



# Q&A

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## **Was there a pivotal moment or influence early in your life that shaped your interest in finance?**

My interest in corporate finance was ignited at the age of 15, during a pivotal time in my family's life. I vividly recall watching my father navigate the challenging merger of his private insurance company with another firm. This was a strategic move to comply with the new recapitalisation requirement set by NAICOM (Nigeria's insurance regulator) at that time. Witnessing the depth of negotiations and the intricate reassessment of equity value left a mark. The process – both complex and captivating – required a sophisticated understanding of financial principles and strategic thinking. This experience sparked my curiosity and set me on a path towards a career in investment banking.

## **What did your path into this field look like – was it intentional or did you discover it along the way?**

I was deliberate in shaping my career path after witnessing firsthand the dynamic world of mergers and acquisitions from my father's experience. Initially, I aspired to become an auditor, but this experience solidified my interest in corporate finance, and the comprehensive curriculum in Accounting and Finance at the University of Manchester was a perfect fit to build a foundation. I then advanced my expertise with a MSc in Finance from the London School of Economics and Political Science, which offered some insights into the world of private equity.

## **What was your first deal or transaction like, and what did you take away from it?**

My first major deal was a sell-side advisory transaction for a consumer goods company that held franchise rights for one of the largest global ice cream and pizza brands. The experience was both exhilarating and educational. As someone with a sweet tooth, I found visiting the production sites and witnessing operations firsthand particularly thrilling. This opportunity allowed me to delve into the intricacies of valuation, and emphasised the critical importance of detailed information in successful transactions. The project was a perfect blend of my personal interests and professional aspirations, providing the adrenaline rush of deal-making and the satisfaction of drawing out the value chain for the

Information Memorandum. It reinforced the necessity of thorough due diligence and strategic thinking in every transaction.

## **How have you built resilience in a high-pressure, male-dominated environment?**

To navigate a high-pressure field, I've learnt to assert myself and advocate for my ideas. Establishing credibility through consistent performance and cultivating a reputation for reliability has been key to building resilience and thriving professionally.

## **What's the hardest lesson you've learnt, and how did it shape you?**

The lesson of meticulous documentation has been invaluable. It has become clear over time that verbal agreements alone could lead to discrepancies and conflicts. Adopting a habit of documenting all interactions – keeping relevant and affected parties in the loop, particularly via email – enhances clarity, efficiency and integrity, and can help position you for career advancements.

## **What advice would you give to your younger self starting out in this field?**

I would advise my younger self to focus on specialising in a particular area of investment banking early on. Having rotated across three different corporate finance products (mergers and acquisitions, equity capital markets and debt capital markets) for over four years, I have learnt over time that by honing expertise in one product, you can build a strong foundation and gain substantial experience that will set you apart in your career.

## **How have you balanced your personal life with the demands of a career in finance?**

Building something visible and tangible outside of my job has been critical to help balance a high-pressured career with my personal life, both mentally and physically. Whilst setting boundaries is still a constant battle, having that mental note that there is something else to deal with has pushed for more intentional time management with work. 🏊‍♀️