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Forever a learning organization, GE embedded ways of learning into both structures and processes. One of those structures was the GE Corporate Audit Staff (aka CAS).

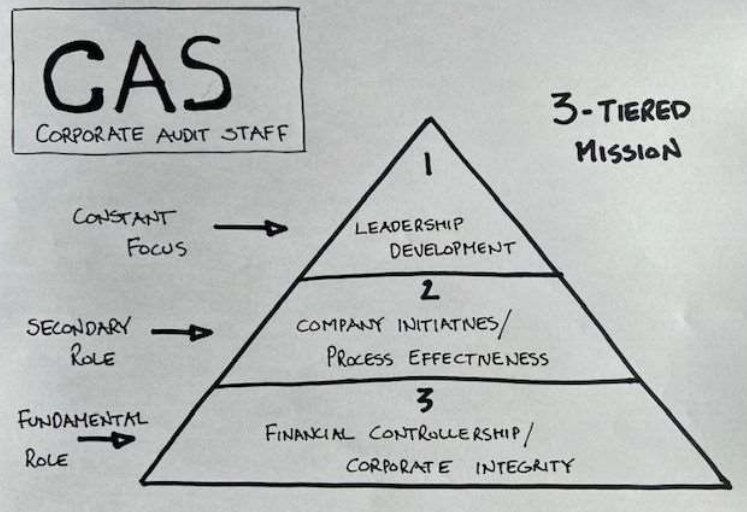
As a structure, CAS brought together a relentless pursuit of continuous improvement with a focus on the development of top talent. From its origin in the 1950s, CAS was created as a management training program. It applied the principles of accelerated development with "in situ" learning, addressing business problems in real time, and then transferring that learning quickly across the company.

The Audit Staff acted very much like an internal consulting organization—another nod to the effort to build self-sufficiency for change. Auditors would typically spend two to five years on the Audit Staff, going through intensive rotations focused on important business problems. They would then be subjected to rigorous performance review (and development) cycles to determine whether they would continue on CAS or move back into the business. While it was essentially an "up or out" organization, careers were always accelerated by time spent on CAS. As Jack Welch once remarked, "The Corporate Audit Staff is the best training program in the history of corporate America."

While CAS reported in to the Finance function, the Audit Staff minted leaders far beyond Finance, and far beyond the pipelines of CFOs CAS was known for developing. The list of executives (and CEOs, in particular) inside and outside GE, developed on CAS, is significant.

The Audit Staff most likely became an engine for talent development under GE President (and later, CEO) Ralph Cordiner as part of his effort to decentralize the organization. It continued through 2020 when Larry Culp reassigned corporate resources to the businesses.

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Adrienne Evatt (She/Her) • 1st

3mo ...

Business & Life Coach - Adrienne Evatt Coaching (Recipe for Life) Author of The Extraordinary Planner Collection. Founder, Owner and CEO - Urban Dreamer Farm & Vineyard

The audit staff was an incredible experience for me! Nothing shaped me as a leader more!

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Michael Shin • 1st

3mo ...

CPO | Chief Supply Chain Officer | VP and Enterprise Head of Global Procurement and Supply Chain

During my tenure at CAS: Keith Sherin promoted to CFO of GE replacing DDD Dennis Dammerman. Keith recruited me. I worked for Bob Swan former CEO of Intel. We were under Dave Calhoun VP CAS. Dave is CEO of Boeing. So many of my CAS classmates went on to a great Corp America C-Suite roles. I believe Jack is correct, CAS was best training ground for Corp Am ...see more

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Jim Studer • 3rd+

3mo ...

CIO C-Suite Survival ✓Best IT Staff ✓Mastering the IT Budget ✓IT Leading the C-Suite

Michael Shin: Before Jack was all-in on the CAS he (as always) loudly asked why anyone would want to reconcile bank accounts for 4 years!

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Michael Cazer • 2nd

3mo ...

Chief Executive Officer at American Magic and Continuum Ventures

I am grateful for the opportunities that GE gave me, especially its Corporate Audit Staff. The most impactful part was the people I worked with there. A talented team striving to add value and grow.

Like · 10 | Reply



Nigel Brazier • 2nd

3mo ...

Senior Finance Executive and Executive Consultant

My CAS experience and exposure continues to serve me today - unparalleled opportunities to learn and add value were put to my peers and I on a constant basis.

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Nigel Brazier • 2nd

3mo ...

Senior Finance Executive and Executive Consultant

Bob Gast thanks Bob!

Like | Reply



William Strittmatter • 2nd

3mo ...

Retired from GE Capital

One of my early managers was a CAS alum. I recall him talking about the way to get ahead on the audit staff was to find bad stuff and get people fired for it. Over time, that seemed to morph into who could "add value" and be "partners" with businesses. Interestingly, as CAS seemingly migrated from purely an internal audit function to more of a development progr: ...see more

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Paolo Simonato • 2nd

3mo ...

Partner, Energy Transition

Public accountants did not exactly shine after getting more focused... Finding bad stuff sadly does not make any clients happy! The Company was early in IT (from the 70s) and a number of fields that would have, could have kept it on top of the world ...but it focused elsewhere. I would not fault CAS for that and we all have to t: ...see more

Like | Reply



Ross Bratlee • 2nd

3mo ***

Interim CFO/Board Member/Financial and Transformation Executive/Coach

Without question, CAS was the best professional investment I ever made in my career. Those I worked for, with and around were outstanding colleagues, leaders and friends. I am very proud to have had the opportunity with CAS.

Like · 15 | Reply



Afzal Modak • 2nd

3mo ***

Investment Management & Governance | Focus Emerging Markets

With two technical degrees (Engineering & Computer Science), getting invited to join CAS (seemingly) in an Accounting & Finance role was confusing. However, I trusted the senior leadership that recommended me and decided to give it a try. It turned out to be easily the best professional decision of my life. In CAS, I learned how to (1) identify, understand ...see more

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Manoj Sharan • 3rd+

3mo ***

Managing Director

Not only learn Accounting & Finance, Afzal. You are amongst the best!!

Like · 1 | Reply



Jim Studer • 3rd+

3mo (edited) ***

CIO C-Suite Survival ✓Best IT Staff ✓Mastering the IT Budget ✓IT Leading the C-Suite

**** Well, OK. ****

This CAS discussion is tightly focused on the good stuff, but worklife isn't made up of only nice straight lines ending in career heaven.

For every positive point discussed here there is a matching negative point in both work-life and homelife. ...see more

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Robert Leach • 3rd+

3mo ***

IT Strategic Consultant, Adjunct Professor

My time at CAS started under Reginal Jones and continued with Jack Welch. CAS was a fast-track route for upward career mobility. But when I joined CAS it was widely known that you were expected to sacrifice everything else including relationships such as with your spouse. I am proud of the fact that I still have the same spouse after 47-y ...see more

Like · 3 | Reply



Sheel Kapoor • 2nd

3mo (edited) ***

President & CEO, Advisor, Consultant, Mentor, seasoned result oriented business/P&L Leader. Executive Director/ Board Member with Manufacturing, Sales/Marketing, Lean Six Sigma, Productivity, Restructuring experience.

Clearly the turning point in my career, CAS was a platform of leadership development. It created the confidence that one could go into uncharted territories, and out of comfort zone, and yet create Impact. My journey from an engineer to CAS, leading operations, finance, quality and ultimately running businesses came from this belief - ...see more

Like · 6 | Reply



David Vu • 2nd

3mo ***

COO, Diagnostics Development Hub (DxD), Digital Health, Services, P&L Leader

CAS had it all: Finance, ops, strategy, multi-industry and international exposure. The program itself had a 100+ year history making it an institution in its own right. Hard to imagine that there will be anything like it again. I feel privileged to have been a part of it.

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