

A word from the experts

What makes a good auditor?

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Within Unity™ Lab Services, we use a volunteer audit team to help us run our internal audit program often using a remote approach. I get asked by managers what makes a good auditor because we have a program where people can be nominated to become a volunteer auditor as a development opportunity if they want audit experience. There are so many different skill sets and behavioral traits that make people strong auditors. In no particular order, I have thought long and hard about the mix and profile on our own internal audit team and here are my top ten auditor qualities:

1. Keen interest to learn new things and new processes outside of their area of expertise.
2. Comfortable talking to people. Not all auditors are extroverted, but you do need to be comfortable asking questions and getting some pushback.
3. Detailed oriented: This helps with reviewing granular levels within a process.
4. Approachable: Auditors should not be intimidating, they need to make people feel comfortable.
5. Collaborative: Auditors should promote dialogue that helps problem solve issues as well as identify opportunities.
6. Inquisitive: This falls into the area of being able to look within a process, ask WHY and other probing questions to identify opportunities.
7. Strong report writing skills: People often miss this one. You need to be able to document what you observed, provide evidence and translate it into a way that the auditee can understand. Believe it or not, this is not an easy task.
8. Organized: Sometimes during an audit there are many different things to check and multiple conversation pathways, you have to stay organized to be able to document the key findings.
9. Strong communication skills
10. A problem solver: Use the agenda as a basis for your planning

Of course, there is no one employee that has all of these strengths. It is about identifying the strengths within each audit team member and leveraging those using a team approach as well as continuing to develop the other areas.

If you would like more information on our audit program please feel free to contact me at: kelly.huckabone@thermofisher.com.