AuditCon by ACUA

New Orleans, Louisiana | September 27 - October 1, 2026

ACUA

1

BENCH STRENGTH

LEVERAGING STUDENT WORKERS AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTS TO EXPAND AUDIT COVERAGE ON CAMPUS

JORDAN RAMSEY, CIA, CFE

- Deputy Director of Internal Audit at MSU (at MSU since 2011)
- Prior experience:
  - 6 years with FedEx Internal Audit
  - 4 years as Associate Director of the MSU Alumni Association

TYLER MORGAN, CPA, CIA

- Assistant Director of Internal Audit at MSU (at MSU since 2020)
- Prior experience:
  - 3.5 years audit/tax with T.E. Lott & Co.
  - 3 years audit with Mississippi Office of the State Auditor in the County Division



2

SESSION OBJECTIVES

What participants will be able to do

1 IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

Identify opportunities within their own audit universe where student workers or graduate assistants could perform meaningful, structured audit work.

2 DESCRIBE ONBOARDING

Describe the key components of an effective student worker onboarding and training program for an internal audit office.

3 DEVELOP AN AUDIT PROGRAM

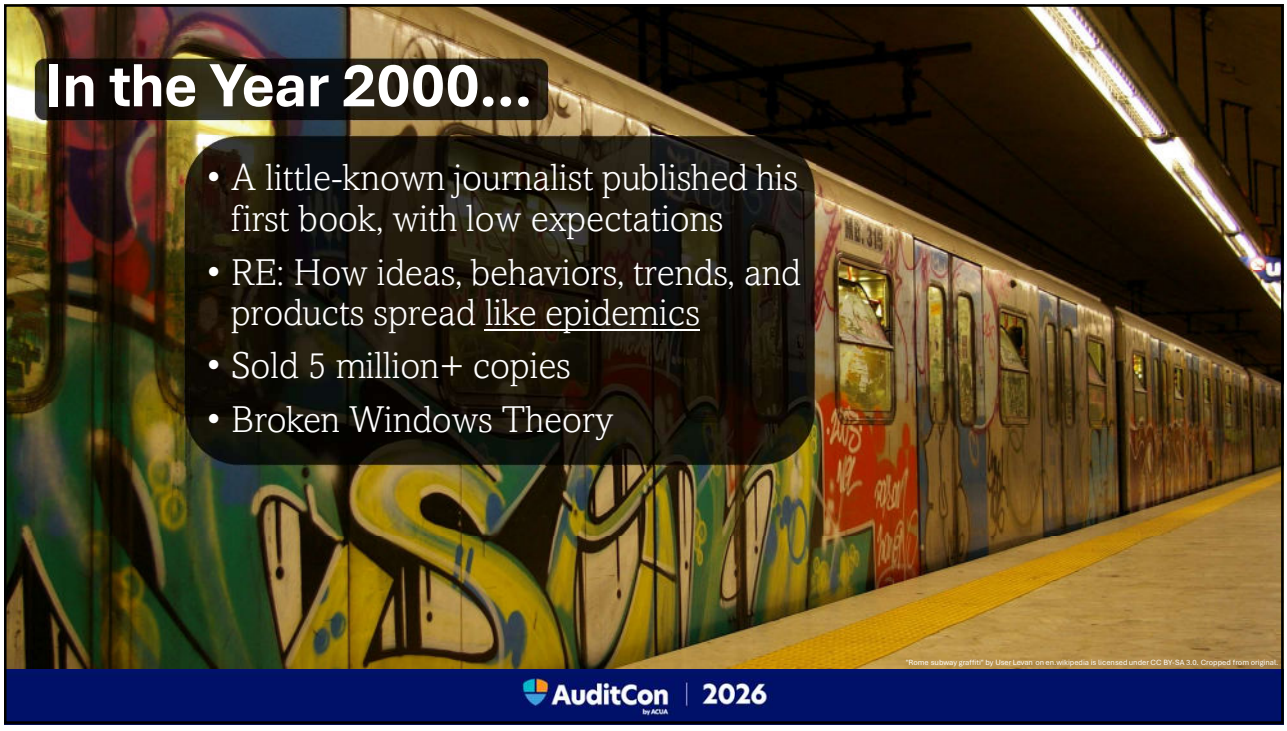
Develop an audit program for departmental basic control assessments that is suitable for student auditors.

4 RECOGNIZE PITFALLS

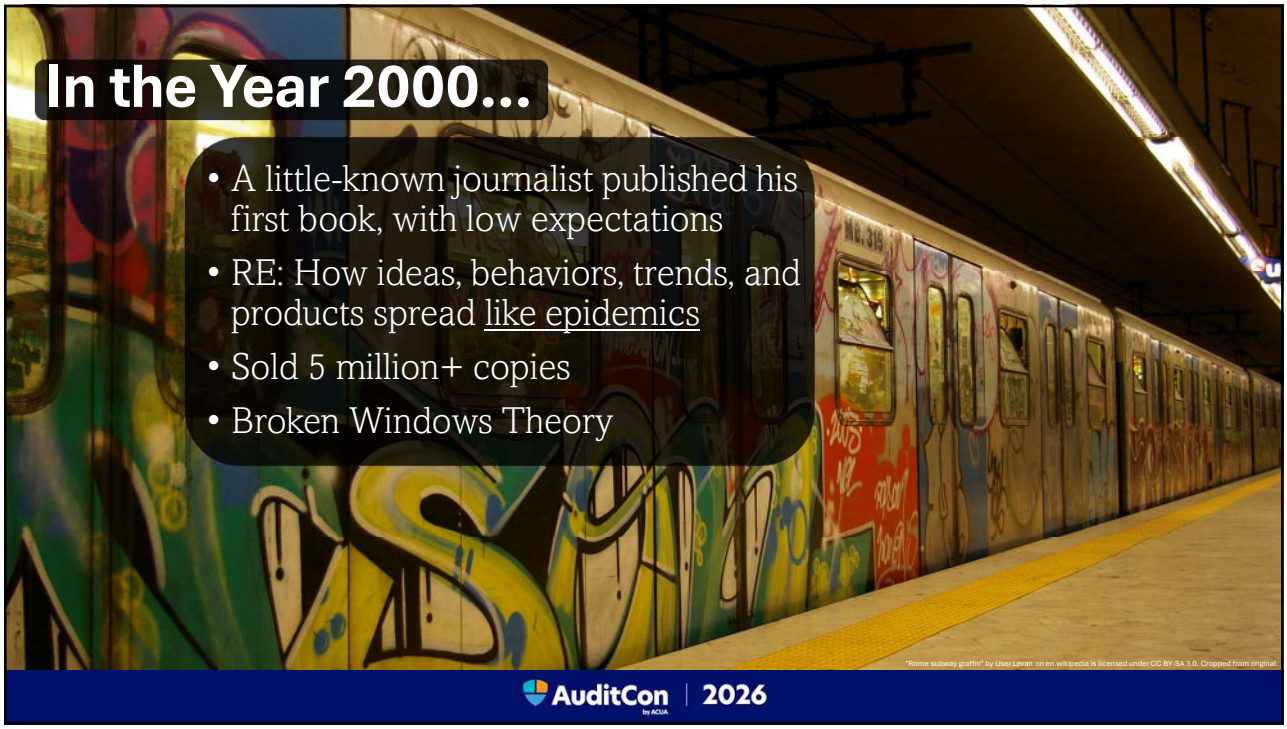
Recognize common pitfalls and lessons learned from a real-world implementation to avoid similar challenges in their own institutions.

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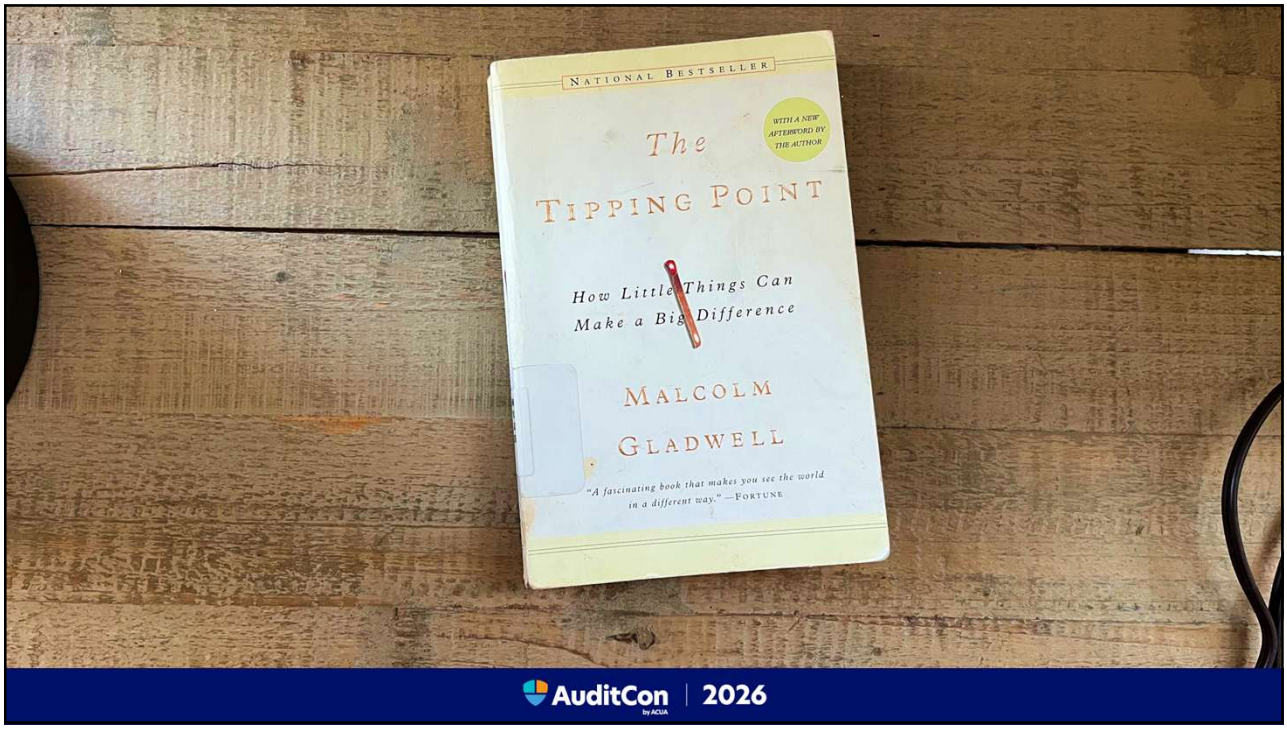
3



4


In the Year 2000...
• A little-known journalist published his first book, with low expectations
• RE: How ideas, behaviors, trends, and products spread like epidemics
• Sold 5 million+ copies
• Broken Windows Theory
"Rome subway graffiti" by User:Levan on en.wikipedia is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0. Cropped from original.
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5


NATIONAL BESTSELLER
WITH A NEW AFTERWORD BY THE AUTHOR
The TIPPING POINT
How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference
MALCOLM GLADWELL
"A fascinating book that makes you see the world in a different way." —FORTUNE
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6



7

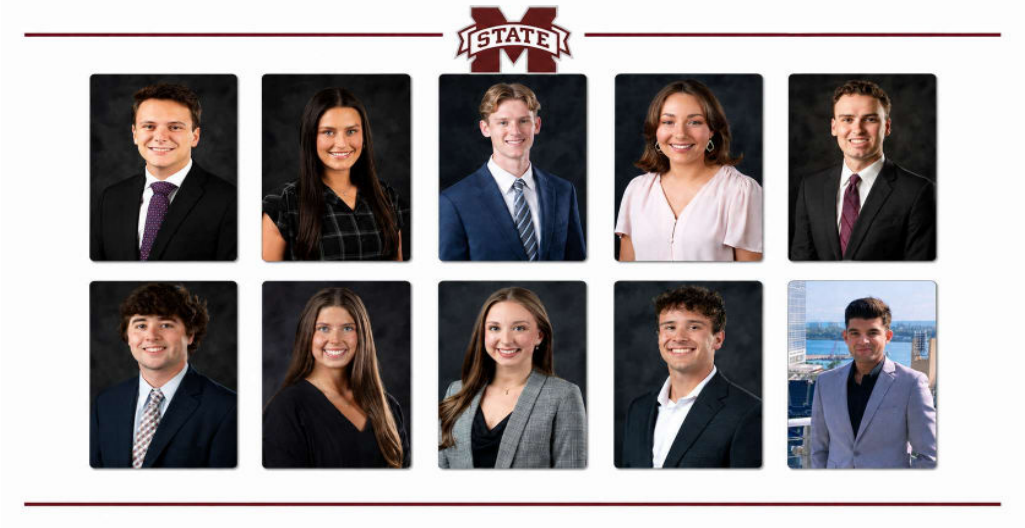
Types of Audits Students Work On

- Basic control assessments
- Continuous monitoring audits
- Ad hoc audits



8

Our Graduate Assistants and Student Workers Since 2023



Four CPAs and two currently enrolled in law school

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9

Basic Control Assessments (AKA "BCAs")



- Typically one academic department at a time
- Scope of a BCA
- Compliance with university-wide policies, laws/regulations, and some best practices

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10

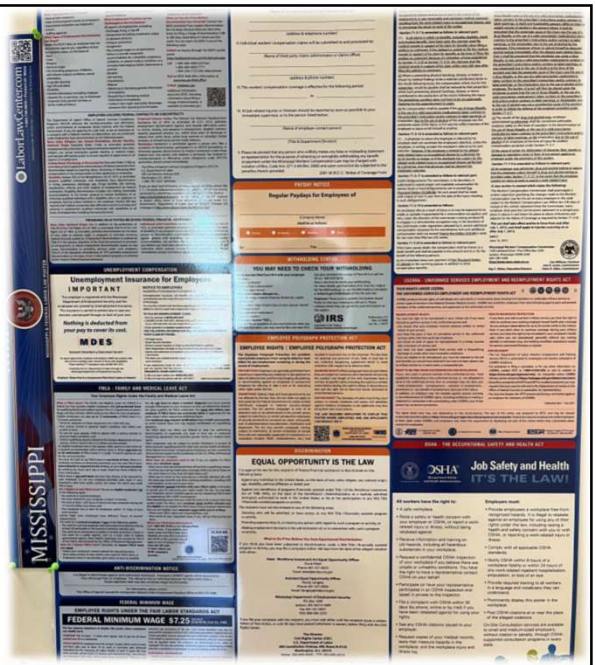
Basic Control Assessment Coverage

- General Administration
- Research
- Cash
- Leave and Payroll
- Fleet Management
- Facilities Management
- Information Security
- Account Reconciliations
- Procurement Cards

11

General Administration

- Desk manuals (AKA standard operating procedures)
- Miles per gallon analysis reports



12



Research

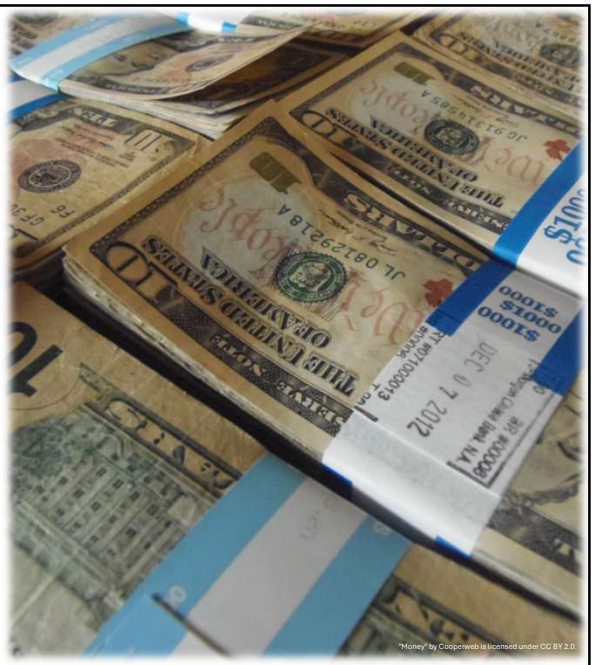
- Time and effort reports
  - Timeliness of submission
  - Who is signing the reports?

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13

Cash Receipts

- Most departments have very few cash transactions
- Reputational risk
- How do you know if they collect cash?

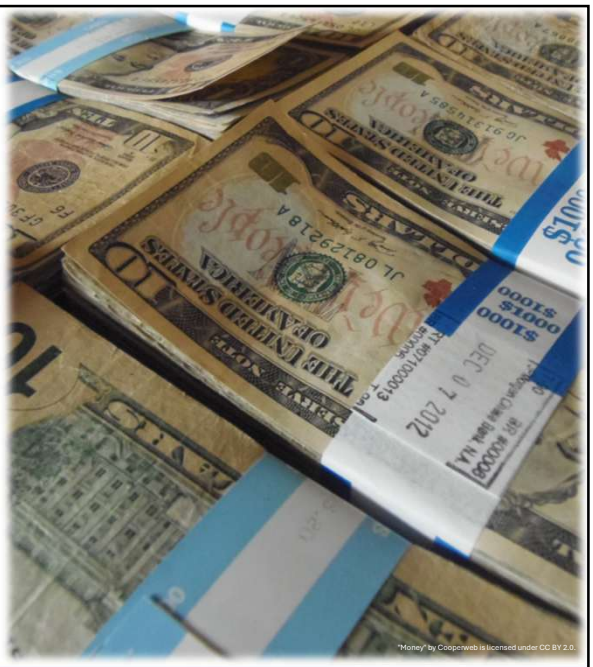


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14

Cash Receipts (cont.)

- Where is cash stored?
- University cash policy drives testwork
  - Pre-numbered cash receipts book
  - Cash log
  - Timeliness of deposit



15



Leave (Paid Time Off)

- Leave usage reasonableness test
- Monthly leave reports
  - Leave taken report
  - Leave "purgatory" report

16

Payroll

- Timesheets vs. payroll reports
- Documented approvals (at the right time)
- Accuracy of overtime pay
- How timesheets are turned in
- Employees keying their own overtime



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17



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Fleet Management

- Vehicle logs
- Miles per gallon analysis reports

18

Facilities Management

- Electronic card access to buildings
- Hard key listing
  - Include all keys; organized by key rather than by person
  - Clearly list area that key opens
  - Date of last issuance
  - Location of unissued keys
  - Documented consideration to re-key for lost keys
  - Mitigating risk while understanding it's imperfect



"Key to the open door" by Tawheed Manzoor is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

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19

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

McArthur Hall Room 150
P.O. Box 9603 Mississippi State, MS 39762
PH: (662) 325-3713 | FAX: (662) 325-0753

Separating/Transfer Checklist

Employee Name:	
MSU ID:	
Department:	Termination/Transfer Date:
Checklist Completed by:	Today's Date:
New Mailing Adress:	
City, State, Zip:	
Email:	

Per University Policy, HRM 60-405, departments/units are required to maintain this form in the department for three years when there is separation from employment /change of position. DO NOT send the form to Human Resources Management.

	Description	Date Completed (If Not Applicable, mark as N/A)
	Complete the Employment Action Form (EAF) and submit to HRM with letter of resignation	
University Assets and Financial Steps		
	Return University fuel, procurement and/or travel card(s) to department	
	Return office key(s) (i.e., lab, desk, cabinet, and storage area) and ID badge(s)	
	Return University-owned property and/or equipment (computers, laptop, tablet, books, mobile devices, storage media, supplies, tools, uniforms, etc.)	
Shared Files/Systems (Electronic Access should be cancelled unless there are extenuating circumstances requiring access to continue)		
	Confirm transfer or deletion of all electronic files from OneDrive, local drive, personally owned computers, mobile devices, cloud storage, and storage media (e.g., flash drives, etc.)	
	Complete removal procedure(s) for all system access (e.g., shared network drives, databases, Banner, Outlook, PageUp, departmental software, subscriptions etc.) Submit helpdesk ticket, if appropriate.	
	Remove electronic door access, if appropriate	
	Discontinue voice mail or plan for recovery of messages left for departing employee	
Payroll/Benefits		
	Make sure leave has been audited and processed	
	Make sure time sheets have been submitted and approved (Make sure department pays compensatory time for employees separating from the University or transferring to another department)	
Miscellaneous		
	Share information about Exit Interview Survey (generated electronically to the employee)	
	Contact Parking and Transit Services to end accrual of charges for digital parking permit	

I attest that I have completed this checklist in good faith and have complied with all tasks herein.

Information Security

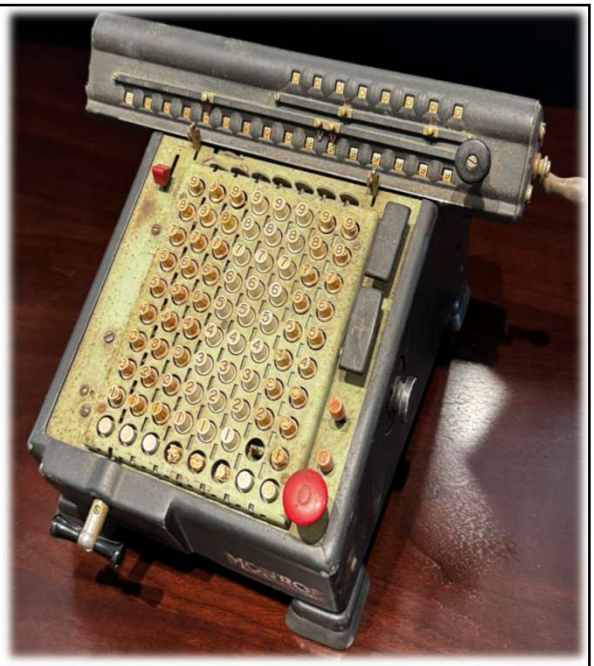
- Separating checklist
  - Required by policy for anyone who terminates or transfers
  - Sample test last three employees
    - Tipping points

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20

Account Reconciliations

- Timeliness
- Two Signatures
- Beware of perverse incentives



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21



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22

Procurement Cards

- Limited, targeted sample testing
- Reliance on robust centralized monitoring



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23

Other Audits

- Continuous monitoring audits
  - Account reconciliations
  - Separating checklists
- Ad hoc audits
  - Overtime pay vs. timesheets
  - I-9 verification



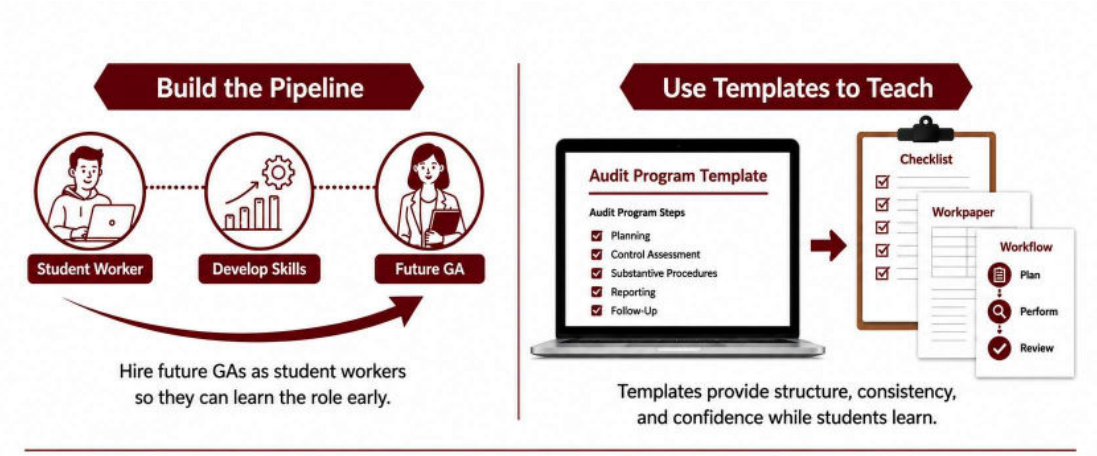
24

Recruiting and Retention



25

Training



26

BEFORE YOU SEND IT TO REVIEW...

Tips for your grad students

LINK IT

When signing off on a section, ensure all workpapers in the section are referenced with a TeamMate workpaper link in the leadsheet.

CHECK IT IN

Also, make sure all workpapers are checked in before sending to reviewer. There is an option in TeamMate to quickly see all checked out workpapers.

TIE IT OUT

Read all report findings and make sure the information within them agrees with the testing workpapers.

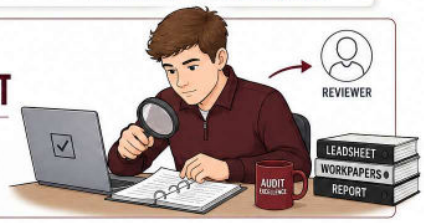
LEARN FROM IT

Before submitting workpapers for review, look at the review points from your prior audit and make sure you aren't repeating any of your same mistakes.
A mistake is fine. But don't repeat it!

GET OUT OF THE PROFESSOR–STUDENT MINDSET

Students wait to be told what they got wrong.

Auditors try to find it before the reviewer does.



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27

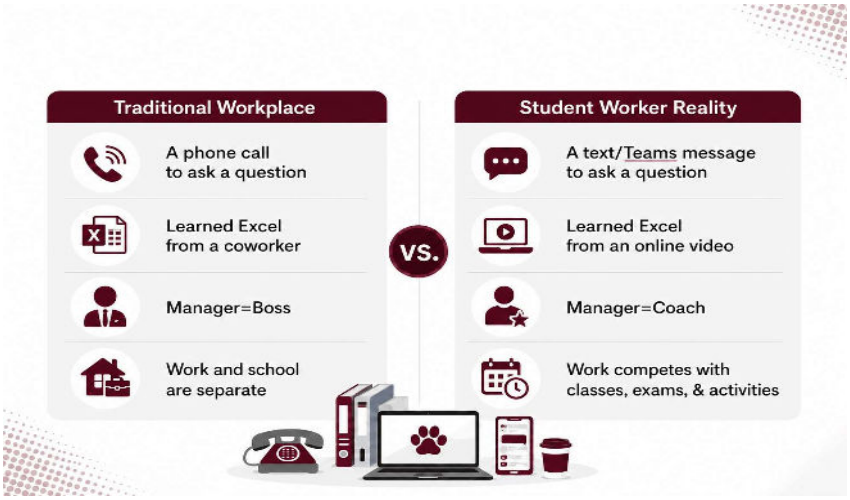
Working effectively with today's student auditor



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28

THEN vs. NOW (Sort of)



29

Explain the Why



30

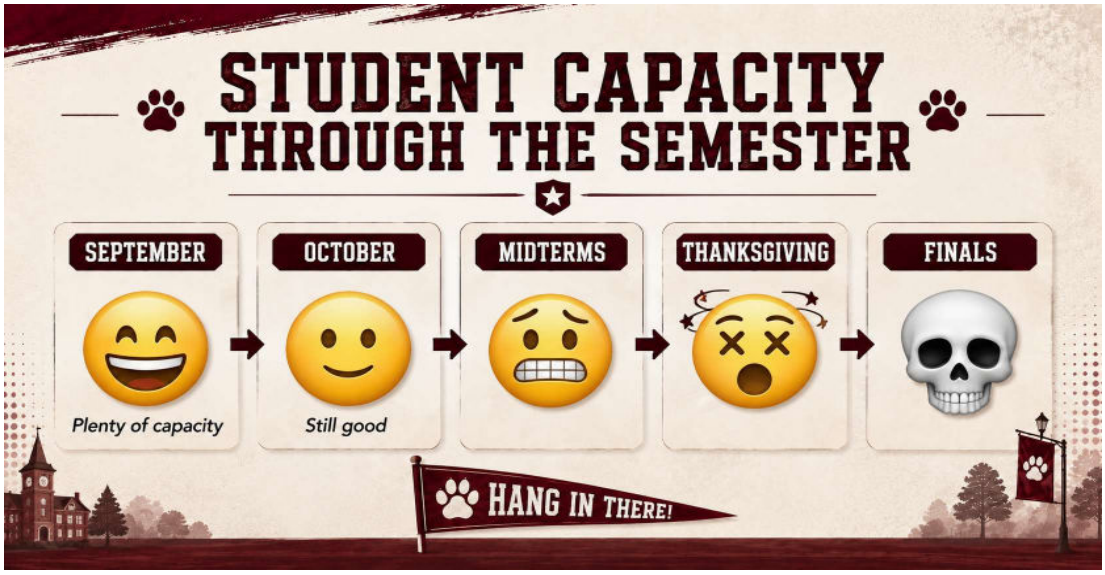
TECHNOLOGY FLUENCY DOES NOT ALWAYS EQUAL WORKPLACE TECHNOLOGY

31

Teach the Unwritten Rules



32


STUDENT CAPACITY
THROUGH THE SEMESTER
SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
MIDTERMS
THANKSGIVING
FINALS
Plenty of capacity
Still good
HANG IN THERE!

33


Frequent Feedback
Meaningful Work
Clear Expectations
Flexibility
Coaching
Development Opportunities
Connections
AUDIT PLAN
PLANNING
TESTING
ANALYSIS
REPORTING

34

"I found it really cool that the GA's are given a decent amount of responsibility when it comes to Basic Control Assessments. Being the main communicator to the Business Coordinators of the department is really neat and I think it has already helped tremendously with communicating professional and timely."

"During my time in Undergrad and internships, I had never been exposed to auditing anything but numbers. Working at Internal Audit, I have been introduced to Basic Control Assessments, essentially the auditing of processes to ensure compliance with University Policy. This has allowed me to expand my scope of what I thought was possible from a career in Audit."

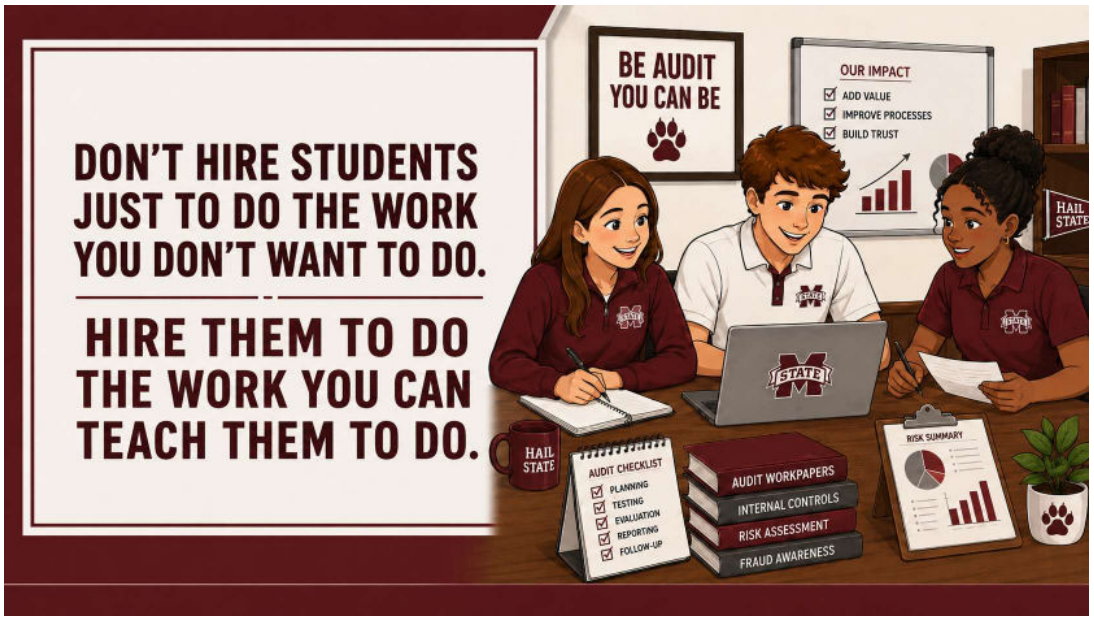
"Working in Internal Audit has created an unanticipated fulfillment in the ability to help departments. This can take on many forms, like strategizing more efficient processes, or simply giving recommendations for an updated key listing. Regardless, this was not a factor I initially considered when I began working here but has created an amazing opportunity to give back to the University."

"I really liked the process of how we go back and check to make sure that management actually did what we told them."

"I was very surprised about how much I actually got to interact with Department heads on my own."

"I didn't realize going into to it how much our projects affected or helped correct the departments processes."

35



36



37

Express Evaluation Code

A link to the Express Evaluation is located at ACUA.org.

Under the **Training & Events** menu, select **Event Evaluator**. An ACUA login is required to access the session evaluations.

Codes are *unique* to each session and are required for access.

38

Thank you!

QUESTIONS?

39

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40