

### What Recruiters Look for in Candidates

- Why should I hire them?
- Do they have a sincere interest in the financial markets? Are they applying just because friends or parents told them to do so?
- Are they excited to be here?
- Are they detail-oriented?
- Is this someone I can sit next to for 12 hours a day, 5 days a week? Are they personable? Can I put them in front of clients?
- Do they work well with others? Have they had leadership roles or teamwork experience that speaks to that?
- Do they have a desire to learn? Can they speak knowledgeably about their classes and past work experiences?

*Note: Saying you are a leader doesn't go very far. You need to exemplify it in a story, maybe about the student organization you are in charge of or about a team project on which you worked. Same goes for any characteristics on which you are hoping to sell the interviewer.*

### General Interview Questions

When answering these, do not just list facts. Those should already be on your resume. You need to have a theme or specific characteristic that you are hoping to portray to the interviewer. For example, you want to show that you love the markets and are detail-oriented. That needs to come through in the answers to those questions. Keep in mind what the interviewer is trying to identify. Know your audience and drive the conversation to what you know. Sell your best self.

- Tell me about yourself, or walk me through your resume.
- Why this company?
- Why are you interested in this area of finance?
- What would you invest in with \$1mm? (Have an investment theme.)
- Know basic bond math and monetary policy tools.
- Have some basic idea of regulatory changes in the industry and what the Federal Reserve has been doing.
- Know the major players in the market: Treasury Secretary, Chairmen of the Fed, CEOs of the largest banks, etc.
- Know the banking/finance structure and different functionalities of firms. (You can find this info online).

## Probability/Brainteaser Questions

- If you toss a fair coin 12 times, what is the expected product of number of heads and number of tails? (It is not 36).
- There's a 10x10x10 cube made of 1000 1x1x1 cubes. If you eliminate the outer layer of cubes, how many do you have left?
- You are trapped in a dark cave with three indistinguishable exits on the walls. One of the exits takes you 3 hours to travel and takes you outside. One of the other exits takes you 1 hour to travel and the other takes 2 hours, but both drop you back in the original cave through the ceiling, which is unreachable from the floor of the cave. You have no way of marking which exits you have attempted. What is the expected time it takes for you to get outside?

## Skills/Sample Questions by Finance Category

### Corporate Finance

#### Questions:

- How does a balance sheet work?
- If you worked for the finance division of our company, how would you decide whether or not to invest in a project?
- Describe a project where you had multiple options, how you assessed the situation, and how you decided to pursue the specific option/course of action

#### Skills:

- Strong math, statistics, and finance background
- Strategic/forward thinking
- Project-oriented

### Investment Banking

#### Questions:

- What industry or product groups interest you?
- Describe a recent investment banking transaction that was in the news.
- How would you value a company?
- What is your understanding of the role of an investment banking analyst?

#### Skills:

- Strong academic achievements
- Math, accounting, and Excel abilities
- Qualities of maturity, commitment, and interest in industry

### Investment Management

#### Questions:

- How do you follow the markets? What are the economic indicators that are driving the market you follow?
- Give an example of a time you had to use data analysis or quantitative skills.
- What do you see as the most important factor to impact the US economy in the next 6 months?

#### Skills:

- Quantitative and qualitative analytical skills
- Ability to work well under pressure and handle multiple projects
- Attention to detail and organization
- Passions for investing and financial markets

### Investment Research

#### Questions:

- Do you follow the markets? Where are the different markets (Dow, Oil, Gold)?
- Do you follow particular companies? If so, what are their stock prices?
- Do you have a stock portfolio? If so, what factors do you use to pick your stocks?
- Pitch me a stock.
- Give me an example of a research project or paper that you have done.

#### Skills:

- Strong communication skills, both verbal and written
- Research/thesis/writing skills
- Courses in finance, economics, accounting and statistics
- Knowledge of the markets

### Sales/Trading

#### Questions:

- Where is the Dow?
- What markets/stocks do you follow?
- Pitch me a stock.
- What have been some trends in the markets over the past few weeks?
- Give an example of a time when you had to make a quick decision with limited information

#### Skills:

##### **Sales and Trading:**

- Ability to work in fast-paced, intense environments

##### **Sales:**

- Ability to build relationships
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills

##### **Trading:**

- Ability to take risks
- Quantitative skills

### Resources

- Vault Guide to Finance Interviews
- Vault Finance Interviews Practice Guide
- Vault Guide to Advanced Finance and Quantitative Interviews
- Glassdoor.com - Interview Questions by Company
- [Morgan Stanley Interview Guide](#)
- [Efinancialcareers.com Interview Article on Company Questions](#)