us more confidence for the future."

Hilary Collins, Director | Grafton Nursery Ltd

Lee Mitchell of Sort Rehearsal Rooms in Liverpool pointed out the reliability of our team and how we are always there to answer any weird or wonderful questions you may have!

"Jon Davies Accountants help us manage all aspects when it comes to accounting. They manage my VAT, End of Year Tax, Self-Assessment and Payroll! I find this so helpful as I know it is sorted without having to fret and I can focus more on the business!

I love that I have a reliable Client Manager, and I can ask all my weird and wonderful questions. Having that point of contact is really helpful and means I can get all the answers I need from a knowledgeable source!"

Lee Mitchell, Director | Sort Rehearsal Rooms Limited

We recently helped Michael Shane of Enter IT Limited, a software training business with clients all around the UK, move his accounts into Xero. We automated much of the bookkeeping process, with monthly sales invoices being sent to clients and automatic payments via Direct Debit.

"I knew Jon and the people at his practice were experts in Xero. And I reached out to him for a little bit of advice and guidance. And I guess I asked Jon if he could look at my Xero.

I was amazed - truly amazed - with the service that I received from Jon and Louise. They didn't go that extra mile to help me. They must have gone a billion miles to help me.

They reconciled everything. They reconciled all of the accounts. And they left me with a system which is more than good to go

They come with the strongest recommendation I could ever possibly give. So as far as I'm concerned, they're a great team and a great bunch of people to work with.

With Jon & Louise at Jon Davies Accountants, nothing, but nothing was too much trouble."

Michael Shane, Director | Mi Crow Courses

This recommendation comes from Simon Bernstein, Director of Empathy Communications Ltd. This business works with organisations to train them in leadership skills, improving communications and reaching business goals.

"We moved to Jon Davies Accountants in 2017 and have found the service excellent. The team are pro-active in their advice and they are always on our side – they help us save money in taxes, rather than working for HMRC. They're responsive to our queries and very patient when replying. We highly recommend them."

Simon Bernstein, Director | Empathy Communications Ltd

Our final testimonial comes from Sam Dunster, Director of www.opennshut.co.uk Limited, a shutter company based in Chichester. Sam highlights how JDA have aided him in growing his business and focusing on marketing during the management accounts meetings.

"I've been looking for a proactive accountant that actually understood the monthly numbers, scorecards and marketing that a growing business needs. Jon was at an Entrepreneurs Exhibition - his stand caught my eye, we had a chat and found we were a good fit for each other.

I get the right amount of support and advice that I was looking for and I would recommend Jon and his team if you're looking grow and invest time on your business. Thanks Jon & team."

Sam Dunster, Director | www.opennshut.co.uk Limited

I really hope that this guide has been ***useful.***

Picking an accountant is an important decision.

It's an investment, and it requires properly researching to find out what you need and who is going to suit you and your business the best.

If you're considering working with an accountant that will help you grow your business, please do get in touch and we can arrange a free consultation to find about you and your business needs.

Make the right decision for your business today!

Jon Davies
Founder, Jon Davies Accountants

You can call us on **0151 665 0900**
Email us at **growth@jondaviesaccountants.co.uk**
Read more at **www.jondaviesaccountants.co.uk** or follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Linkedin and Youtube

And **always remember we're available for a chat at our office:**
Business First Business Centre, 23 Goodlass Road, Liverpool, L24 9HJ

xero GOLD PARTNER

ICAEW CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

intuit quickbooks Platinum ProAdvisor

Liverpool & Sefton Chambers of Commerce Member

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JON DAVIES
ACCOUNTANTS

One of the North West's leading accountants for growing businesses