

Preparing for Finance Interviews

Know Your Resume Inside Out!

- Be prepared to answer questions on EVERYTHING
- “Walk me through your resume” – pick out the 3 most important highlights first and then elaborate on the rest. Do NOT start at the top and read every line
- Do NOT embellish to give the impression you know more than you do!

Key Characteristics for Interview Success

- Genuine passion for the role, the industry, and the firm
- Know *what* your skills are, have multiple examples, and know how they would be useful in the role
- Get across who you are

How do I Ace This?

Important Aspects to Demonstrate

- 1) Solid academic performance
- 2) Ability to take on several demanding tasks at once
- 3) Commitment to & interest in the industry over time
- 4) Leadership qualities
- 5) Proven teamwork skills
- 6) Ability to take initiative

Why Did you Want to do Investment Banking Again?

- Some interviewees have no idea why they are applying to this industry. The interviewer will know immediately
- Avoid the answer – “I want to Learn”. This is a weak statement. WHAT do you want to learn? What excites you about the role?

Questions?

Always have some questions for the interviewer
They want candidates to be CURIOUS about the firm, the field and the role!
Do NOT ask generic questions, such as:
“What is your firm’s culture?” or
“How does the internship program work?”

How do I Network effectively?

- Avoid overkill. Emailing someone 5 times in 2 weeks is too much, once or twice in 6 months may be too little
- Ask if you can follow-up if you have more questions
- Identify which contacts are responding favorably & get a feel for what is appropriate with regards to correspondence
- Be creative with meeting contacts. Suggest coffee if you are passing through town – make the effort
- Explore all network pipelines – clubs, info sessions, guest speaker events, career workshops, Duke Connect
- Think of interesting questions and conversation topics – be original!

Be Honest about your Finance knowledge

- Don’t admit to knowing more about finance than you do – they will call you out
- Be careful what you mention you can do on your resume – if you say you can build financial models be prepared to explain how in detail.
- It’s ok if you don’t know how to do a DCF...But know what it is!

Practice Makes Perfect!

Sign up for a mock interview
The earlier the better!
Ask a mentor or friend to help
Do more than ONE!

Know YOUR Story!

Develop an “Elevator Pitch” 2-3 minutes on your background, why this field and why you want the job.

If your background (major, extracurriculars, work experience) have little/no relevance, be prepared to explain in detail

What Are They Looking For?

Solid academic achievement

Strong interest in the industry, the job and the firm

Being in tune with the current industry environment is important – speak to your peers, industry experts, network!

Safe Hands?

Have you got what it takes to do the work promptly and correctly?

This is what they are trying to determine!

Good Fit?

Will you gel with the firm's culture?
Can you work well within the group?

Don't underestimate the importance of this aspect of the interview

For Investment Banking:

- Comfortable with financial concepts, accounting and excel
 - Strong judgment, presence and maturity
- Demonstrated commitment, stamina & ability to excel under pressure
- Ability to take responsibility & get complex, detail oriented jobs done right
- Possess a mind to pick things apart and perform deep analytical analysis
 - High accuracy and attention to detail

For Sales & Trading:

- Knowledge of financial/market products: Bonds, Currencies, Equities, Derivatives
 - Strong judgment, presence and maturity
 - Understanding of risk taking/management
 - Ability to multi-task and cope under intense pressure
- Strong communication & interpersonal skills
- Possess an inquisitive mind, can think on your feet and make quick decisions
 - High accuracy and attention to detail

Information is Power

READ, read, read. Start with WSJ, Businessweek

For industry buzz:

www.streetinsider.com

www.reuters.com

www.thedeal.com

www.bloomberg.com