



ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION AND PRESENTATION					
Account Title	Classification	Financial Statement	Normal Balance		
	A				
Accounts Payable	Current Liability	Balance Sheet	Credit		
Accounts Receivable	Current Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit		
Accumulated Depreciation—Buildings	Plant Asset—Contra	Balance Sheet	Credit		
Accumulated Depreciation—Equipment	Plant Asset—Contra	Balance Sheet	Credit		
Advertising Expense	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit		
Allowance for Doubtful Accounts	Current Asset—Contra	Balance Sheet	Credit		
Amortization Expense	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit		
	В				
Bad Debt Expense	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit		
Bonds Payable	Long-Term Liability	Balance Sheet	Credit		
Buildings	Plant Assets	Balance Sheet	Debit		
	C				
Cash	Current Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit		
Common Stock	Stockholders' Equity	Balance Sheet	Credit		
Copyrights	Intangible Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit		
Cost of Goods Sold	Cost of Goods Sold	Income Statement	Debit		
	D				
Debt Investments	Current Asset/Long-Term Investment	Balance Sheet	Debit		
Depreciation Expense	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit		
Discount on Bonds Payable	Long-Term Liability—Contra	Balance Sheet	Debit		
Dividends	Temporary account closed to Retained Earnings	Retained Earnings Statement	Debit		
Dividends Payable	Current Liability	Balance Sheet	Credit		
	E				
Equipment	Plant Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit		
\mathbf{F}					
Freight-Out	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit		
G					
Gain on Disposal of Plant Assets	Other Income	Income Statement	Credit		
Goodwill	Intangible Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit		
	I		•		
Income Summary	Temporary account closed to Retained Earnings	Not Applicable	(1)		
Income Tax Expense	Income Tax Expense	Income Statement	Debit		
Income Taxes Payable	Current Liability	Balance Sheet	Credit		
Insurance Expense	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit		
Interest Expense	Other Expense	Income Statement	Debit		
Interest Payable	Current Liability	Balance Sheet	Credit		
Interest Receivable	Current Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit		
Interest Revenue	Other Income	Income Statement	Credit		
Inventory	Current Asset	Balance Sheet (2)	Debit		

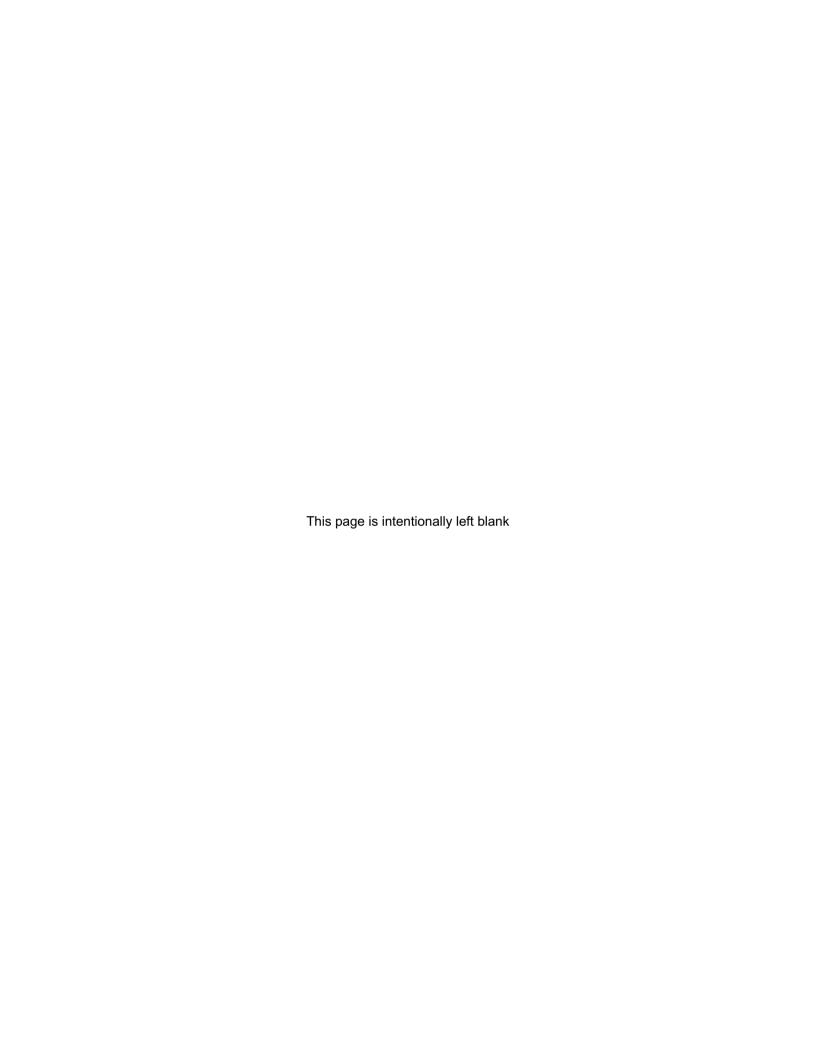
Account Title	Classification	Financial Statement	Normal Balance
	L		
Land	Plant Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit
Loss on Disposal of Plant Assets	Other Expense	Income Statement	Debit
-	M		
Maintenance and Repairs Expense	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit
Mortgage Payable	Long-Term Liability	Balance Sheet	Credit
	N	1	-
Notes Payable	Current Liability/ Long-Term Liability	Balance Sheet	Credit
	0		
Owner's Capital	Owner's Equity	Owner's Equity and Balance Sheet	Credit
Owner's Drawings	Temporary account closed to Owner's Capital	Owner's Equity	Debit
	P		
Patents	Intangible Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit
Paid-in Capital in Excess of Par— Common Stock	Stockholders' Equity	Balance Sheet	Credit
Paid-in Capital in Excess of Par— Preferred Stock	Stockholders' Equity	Balance Sheet	Credit
Preferred Stock	Stockholders' Equity	Balance Sheet	Credit
Premium on Bonds Payable	Long-Term Liability	Balance Sheet	Credit
Prepaid Insurance	Current Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit
Prepaid Rent	Current Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit
	R		
Rent Expense	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit
Retained Earnings	Stockholders' Equity	Balance Sheet and Retained Earnings Statement	Credit
	S		
Salaries and Wages Expense	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit
Salaries and Wages Payable	Current Liability	Balance Sheet	Credit
Sales Discounts	Revenue—Contra	Income Statement	Debit
Sales Returns and Allowances	Revenue—Contra	Income Statement	Debit
Sales Revenue	Revenue	Income Statement	Credit
Selling Expenses	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit
Service Revenue	Revenue	Income Statement	Credit
Stock Investments	Current Asset/Long-Term Investment	Balance Sheet	Debit
Supplies	Current Asset	Balance Sheet	Debit
Supplies Expense	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit
	T		
Treasury Stock	Stockholders' Equity—Contra	Balance Sheet	Debit
	U		
Unearned Service Revenue	Current Liability	Balance Sheet	Credit
Utilities Expense	Operating Expense	Income Statement	Debit

⁽¹⁾ The normal balance for Income Summary will be credit when there is a net income, debit when there is a net loss. The Income Summary account does not appear on any financial statement.

⁽²⁾ If a periodic system is used, Inventory also appears on the income statement in the calculation of cost of goods sold.

The following is a sample chart of accounts. It does not represent a comprehensive chart of all the accounts used in this textbook but rather those accounts that are commonly used. This sample chart of accounts is for a company that generates both service revenue as well as sales revenue. It uses the perpetual approach to inventory. If a periodic system was used, the following temporary accounts would be needed to record inventory purchases: Purchases, Freight-In, Purchase Returns and Allowances, and Purchase Discounts.

CHART OF ACCOUNTS				
Assets	Liabilities	Owner's and Stockholders' Equity	Revenues	Expenses
Cash	Notes Payable	Owner's Capital	Service Revenue	Advertising
Accounts Receivable Allowance for Doubtful Accounts Interest Receivable Inventory Supplies Prepaid Insurance Prepaid Rent Land Equipment Accumulated Depreciation— Equipment Buildings Accumulated Depreciation— Buildings Copyrights Goodwill	Notes Payable Accounts Payable Unearned Service Revenue Salaries and Wages Payable Unearned Rent Revenue Interest Payable Dividends Payable Income Taxes Payable Bonds Payable Discount on Bonds Payable Premium on Bonds Payable Mortgage Payable	Owner's Capital Owner's Drawings Common Stock Paid-in Capital in Excess of Par— Common Stock Preferred Stock Paid-in Capital in Excess of Par— Preferred Stock Treasury Stock Retained Earnings Dividends Income Summary	Service Revenue Sales Revenue Sales Discounts Sales Returns and Allowances Interest Revenue Gain on Disposal of Plant Assets	Advertising Expense Amortization Expense Bad Debt Expense Cost of Goods Sold Depreciation Expense Freight-Out Income Tax Expense Insurance Expense Interest Expense Loss on Disposal of Plant Assets Maintenance and Repairs Expense Rent Expense Salaries and Wages Expense Supplies Expense Utilities Expense
Buildings Copyrights				





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Brief Contents

- 1 Accounting in Action 2
- 2 The Recording Process 52
- 3 Adjusting the Accounts 98
- 4 Completing the Accounting Cycle 160
- **5** Accounting for Merchandising Operations 216
- 6 Inventories 274
- 7 Accounting Information Systems 328
- 8 Fraud, Internal Control, and Cash 374
- **9** Accounting for Receivables 428
- 10 Plant Assets, Natural Resources, and Intangible Assets 470
- 11 Current Liabilities and Payroll Accounting 522
- **12** Accounting for Partnerships 566
- **13** Corporations: Organization and Capital Stock Transactions 606
- **14** Corporations: Dividends, Retained Earnings, and Income Reporting 648
- 15 Long-Term Liabilities 684
- 16 Investments 738
- 17 Statement of Cash Flows 776
- 18 Financial Statement Analysis 840
- 19 Managerial Accounting 892
- 20 Job Order Costing 938
- 21 Process Costing 982
- 22 Cost-Volume-Profit 1030
- 23 Budgetary Planning 1074
- 24 Budgetary Control and Responsibility Accounting 1122
- 25 Standard Costs and Balanced Scorecard 1176
- 26 Incremental Analysis and Capital Budgeting 1226

APPENDICES

- A Specimen Financial Statements: Apple Inc. A1
- B Specimen Financial Statements: PepsiCo, Inc. B1
- C Specimen Financial Statements: The Coca-Cola
 - Company C1
- D Specimen Financial Statements: Amazon.com, Inc. D1
- **E** Specimen Financial Statements: Wal-Mart
 - Stores, Inc. E1
- F Specimen Financial Statements: Zetar plc F1
- G Time Value of Money G1
- *H Using Financial Calculators H1
- *I Standards of Ethical Conduct for Management Accountants I1

^{*}Available at the book's companion website, www.wiley.com/college/weygandt.

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REAL-WORLD CONTEXT

Real-world companies and business situations give you glimpses

Feature Stories introduce chapter topics in fun ways using real-world companies that are engaging.

Issues that affect today's business world are highlighted in the textbook.



Time Warner completed a spin-off of AOL after years of trying to integrate the two companies. One

analyst called the failed deal "a nine-year adventure akin to a marathon through mud."

Insight Boxes frame real-world company issues through international, ethical, and other perspectives.

ACCOUNTING ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION usand Millionaires!



Source " stanus updane i on kichi kacabook Hosmion to Crumo 1,7000 Adillionares Among Companys kar and Rio, " Daily Adal Reporter (February 1, 2012).

Why did Mark Zuckerberg, the CEO and founder of Facebook, delay taking his company's theres public through an initial public offering (IPO)? (See page 642.)

Real-World Focus

facebook

BYP22-4 The Coca-Cola Company hardly needs an introduction. A line taken from the cover of a recent annual report says it all: If you measured time in servings of Coca-Cola, "a billion Coca-Cola's ago was yesterday moming." On average, every U.S. citized rinks 368 Source servings of Coca-Cola products each year. Coca-Cola's primary line of business is the making and selling of syrup to bottlers. These bottlers then sell the finished bottles and cans of Coca-Cola to the consumer. In the annual report of Coca-Cola, the information shown below was provided.

THE COCA-COLA COMPANY

Management Discussion

Our gross margin declined to 61 percent this year from 62 percent in the prior year, primarily due to costs for materials such as sweeteners and packaging.

The increases [in selling expenses] in the last two years were primarily due to higher marketing expenditures in support of our Company's volume growth.

ANATOMY OF A FRAUD

Lawrence Fairbanks, the assistant vice-chancellor of communications at Aesop University, was allowed to make purchases of under \$2,500 for his department without external approval. Unfortunately, he also sometimes bought items for himself, such as expensive antiques and other collectibles. How did he do it? He replaced the vendor invoices he received with fake vendor invoices that he created. The fake invoices had descriptions that were more consistent with the communications department's purchases. He submitted these fake invoices to the accounting department as the basis for their journal entries and to the accounts payable department as the basis for payment.

Total take: \$475,000

THE MISSING CONTROL

Segregation of duties. The university had not properly segregated related purchasing activities. Lawrence was ordering items, receiving the items, and receiving the invoice. By receiving the invoice, he had control over the documents that were used to account for the purchase and thus was able to substitute a fake invoice.

Source: Adapted from Wells, Fraud Casebook (2007), pp. 3-15.

Financial Reporting and Analysis

Financial Reporting Problem: Apple Inc.

BYP1-1 The actual financial statements of Apple Inc. for 2011, are presented in Appendix A (at the



10. most agree that there is a need for one set of international accounting standards. Here is why: Multinational corporations. Today's companies view the entire world a their market, For case ple, Coas Cola, Innel, and McDonalds generate more than 50% of their sales counside the Unit States.
States, and marker foreign companies, such as Toyota, Needle, and Suny, find their largest marker be the United States.
Mergers and exopositions. The mergers between Fluid Chysder and Vockfore/Mannermann suggest that we will see even more such business combinations of companies from different countrie in the future.

seelit

CONTENT FOR ALL LEARNING STYLES

In addition to a textbook consistently reviewed as very readable, over 50% of the textbook provides visual presentations and interpretations of content.

Equation Analysis Illustrations visually walk you through the steps of journal transactions.

A

+2,000

Cash Flows +2,000 Basic
Analysis

The expense Insurance Expense is increased \$50, and the asset
Prepaid Insurance is decreased \$50.

Equation
Analysis

(2) Assets
Prepaid Insurance
-\$50 = Liabilities * Owner's Equity
Insurance Expense
-\$50

Debits-Credit
Analysis

Debits-Credit Analysis

Oct. 31 | Insurance Expense expenses: debit Insurance Expense \$50.

Credits decrease assets: credit Prepaid Insurance Expense \$50.

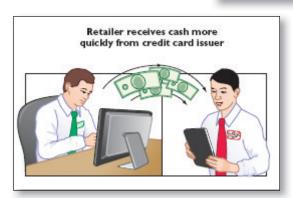
Oct. 31 | Insurance Expense | 50 | 50

Solution | 50 | 50

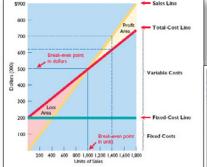
The expense Insurance Expense | 50 | 50

The expense Insurance Expe

Cash Flow Analyses visually summarize the effects of transactions on cash flows.



Infographics reinforce important textual concepts. All infographics were revised in the Eleventh Edition.



Illustrations are clearly identified and often present data in a real-world format.

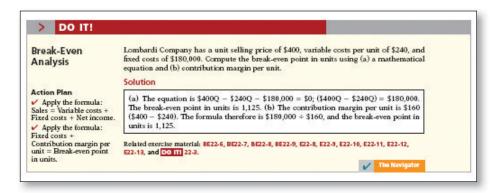




do!it

KNOW THE FUNDAMENTALS

Knowing the fundamentals of accounting will help you understand what is happening in all areas of a business. **DO IT!** exercises throughout the textbook will help you practice your understanding of accounting.

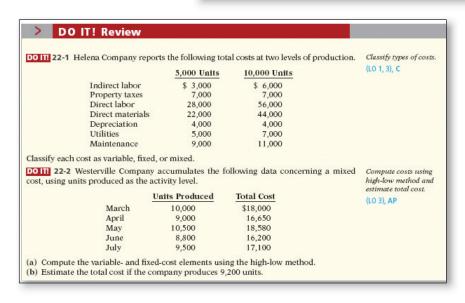


Clear **DO IT! exercises** in the textbook narrative provide step-by-step applications of a concept at the precise moment you acquire the knowledge. Each **DO IT!** in the textbook narrative includes a solution, an Action Plan, and a path of related homework exercises.

Comprehensive

DO IT! 's at the end of each chapter apply the **DO IT!** exercises and address **multiple** topics.





End-of-Chapter DO IT! exercises provide further practice with alternate version

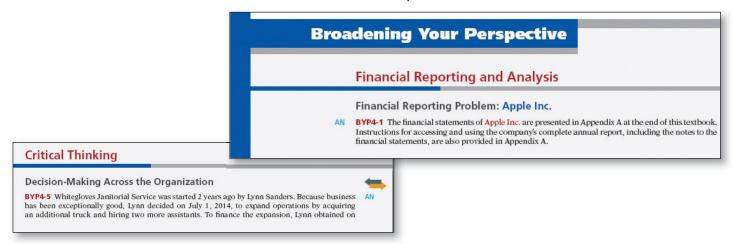
practice with alternate versions of the in-chapter **DO IT!** exercises.

detlit

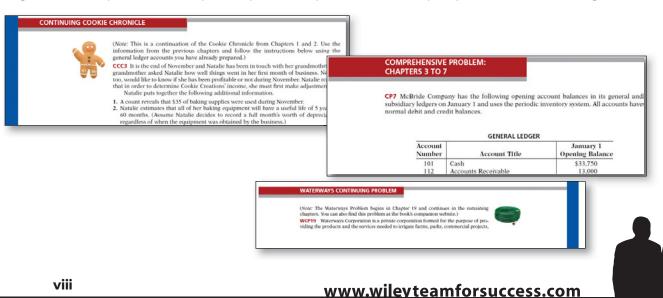
IMPROVE DECISION-MAKING SKILLS

As an employee, manager, or even a director of your own personal finances, you will make better decisions by learning how to analyze and solve business problems using materials provided at the end of each chapter.

Broadening Your Perspective questions help you pull together concepts from a particular chapter and apply them to real-world business situations. Critical thinking, communication, ethics, and other questions are included in this section at the end of each textbook chapter.



Continuing Cookie Chronicle, Waterways Continuing Problem, and Comprehensive Problems pull together concepts from multiple chapters and provide a macro perspective of accounting in action.



Contents

Chapter 1

Accounting in Action 2

Feature Story: Knowing the Numbers 2

What Is Accounting? 4

Three Activities 4

Who Uses Accounting Data? 5

The Building Blocks of Accounting 7

Ethics in Financial Reporting 7

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles 8

Measurement Principles 9

Assumptions 10

The Basic Accounting Equation 12

Assets 13

Liabilities 13

Owner's Equity 13

Using the Accounting Equation 15

Transaction Analysis 15

Summary of Transactions 20

Financial Statements 21

Income Statement 23

Owner's Equity Statement 23

Balance Sheet 24

Statement of Cash Flows 24

APPENDIX 1A Accounting Career Opportunities 29

Public Accounting 29

Private Accounting 30

Governmental Accounting 30

Forensic Accounting 30

"Show Me the Money" 30

A Look at IFRS 48

Chapter 2

The Recording Process 52

Feature Story: Accidents Happen 52

The Account 54

Debits and Credits 54

Summary of Debit/Credit Rules 58

Steps in the Recording Process 58

The Journal 59

The Ledger 62

The Recording Process Illustrated 65

Summary Illustration of Journalizing and

Posting 71

The Trial Balance 72

Limitations of a Trial Balance 73

Locating Errors 74

Use of Dollar Signs 74

A Look at IFRS 96

Chapter 3

Adjusting the Accounts 98

Feature Story: Keeping Track of Groupons 98

Timing Issues 100

Fiscal and Calendar Years 100

Accrual- vs. Cash-Basis Accounting 100

Recognizing Revenues and Expenses 100

The Basics of Adjusting Entries 102

Types of Adjusting Entries 103

Adjusting Entries for Deferrals 104

Adjusting Entries for Accruals 110

Summary of Basic Relationships 116

The Adjusted Trial Balance and Financial Statements 119

Preparing the Adjusted Trial Balance 119

Preparing Financial Statements 119

APPENDIX 3A Alternative Treatment of Prepaid

Expenses and Unearned Revenues 124

Prepaid Expenses 125

Unearned Revenues 126

Summary of Additional Adjustment

Relationships 127

A Look at IFRS 157

Chapter 4

Completing the Accounting Cycle 160

Feature Story: Everyone Likes to Win 160

Using a Worksheet 162

Steps in Preparing a Worksheet 163

Preparing Financial Statements from

a Worksheet 165

Preparing Adjusting Entries from a

Worksheet 167

Closing the Books 167

Preparing Closing Entries 168

Posting Closing Entries 170

Preparing a Post-Closing Trial Balance 172

Summary of the Accounting Cycle 174

Reversing Entries—An Optional Step 175

Correcting Entries—An Avoidable Step 176

The Classified Balance Sheet 177

Current Assets 178

Long-Term Investments 179

Property, Plant, and Equipment 180

Intangible Assets 180

Current Liabilities 182

Long-Term Liabilities 183

Owner's Equity 183

APPENDIX 4A Reversing Entries 188

Reversing Entries Example 188
A Look at IFRS 212

Chapter 5

Accounting for Merchandising Operations 216

Feature Story: Buy Now, Vote Later 216

Merchandising Operations 218

Operating Cycles 218 Flow of Costs 219

Recording Purchases of Merchandise 221

Freight Costs 222

Purchase Returns and Allowances 223

Purchase Discounts 224

Summary of Purchasing Transactions 225

Recording Sales of Merchandise 226

Sales Returns and Allowances 227 Sales Discounts 228

Completing the Accounting Cycle 230

Adjusting Entries 230 Closing Entries 230

Summary of Merchandising Entries 231

Forms of Financial Statements 232

Multiple-Step Income Statement 232 Single-Step Income Statement 236 Classified Balance Sheet 236

APPENDIX 5A Worksheet for a Merchandising

Company—Perpetual Inventory 240

Using a Worksheet 240

APPENDIX 5B Periodic Inventory System 241

Determining Cost of Goods Sold Under a Periodic System 242 Recording Merchandise Transactions 243 Recording Purchases of Merchandise 243 Recording Sales of Merchandise 244 Journalizing and Posting Closing Entries 245 Using a Worksheet 246

A Look at IFRS 271

Chapter 6

Inventories 274

Feature Story: "Where Is That Spare Bulldozer Blade?" 274

Classifying and Determining Inventory 276

Classifying Inventory 276

Determining Inventory Quantities 277

Inventory Costing 280

Specific Identification 281
Cost Flow Assumptions 281
Financial Statement and Tax Effects of Cost
Flow Methods 286

Using Inventory Cost Flow Methods Consistently 288 Lower-of-Cost-or-Market 289

Inventory Errors 290

Income Statement Effects 290 Balance Sheet Effects 291

Statement Presentation and Analysis 292

Presentation 292 Analysis 293

APPENDIX 6A Inventory Cost Flow Methods in

Perpetual Inventory Systems 297

First-In, First-Out (FIFO) 297 Last-In, First-Out (LIFO) 298 Average-Cost 298

APPENDIX 6B Estimating Inventories 300

Gross Profit Method 301 Retail Inventory Method 302

A Look at IFRS 324

Chapter 7

Accounting Information Systems 328

Feature Story: QuickBooks® Helps This Retailer Sell Guitars 328

Basic Concepts of Accounting Information Systems 330

Computerized Accounting Systems 330 Manual Accounting Systems 332

Subsidiary Ledgers 332

Subsidiary Ledger Example 333 Advantages of Subsidiary Ledgers 334

Special Journals 335

Sales Journal 336
Cash Receipts Journal 339
Purchases Journal 342
Cash Payments Journal 344
Effects of Special Journals on the General
Journal 347
A Look at IFRS 371

Chapter 8

Fraud, Internal Control, and Cash 374

Feature Story: Minding the Money in Moose Jaw 374

Fraud and Internal Control 376

Fraud 376
The Sarbanes-Oxley Act 376
Internal Control 377
Principles of Internal Control Activities 378
Limitations of Internal Control 384

Cash Controls 386

Cash Receipts Controls 386 Cash Disbursements Controls 389 Petty Cash Fund 390

Control Features: Use of a Bank 394

Making Bank Deposits 394 Writing Checks 394

Bank Statements 395

Reconciling the Bank Account 397

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) System 401

Reporting Cash 402

Cash Equivalents 402 Restricted Cash 403

A Look at IFRS 425

Chapter 9

Accounting for Receivables 428

Feature Story: A Dose of Careful Management Keeps Receivables Healthy 428

Types of Receivables 430 Accounts Receivable 430

Recognizing Accounts Receivable 431 Valuing Accounts Receivable 432 Disposing of Accounts Receivable 438

Notes Receivable 441

Determining the Maturity Date 442 Computing Interest 443 Recognizing Notes Receivable 443 Valuing Notes Receivable 443 Disposing of Notes Receivable 444

Statement Presentation and Analysis 447

Presentation 447 Analysis 447 A Look at IFRS 468

Chapter 10

Plant Assets, Natural Resources, and Intangible Assets 470

Feature Story: How Much for a Ride to the Beach? 470

Plant Assets 472

Determining the Cost of Plant Assets 472 Depreciation 475 Expenditures During Useful Life 483 Plant Assets Disposals 484

Natural Resources 486

Depletion 487 Presentation 487

Intangible Assets 488

Accounting for Intangible Assets 489 Research and Development Costs 491

Statement Presentation and Analysis 492

Presentation 492 Analysis 493

APPENDIX 10A Exchange of Plant Assets 497

Loss Treatment 497 Gain Treatment 498 A Look at IFRS 517

Chapter 11

Current Liabilities and Payroll Accounting 522

Feature Story: Financing His Dreams 522

Current Liabilities 524

Notes Payable 524
Sales Taxes Payable 525
Unearned Revenues 526
Current Maturities of Long-Ter

Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt 526 Statement Presentation and Analysis 527

Contingent Liabilities 529

Recording a Contingent Liability 529
Disclosure of Contingent Liabilities 530

Payroll Accounting 532

Determining the Payroll 532 Recording the Payroll 535 Employer Payroll Taxes 539 Filing and Remitting Payroll Taxes 541 Internal Control for Payroll 542

APPENDIX 11A Additional Fringe Benefits 545

Paid Absences 545
Postretirement Benefits 546
A Look at IFRS 564

Chapter 12

Accounting for Partnerships 566

Feature Story: From Trials to the Top Ten 566

Partnership Form of Organization 568

Characteristics of Partnerships 568
Organizations with Partnership Characteristics 569
Advantages and Disadvantages of
Partnerships 571

The Partnership Agreement 571

Basic Partnership Accounting 572

Forming a Partnership 572
Dividing Net Income or Net Loss 574
Partnership Financial Statements 576

Liquidation of a Partnership 578

No Capital Deficiency 579 Capital Deficiency 581

APPENDIX 12A Admission and Withdrawal of

Partners 585

Admission of a Partner 585 Withdrawal of a Partner 589

Chapter 13

Corporations: Organization and Capital Stock Transactions 606

Feature Story: What's Cooking? 606

The Corporate Form of Organization 608 Characteristics of a Corporation 608 Forming a Corporation 610

Stockholder Rights 612 Stock Issue Considerations 612 Corporate Capital 615

Accounting for Issues of Common Stock 617

Issuing Par Value Common Stock for Cash 618 Issuing No-Par Common Stock for Cash 618 Issuing Common Stock for Services or Noncash Assets 619

Accounting for Treasury Stock 620

Purchase of Treasury Stock 621 Disposal of Treasury Stock 622

Accounting for Preferred Stock 624

Dividend Preferences 625 Liquidation Preference 625

Statement Presentation 626

A Look at IFRS 644

Chapter 14

Corporations: Dividends, Retained Earnings, and Income Reporting 648

Feature Story: Owning a Piece of the Action 648

Dividends 650

Cash Dividends 650 Stock Dividends 654 Stock Splits 656

Retained Earnings 658

Retained Earnings Restrictions 658 Prior Period Adjustments 659 Retained Earnings Statement 660

Statement Presentation and Analysis 661

Presentation 661
Analysis 662
Income Statement Presentation 663
Income Statement Analysis 663
A Look at IFRS 682

Chapter 15

Long-Term Liabilities 684

Feature Story: And Then There Were Two 684

Bond Basics 686

Types of Bonds 687 Issuing Procedures 687 Determining the Market Price of a Bond 688

Accounting for Bond Issues 690

Issuing Bonds at Face Value 690 Discount or Premium on Bonds 691 Issuing Bonds at a Discount 692 Issuing Bonds at a Premium 693

Accounting for Bond Redemptions 694

Redeeming Bonds at Maturity 695 Redeeming Bonds before Maturity 695 Converting Bonds into Common Stock 695

Accounting for Other Long-Term Liabilities 696

Long-Term Notes Payable 696 Lease Liabilities 699

Statement Presentation and Analysis 700

Presentation 700 Analysis 701

APPENDIX 15A Present Value Concepts

Related to Bond Pricing 705

Present Value of a Single Amount 706
Present Value of Interest Payments
(Annuities) 707

Time Periods and Discounting 709

Computing the Present Value of a Bond 709

APPENDIX 15B Effective-Interest Method of

Bond Amortization 711

Amortizing Bond Discount 711 Amortizing Bond Premium 713

APPENDIX 15C Straight-Line Amortization 715

Amortizing Bond Discount 715 Amortizing Bond Premium 716 A Look at IFRS 735

Chapter 16

Investments 738

Feature Story: "Is There Anything Else We Can Buy?" 738

Why Corporations Invest 740

Accounting for Debt Investments 741

Recording Acquisition of Bonds 741 Recording Bond Interest 741 Recording Sale of Bonds 742

Accounting for Stock Investments 743

Holdings of Less than 20% 743 Holdings Between 20% and 50% 743 Holdings of More than 50% 743

Valuing and Reporting Investments 748

Categories of Securities 748
Balance Sheet Presentation 752
Presentation of Realized and Unrealized
Gain or Loss 753
Classified Balance Sheet 754

A Look at IFRS 773

Chapter 17

Statement of Cash Flows 776

Feature Story: Got Cash? 776

The Statement of Cash Flows: Usefulness and Format 778

Usefulness of the Statement of Cash Flows 778 Classification of Cash Flows 778 Significant Noncash Activities 780 Format of the Statement of Cash Flows 780 Preparing the Statement of Cash Flows 782 Indirect and Direct Methods 782

Preparing the Statement of Cash Flows—Indirect Method 783

Step 1: Operating Activities 784

Summary of Conversion to Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities—Indirect Method 788

Step 2: Investing and Financing Activities 789

Step 3: Net Change in Cash 790

Using Cash Flows to Evaluate a Company 793

Free Cash Flow 793

APPENDIX 17A Statement of Cash Flows—Direct Method 798

Step 1: Operating Activities 799

Step 2: Investing and Financing Activities 803

Step 3: Net Change in Cash 805

APPENDIX 17B Using a Worksheet to Prepare

the Statement of Cash Flows—Indirect Method 806

Preparing the Worksheet 807

A Look at IFRS 837

Chapter 18

Financial Statement Analysis 840

Feature Story: It Pays to Be Patient 840

Basics of Financial Statement Analysis 842

Need for Comparative Analysis 842

Tools of Analysis 842

Horizontal Analysis 843

Balance Sheet 844

Income Statement 844

Retained Earnings Statement 845

Vertical Analysis 846

Balance Sheet 846

Income Statement 847

Ratio Analysis 848

Liquidity Ratios 850

Profitability Ratios 853

Solvency Ratios 857

Summary of Ratios 858

Earning Power and Irregular Items 861

Discontinued Operations 861

Extraordinary Items 862

Changes in Accounting Principle 863

Comprehensive Income 864

Quality of Earnings 865

Alternative Accounting Methods 865

Pro Forma Income 865

Improper Recognition 866

A Look at IFRS 889

Chapter 19

Managerial Accounting 892

Feature Story: Just Add Water . . . and Paddle 892

Managerial Accounting Basics 894

Comparing Managerial and Financial Accounting 894

Management Functions 894 Organizational Structure 896 Business Ethics 897

Managerial Cost Concepts 899

Manufacturing Costs 899

Product versus Period Costs 901

Manufacturing Costs in Financial Statements 902

Income Statement 902

Cost of Goods Manufactured 903

Cost of Goods Manufactured Schedule 904

Balance Sheet 905

Cost Concepts—A Review 906

Product Costing for Service Industries 908

Managerial Accounting Today 909

Focus on the Value Chain 909

Balanced Scorecard 910

Corporate Social Responsibility 911

Chapter 20

Job Order Costing 938

Feature Story: She Succeeds Where Others Have Failed 938

Cost Accounting Systems 940

Job Order Cost System 940 Process Cost System 940

Job Order Cost Flow 941

Accumulating Manufacturing Costs 942 Assigning Manufacturing Costs to Work in Process 944

Manufacturing Overhead Costs 948

Assigning Costs to Finished Goods 952

Assigning Costs to Cost of Goods Sold 953

Summary of Job Order Cost Flows 954

Job Order Costing for Service Companies 955 Advantages and Disadvantages of Job Order Costing 957

Reporting Job Cost Data 958

Under- or Overapplied Manufacturing Overhead 958

Chapter 21

Process Costing 982

Feature Story: Ben & Jerry's Tracks Its Mix-Ups 982

The Nature of Process Cost Systems 984

Uses of Process Cost Systems 984

Process Costing for Service Companies 985

Similarities and Differences Between Job Order

Cost and Process Cost Systems 985

Process Cost Flow 987

Assigning Manufacturing Costs—Journal Entries 987

Equivalent Units 990

Weighted-Average Method 990 Refinements on the Weighted-Average Method 991

Production Cost Report 993

Compute the Physical Unit Flow (Step 1) 994 Compute Equivalent Units of Production (Step 2) 994

Compute Unit Production Costs (Step 3) 995 Prepare a Cost Reconciliation Schedule (Step 4) 995

Preparing the Production Cost Report 996 Costing Systems—Final Comments 998

Contemporary Developments 998

Just-in-Time Processing 998 Activity-Based Costing 1000

APPENDIX 21A Example of Traditional Costing

versus Activity-Based Costing 1006

Production and Cost Data 1006 Unit Costs Under Traditional Costing 1006 Unit Costs Under ABC 1006 Comparing Unit Costs 1007 Benefits of ABC 1008 Limitations of ABC 1008

Chapter 22

Cost-Volume-Profit 1030

Feature Story: Don't Worry—Just Get Big 1030

Cost Behavior Analysis 1032

Variable Costs 1032 Fixed Costs 1033 Relevant Range 1034 Mixed Costs 1035

Importance of Identifying Variable and Fixed Costs 1039

Cost-Volume-Profit Analysis 1040

Basic Components 1040
CVP Income Statement 1040
Break-Even Analysis 1043
Target Net Income 1047
Margin of Safety 1048
CVP and Changes in the Business
Environment 1050
CVP Income Statement Revisited 1052

APPENDIX 22A Variable Costing 1055

Example Comparing Absorption Costing with Variable Costing 1055 Absorption Costing Example 1056 Variable Costing Example 1056 Rationale for Variable Costing 1058

Chapter 23

Budgetary Planning 1074

Feature Story: Was This the Next Amazon.com? Not Quite 1074

Budgeting Basics 1076

Budgeting and Accounting 1076 The Benefits of Budgeting 1076 Essentials of Effective Budgeting 1076 Length of the Budget Period 1077
The Budgeting Process 1077
Budgeting and Human Behavior 1078

Budgeting and Long-Range Planning 1079

The Master Budget 1079

Preparing the Operating Budgets 1081

Sales Budget 1081 Production Budget 1082 Direct Materials Budget 1084 Direct Labor Budget 1086

Manufacturing Overhead Budget 1087

Selling and Administrative Expense Budget 1087

Budgeted Income Statement 1089

Preparing the Financial Budgets 1090

Cash Budget 1090

Budgeted Balance Sheet 1093

Budgeting in Nonmanufacturing

Companies 1095

Merchandisers 1095 Service Enterprises 1096 Not-for-Profit Organizations 1096

Chapter 24

Budgetary Control and Responsibility Accounting 1122

Feature Story: Turning Trash into Treasure 1122

Budgetary Control 1124 Static Budget Reports 1125

Examples 1125

Uses and Limitations 1126

Flexible Budgets 1126

Why Flexible Budgets? 1127
Developing the Flexible Budget 1128
Flexible Budget—A Case Study 1130
Flexible Budget Reports 1133

Responsibility Accounting 1135

Controllable versus Noncontrollable Revenues and Costs 1137 Principles of Performance Evaluation 1137 Responsibility Reporting System 1139

Types of Responsibility Centers 1142

Responsibility Accounting for Cost Centers 1143
Responsibility Accounting for Profit Centers 1143
Responsibility Accounting for Investment
Centers 1145

Chapter 25

Standard Costs and Balanced Scorecard 1176

Feature Story: 80,000 Different Caffeinated Combinations 1176

The Need for Standards 1178

Distinguishing Between Standards and Budgets 1178 Why Standard Costs? 1178

Setting Standard Costs 1178

Ideal versus Normal Standards 1179 A Case Study 1180

Analyzing and Reporting Variances from Standards 1184

Direct Materials Variances 1185 Direct Labor Variances 1188 Manufacturing Overhead Variances 1190

Reporting Variances 1193

Statement Presentation of Variances 1193

Balanced Scorecard 1194

APPENDIX 25A Standard Cost Accounting System 1200

Journal Entries 1200 Ledger Accounts 1202

APPENDIX 25B A Closer Look at Overhead

Variances 1203

Overhead Controllable Variance 1203 Overhead Volume Variance 1204

Chapter 26

Incremental Analysis and Capital Budgeting 1226 Feature Story: Make It or Buy It? 1226

Incremental Analysis 1228

Management's Decision-Making Process 1228 Incremental Analysis Approach 1228 How Incremental Analysis Works 1229 Accept an Order at a Special Price 1230 Make or Buy 1232 Sell or Process Further 1234 Repair, Retain, or Replace Equipment 1235 Eliminate an Unprofitable Segment or Product 1236

Capital Budgeting 1240

Evaluation Process 1240 Annual Rate of Return 1241 Cash Payback 1243 Discounted Cash Flow 1245 Comparing Discounted Cash Flow Methods 1249

Appendix A

Specimen Financial Statements: Apple Inc. A1

Allocate Limited Resources 1239

Appendix B

Specimen Financial Statements: PepsiCo, Inc. B1

Appendix C

Specimen Financial Statements: The Coca-Cola Company C1

Appendix D

Specimen Financial Statements: Amazon.com, Inc. D1

Appendix E

Specimen Financial Statements: Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. E1

Appendix F

Specimen Financial Statements: Zetar plc F1

Appendix G

Time Value of Money G1

Nature of Interest G1

Simple Interest G1 Compound Interest G2

Present Value Variables G3 Present Value of a Single Amount G3 Present Value of an Annuity G5 Time Periods and Discounting G7 Computing the Present Value of a Long-Term Note or Bond G7

Appendix H (available online at www.wiley.com/college/weygandt)

Using Financial Calculators H1

Present Value of a Single Sum H1

Plus and Minus H2 Compounding Periods H2 Rounding H2

Present Value of an Annuity H2 **Useful Applications of the Financial** Calculator H3

> Auto Loan H3 Mortgage Loan Amount H3

Appendix I (available online at www.wiley.com/college/weygandt)

Standards of Ethical Conduct for Management Accountants 11

IMA Statement of Ethical Professional Practice I1

Principles 11 Standards 11 Resolution of Ethical Conflict 12

company index IN-1 subject index IN-3

Accounting in Action

Feature Story

The **Feature Story** helps you picture how the chapter topic relates to the real world of accounting and business. You will find references to the story throughout the chapter.

The Navigator

Knowing the Numbers

Many students who take this course do not plan to be accountants. If you are in that group, you might be thinking, "If I'm not going to be an accountant, why do I need to know accounting?" Well, consider this quote from Harold Geneen, the former chairman of IT&T: "To be good at your business, you have to know the numbers—cold." In business, accounting and financial statements are the means for communicating the numbers. If you don't know how to read financial statements, you can't really know your business.

Many businesses agree with this view. They see the value of their employees being able to read financial statements and understand how their actions affect the company's financial results. For example, consider Clif Bar & Company. The original Clif Bar® energy bar was created in 1990 after six months of experimentation by Gary Erickson and his mother in her kitchen. Today, the company has almost 300 employees and is considered one of the leading Landor's Breakaway Brands®.

Clif Bar is guided by what it calls its Five Aspirations— Sustaining Our Business, Our Brands, Our People, Our Community, and the Planet. Its website documents its efforts and accomplishments in these five areas. Just a few examples include the company's use of organic products to protect soil, water, and biodiversity; the "smart" solar array (the largest in North America), which provides nearly all the electrical needs for its 115,000-square foot building; and the incentives Clif Bar provides to employees to reduce their personal environmental impact, such as \$6,500 toward the purchase of an efficient car or \$1,000 per year for eco-friendly improvements toward their homes.

One of the company's proudest moments was the creation of an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) in 2010. This plan gives its employees 20% ownership of the company (Gary and his wife Kit own the other 80%). The ESOP also resulted in Clif Bar enacting an open-book management program, including the commitment to educate all employee-owners about its finances. Armed with this basic financial knowledge, employees are more aware of the financial impact of their actions, which leads to better decisions.

Many other companies have adopted this open-book management approach. Even in companies that do not practice

The Navigator is a learning system designed to prompt you to use the learning aids in the chapter and set priorities as you study.



The Navigator

Scan Learning Objectives

Read Feature Story

Read Preview

Read text and answer DO IT! p. 11

p. 21 p. 25 p. 14

■ Work Comprehensive **DO IT!** p. 26

■ Review Summary of Learning Objectives

Answer Self-Test Questions

Complete Assignments

■ Go to WileyPLUS for practice and tutorials



Read A Look at IFRS p. 48

Learning Objectives give you a framework for learning the specific concepts covered in the chapter.

Learning Objectives



After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

[1] Explain what accounting is.

[2] Identify the users and uses of accounting.

[3] Understand why ethics is a fundamental business concept.

[4] Explain generally accepted accounting principles.

[5] Explain the monetary unit assumption and the economic entity assumption.

[6] State the accounting equation, and define its components.

[7] Analyze the effects of business transactions on the accounting equation.

[8] Understand the four financial statements and how they are prepared.



open-book management, employers generally assume that managers in all areas of the company are "financially literate."

Taking this course will go a long way to making you financially literate. In this textbook, you will learn how to read and prepare financial statements, and how to use basic tools to evaluate financial results. Throughout this textbook, we attempt to increase your familiarity with financial reporting by providing numerous references, questions, and exercises that encourage you to explore the financial statements of well-known companies.

Preview of Chapter 1



The Navigator

The opening story about Clif Bar & Company highlights the importance of having good financial information and knowing how to use it to make effective business decisions. Whatever your pursuits or occupation, the need for financial information is inescapable. You cannot earn a living, spend money, buy on credit, make an investment, or pay taxes without receiving, using, or dispensing financial information. Good decision-making depends on good information.

The purpose of this chapter is to show you that accounting is the system used to provide useful financial information.

The content and organization of Chapter 1 are as follows.

The Preview describes and outlines the major topics and subtopics you will see in the chapter.

ACCOUNTING IN ACTION

What Is	The Building Blocks	The Basic Accounting	Using the	Financial Statements
Accounting?	of Accounting	Equation	Accounting Equation	
 Three activities Who uses accounting data 	 Ethics in financial reporting Generally accepted accounting principles Measurement principles Assumptions 	AssetsLiabilitiesOwner's equity	Transaction analysisSummary of transactions	 Income statement Owner's equity statement Balance sheet Statement of cash flows

What Is Accounting?

Explain what accounting is.

What consistently ranks as one of the top career opportunities in business? What frequently rates among the most popular majors on campus? What was the undergraduate degree chosen by Nike founder Phil Knight, Home Depot cofounder Arthur Blank, former acting director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Thomas Pickard, and numerous members of Congress? Accounting. Why did these people choose accounting? They wanted to understand what was happening financially to their organizations. Accounting is the financial information system that provides these insights. In short, to understand your organization, you have to know the numbers.

Accounting consists of three basic activities—it **identifies**, **records**, and **communicates** the economic events of an organization to interested users. Let's take a closer look at these three activities.

Three Activities

As a starting point to the accounting process, a company **identifies** the **economic events relevant to its business**. Examples of economic events are the sale of snack chips by PepsiCo, the provision of telephone services by AT&T, and the payment of wages by Ford Motor Company.

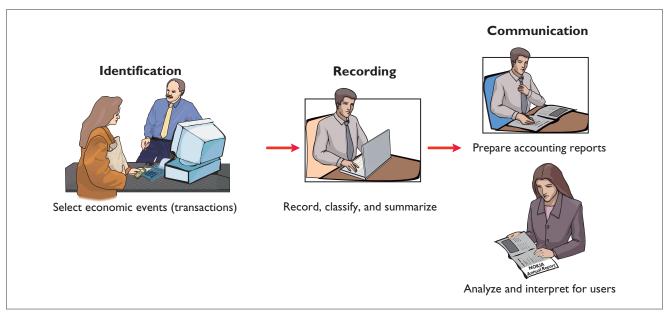
Once a company like PepsiCo identifies economic events, it **records** those events in order to provide a history of its financial activities. Recording consists of keeping a **systematic**, **chronological diary of events**, measured in dollars and cents. In recording, PepsiCo also classifies and summarizes economic events.

Finally, PepsiCo **communicates** the collected information to interested users by means of **accounting reports**. The most common of these reports are called **financial statements**. To make the reported financial information meaningful, PepsiCo reports the recorded data in a standardized way. It accumulates information resulting from similar transactions. For example, PepsiCo accumulates all sales transactions over a certain period of time and reports the data as one amount in the company's financial statements. Such data are said to be reported **in the aggregate**. By presenting the recorded data in the aggregate, the accounting process simplifies a multitude of transactions and makes a series of activities understandable and meaningful.

A vital element in communicating economic events is the accountant's ability to **analyze and interpret** the reported information. Analysis involves use of ratios, percentages, graphs, and charts to highlight significant financial trends and relationships. Interpretation involves **explaining the uses**, **meaning**, **and limitations of reported data**. Appendices A–E show the financial statements of Apple Inc., PepsiCo Inc., The Coca-Cola Company, Amazon.com, Inc., and Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., respectively. (In addition, in the *A Look at IFRS* section at the end of each chapter, the U.K. company Zetar plc is analyzed.) We refer to these statements at various places throughout the textbook. At this point, these financial statements probably strike you as complex and confusing. By the end of this course, you'll be surprised at your ability to understand, analyze, and interpret them.

Illustration 1-1 summarizes the activities of the accounting process.

¹The appendix to this chapter describes job opportunities for accounting majors and explains why accounting is such a popular major.



You should understand that the accounting process **includes** the bookkeeping function. **Bookkeeping** usually involves **only** the recording of economic events. It is therefore just one part of the accounting process. In total, accounting involves **the entire process of identifying, recording, and communicating economic events.**²

Who Uses Accounting Data

The financial information that users need depends upon the kinds of decisions they make. There are two broad groups of users of financial information: internal users and external users.

INTERNAL USERS

Internal users of accounting information are managers who plan, organize, and run the business. These include marketing managers, production supervisors, finance directors, and company officers. In running a business, internal users must answer many important questions, as shown in Illustration 1-2.

Illustration 1-1

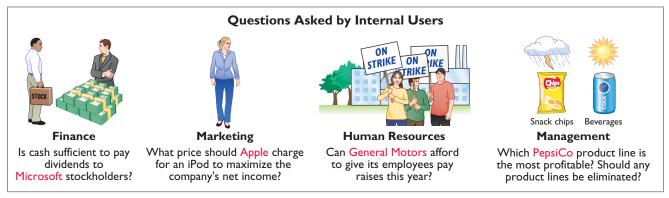
The activities of the accounting process

Essential terms are printed in blue when they first appear, and are defined in the end-of-chapter glossary.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

2

Identify the users and uses of accounting.



²The origins of accounting are generally attributed to the work of Luca Pacioli, an Italian Renaissance mathematician. Pacioli was a close friend and tutor to Leonardo da Vinci and a contemporary of Christopher Columbus. In his 1494 text *Summa de Arithmetica*, *Geometria*, *Proportione et Proportionalite*, Pacioli described a system to ensure that financial information was recorded efficiently and accurately.

Illustration 1-2Questions that internal users ask

To answer these and other questions, internal users need detailed information on a timely basis. **Managerial accounting** provides internal reports to help users make decisions about their companies. Examples are financial comparisons of operating alternatives, projections of income from new sales campaigns, and forecasts of cash needs for the next year.



ACCOUNTING ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION



The Scoop on Accounting

Accounting can serve as a useful recruiting tool even for the human resources department. Rhino Foods, located in Burlington, Vermont, is a manufacturer of specialty ice cream. Its corporate website includes the following:

"Wouldn't it be great to work where you were part of a team? Where your input and hard work made a difference? Where you weren't kept in the dark about what management was thinking? . . . Well—it's not a dream! It's the way we do business . . . Rhino Foods believes in family, honesty and open communication—we really care about and appreciate our employees—and it shows. Operating results are posted and monthly group meetings inform all employees about what's happening in the Company. Employees also share in the Company's profits, in addition to having an excellent comprehensive benefits package."

Source: www.rhinofoods.com/workforus/workforus.html.

?

What are the benefits to the company and to the employees of making the financial statements available to all employees? (See page 47.)

© Agnieszka Pastuszak-Maksim/ iStockphoto

Accounting Across the Organization boxes demonstrate applications of accounting information in various business functions.

EXTERNAL USERS

External users are individuals and organizations outside a company who want financial information about the company. The two most common types of external users are investors and creditors. **Investors** (owners) use accounting information to decide whether to buy, hold, or sell ownership shares of a company. **Creditors** (such as suppliers and bankers) use accounting information to evaluate the risks of granting credit or lending money. Illustration 1-3 shows some questions that investors and creditors may ask.

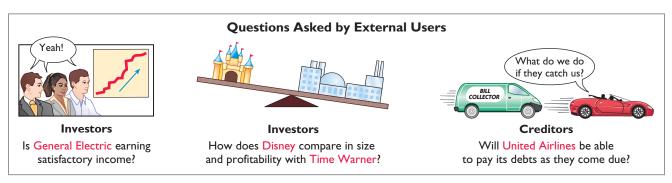


Illustration 1-3Questions that external users ask

Financial accounting answers these questions. It provides economic and financial information for investors, creditors, and other external users. The information

needs of external users vary considerably. **Taxing authorities**, such as the Internal Revenue Service, want to know whether the company complies with tax laws. **Regulatory agencies**, such as the Securities and Exchange Commission or the Federal Trade Commission, want to know whether the company is operating within prescribed rules. **Customers** are interested in whether a company like **General Motors** will continue to honor product warranties and support its product lines. **Labor unions** such as the **Major League Baseball Players Association** want to know whether the owners have the ability to pay increased wages and benefits.

The Building Blocks of Accounting

A doctor follows certain standards in treating a patient's illness. An architect follows certain standards in designing a building. An accountant follows certain standards in reporting financial information. For these standards to work, a fundamental business concept must be at work—ethical behavior.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

3

Understand why ethics is a fundamental business concept.

Ethics in Financial Reporting

People won't gamble in a casino if they think it is "rigged." Similarly, people won't play the stock market if they think stock prices are rigged. In recent years, the financial press has been full of articles about financial scandals at Enron, WorldCom, HealthSouth, AIG, and other companies. As the scandals came to light, mistrust of financial reporting in general grew. One article in the Wall Street Journal noted that "repeated disclosures about questionable accounting practices have bruised investors' faith in the reliability of earnings reports, which in turn has sent stock prices tumbling." Imagine trying to carry on a business or invest money if you could not depend on the financial statements to be honestly prepared. Information would have no credibility. There is no doubt that a sound, well-functioning economy depends on accurate and dependable financial reporting.

United States regulators and lawmakers were very concerned that the economy would suffer if investors lost confidence in corporate accounting because of unethical financial reporting. In response, Congress passed the **Sarbanes-Oxley Act (SOX)**. Its intent is to reduce unethical corporate behavior and decrease the likelihood of future corporate scandals. As a result of SOX, top management must now certify the accuracy of financial information. In addition, penalties for fraudulent financial activity are much more severe. Also, SOX increased the independence requirements of the outside auditors who review the accuracy of corporate financial statements and increased the oversight role of boards of directors.

The standards of conduct by which actions are judged as right or wrong, honest or dishonest, fair or not fair, are **ethics**. Effective financial reporting depends on sound ethical behavior. To sensitize you to ethical situations in business and to give you practice at solving ethical dilemmas, we address ethics in a number of ways in this textbook:

1. A number of the *Feature Stories* and other parts of the textbook discuss the central importance of ethical behavior to financial reporting.

Ethics Note

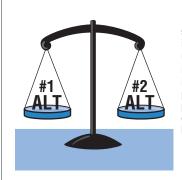


Circus-founder P.T. Barnum is alleged to have said, "Trust everyone, but cut the deck." What Sarbanes-Oxley does is to provide measures that (like cutting the deck of playing cards) help ensure that fraud will not occur.

Ethics Notes help sensitize you to some of the ethical issues in accounting.

- 2. Ethics Insight boxes and marginal Ethics Notes highlight ethics situations and issues in actual business settings.
- 3. Many of the People, Planet, and Profit Insight boxes focus on ethical issues that companies face in measuring and reporting social and environmental
- **4.** At the end of the chapter, an *Ethics Case* simulates a business situation and asks you to put yourself in the position of a decision-maker in that case.

When analyzing these various ethics cases, as well as experiences in your own life, it is useful to apply the three steps outlined in Illustration 1-4.



I. Recognize an ethical situation and the ethical issues involved.

Use your personal ethics to identify ethical situations and issues. Some businesses and professional organizations provide written codes of ethics for guidance in some business situations.

2. Identify and analyze the principal elements in the situation.

Identify the stakeholderspersons or groups who may be harmed or benefited. Ask the question: What are the responsibilities and obligations of the parties involved?

3. Identify the alternatives, and weigh the impact of each alternative on various stakeholders.

Select the most ethical alternative, considering all the consequences. Sometimes there will be one right answer. Other situations involve more than one right solution; these situations require an evaluation of each and a selection of the best alternative.

Illustration 1-4 Steps in analyzing ethics cases and situations

Insight boxes provide examples of business situations from various perspectives—ethics, investor, international, and corporate social responsibility. Guideline answers are provided near the end of the chapter.



Gemunu Amarasinghe/AP Photo

ETHICS INSIGHT

The Numbers Behind Not-for-Profit Organizations



Accounting plays an important role for a wide range of business organizations worldwide. Just as the integrity of the numbers matters for business, it matters at least as much at not-forprofit organizations. Proper control and reporting help ensure that money is used the way donors intended. Donors are less inclined to give to an organization if they think the organization is subject to waste or theft. The accounting challenges of some large international not-forprofits rival those of the world's largest businesses. For example, after the Haitian earthquake, the Haitian-born musician Wyclef Jean was criticized for the poor accounting controls in a relief fund that he founded. In response, he hired a new accountant and improved the transparency regarding money raised and spent.



What benefits does a sound accounting system provide to a not-for-profit organization? (See page 47.)

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Explain generally accepted accounting principles.

The accounting profession has developed standards that are generally accepted and universally practiced. This common set of standards is called **generally** accepted accounting principles (GAAP). These standards indicate how to report economic events.

The primary accounting standard-setting body in the United States is the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is the agency of the U.S. government that oversees U.S. financial markets and accounting standard-setting bodies. The SEC relies on the FASB to develop accounting standards, which public companies must follow. Many countries outside of the United States have adopted the accounting standards issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). These standards are called International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

As markets become more global, it is often desirable to compare the results of companies from different countries that report using different accounting standards. In order to increase comparability, in recent years the two standard-setting bodies have made efforts to reduce the differences between U.S. GAAP and IFRS. This process is referred to as **convergence**. As a result of these convergence efforts, it is likely that someday there will be a single set of high-quality accounting standards that are used by companies around the world. Because convergence is such an important issue, we highlight any major differences between GAAP and IFRS in *International Notes* (as shown in the margin here) and provide a more in-depth discussion in the *A Look at IRFS* section at the end of each chapter.

International Note



Over 100 countries use International Financial Reporting Standards (called IFRS). For example, all companies in the European Union follow international standards. The differences between U.S. and international standards are not generally significant.

International Notes highlight differences between U.S. and international accounting standards.

Measurement Principles

GAAP generally uses one of two measurement principles, the historical cost principle or the fair value principle. Selection of which principle to follow generally relates to trade-offs between relevance and faithful representation. **Relevance** means that financial information is capable of making a difference in a decision. **Faithful representation** means that the numbers and descriptions match what really existed or happened—they are factual.

HISTORICAL COST PRINCIPLE

The **historical cost principle** (or cost principle) dictates that companies record assets at their cost. This is true not only at the time the asset is purchased, but also over the time the asset is held. For example, if **Best Buy** purchases land for \$300,000, the company initially reports it in its accounting records at \$300,000. But what does Best Buy do if, by the end of the next year, the fair value of the land has increased to \$400,000? Under the historical cost principle, it continues to report the land at \$300,000.

FAIR VALUE PRINCIPLE

The **fair value principle** states that assets and liabilities should be reported at fair value (the price received to sell an asset or settle a liability). Fair value information may be more useful than historical cost for certain types of assets and liabilities. For example, certain investment securities are reported at fair value because market price information is usually readily available for these types of assets. In determining which measurement principle to use, companies weigh the factual nature of cost figures versus the relevance of fair value. In general, most companies choose to use cost. Only in situations where assets are actively traded, such as investment securities, do companies apply the fair value principle extensively.

Helpful Hint Relevance and faithful representation are two primary qualities that make accounting information useful for decision-making.

Helpful Hints further clarify concepts being discussed.