



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

BELARUS

FIRST PERSON Intern Becomes Chief Accountant

USAID-trained intern rises to chief accountant in 18 months



Pavel Vagero, 26, the chief accountant of one of Belarus's most promising enterprises at his company in Minsk.

The program “changed the way I saw accounting,” said Pavel Vagero. “It made accounting relevant not only for standard accounting needs, but for financial analysis as well. It became a problem-solving tool.”

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Only 26 years old, Pavel Vagero is the chief accountant of a promising company in Belarus, East European Parts. A few years back, he signed on for a summer accounting internship at the company, which makes supplies for top retail brands, to fulfill a university requirement. At that time, the company was growing rapidly and had a shortage of workers. The intern soon began shouldering more and more responsibilities. It quickly became apparent to him that the company's management had, as he put it, “very little familiarity” with solid accounting practices.

“As the company grew, it became increasingly important to draft clear, reliable financial reports,” recalls Vagero. “I had a lot to learn, and I wasn't sure if I could do it. Even with all my mistakes, the company supported me.” Pavel had gained the skills he needed thanks to a USAID-sponsored training, testing, and certification program known as Certified Accounting Practitioner.

By that time, the 110-employee limited liability company had developed a thriving joint venture with a Dutch firm. Expansion brought a number of challenges that could have overwhelmed the company: its workforce had tripled and foreign reporting and internal auditing processes were vastly more complex. In addition, there was the complicated issue of the growing enterprise's tax liabilities. Pavel stepped up to the challenge again and began to apply the international best practices he had learned at university. The Certified Accounting Practitioner program allowed him to integrate theory into practice, and gave him a chance to discuss problems with experts and fellow classmates.

Pavel is in the second phase of the Certified International Professional Accountant process. Once he receives his accreditation, he'll be one of just a handful of such accountants in Belarus. “I now feel a lot more confident,” he says. “My supervisors take my recommendations and comments seriously. I'm going to continue to deepen my knowledge of management and financial accounting, and find ways to apply it.”

Photo: USAID/Lina Kozina