



Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association



From UOC to Wall Street: A glimpse into the Quant Finance industry

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Demystifying Wall Street



- Sell side (Investment Banks, Broker-Dealers) vs Buy side (Asset Managers, Hedge Funds)
- Different Sell side functions and skills
 - Sales and Trading
 - Investment Banking
 - Securities Lending
 - Wealth Management
 - Risk Management and Analytics
- Examples of cross-functional relationships and mobility

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Finance is becoming even more quantitative

- Trading: Speed and computational power is a game-changer
- Automation driving most functions; Programming now a basic requirement
- Rules-based Investing overtaking Stock Picking and traditional Active Management
- Alternative Data, Machine Learning, NLP algorithms gaining traction
- Add-on levels of complexity as preferred:
 - Products and dimensionality: Cash/Delta one, ETFs, Structured products, Derivatives, Exotics
 - Different asset classes: Equity / Fixed Income / Commodities / Fx
 - Different markets: Developed / Emerging / Frontier

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Hiring continues to be exclusive...

- Wall Street still attracts the best candidates across the world
- Focused on Ivy League schools/target programs
- Quant interviews are harder to crack
- Immigration rules are ever changing - Learn how to navigate these
- Your Network plays a major role - Actively build your network to find out about opportunities and be considered ahead of the competition

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Building a solid background fit for Wall Street

- Get your basics right: shortcuts will only get you so far
- Relevant coursework: take the hard subjects!
 - Statistical Inference, Stochastic Processes, Regression, Time Series Analysis, Advanced Calculus, Optimization
- Professional qualifications to supplement coursework
 - Be selective to best support and develop "your" story
 - Quality over quantity

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How do you plan to stand out?

- Internships, projects and relevant work experience prior to applying for grad school
- Pick a unique and interesting research thesis
- Take up other interests/activities/organizations

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Attitude is key

- Be a self starter- don't wait around for direction
- Have an opinion and be prepared to defend it
- Be comfortable with open-ended questions and dealing with ambiguity
- Critically evaluate all aspects of information- don't be afraid to ask questions
- Be open minded and willing to compromise/find middle ground
- Develop continuous learning- find the next new technology
- Above all, be passionate about your work. It's a tough industry and only your passion will see you through it

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Stories from the trading floor...

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Q&A

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- Find your passion • Be unique • Attitude is key

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