

SAICA Dinner Speech
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- Good evening and welcome
- The Accounting profession often gets a bad rap. Bean counters, account ants, journal jugglers, number crunchers are some of the more colourful names for a profession that isn't considered particularly creative.
- There are some accountants who did indeed turn their back on the profession for a more 'creative' career – amongst them music legends Lionel Ritchie and Mick Jagger, and thriller writer John Grisham.
- Yet, accountants *are* creative - they have the power to change the world.
- Frank J Wilson is one such accountant. You may not immediately recognise his name, but you might recognise his story.
- Throughout the 1920s, mobster boss, Al Capone stayed one step ahead of the law, leaving a trail of 'business acquaintances' sleeping with the fishes. Everyone knew he was a crime boss – public enemy number one - but pinning him down? Getting him behind bars? Impossible. He had a mutually profitable relationship with the Mayor and the city's police. In broad daylight, seven rival gang members were gunned down in the Saint Valentine's Day massacre.
- Big Al had Chicago in the palm of his hand. Except for one thing – he wasn't paying his taxes.
- Frank J Wilson, an accountant by profession, worked for the US Treasury Department's Intelligence Unit. As a colleague noted, "he fears nothing that walks. He will sit quietly looking at books eighteen hours a day, seven days a week, forever, if he wants to find something in those books."
- From the time Wilson and his agents were put on the Capone case, they examined over two million documents to determine not only that Capone was making money, but where that money was.
- Even a contract taken out on Wilson's life didn't deter him.
- Capone was eventually sentenced to 11 years' imprisonment for tax evasion.
- Accounting succeeded where the law, the media, and the local authorities had failed. Frank J Wilson's extraordinary responsibility to his work, his team, his country, and his fellow law-abiding citizens is what drove his success.
- Investec is an organisation founded by accountants – change makers - like Frank J Wilson
- We're delighted to be sponsoring this SAICA event, and in particular welcoming the recently qualified CAs to this often under-regarded profession
- At Investec, we partner with you through each life and career stage so that we can adapt to your needs. For young professionals, at the beginning of your CA career, our partnership gives access and guidance to set you ahead of the curve while you establish your careers
- By partnering with your specialist Private Banker and Investment Manager, we'll help you create, grow, preserve and protect your wealth throughout your life
- Our One Place approach to wealth creation and preservation means our clients can bank and invest through One Place – locally and internationally

- At Investec, we build leadership within our own organisation – with expert and empowered bankers who understand the needs and nuances of our client base, with an offering that is tailored, personal, and distinctive
- In out of the ordinary times, we invite you to partner with Out of the Ordinary
- Accountants speak the language of business
- Accountancy has produced and continues to produce SA's future business leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs
- Accountants, such as yourselves, have the power to succeed where ordinary thinking has failed
- 2019's been a rollercoaster year. A stagnant economy, load shedding, state capture enquiries, fuel price and rate hikes, land expropriation, increase in the cost of living, rise in unemployment, and the national elections.
- Accounting can help grow business, cut costs, manage resources and provide financial leadership from micro-business to large organisations. There is not one aspect of ordinary South Africans' lives that cannot be improved by accountancy. Our success is ultimately their success.
- When all hope was lost, a seemingly unstoppable criminal mob boss was undone by bookkeeping.
- In out of the ordinary times, think out of the ordinary
- Thank you. Please enjoy the event.