



Let's talk money

The attitude to excel and the aptitude to learn can take you places in the world of finance, offers REVATHI IYER

Finance has always intrigued jobseekers. The who's who of the world's list of rich and famous are from this sector. Warren Buffet, the rich and hugely successful investor, once said: "It's better to hang out with people better than you. Pick out associates whose behavior is better than yours and you'll drift in that direction." A career in finance is typically all about that. Options are plenty and wide ranging in the finance sector.

I must tell you at the outset that the parameters for success in finance are very simple. Excellent communication skills, a analytical bent of mind, a fiercely competitive spirit, thorough domain knowledge and the will to succeed could pave the way for growth. The student should never tire himself of reading all that he can lay his hands upon; as everything in finance cannot be taught, it has to be caught. The vast resources available in the form of journals, articles and technology along with a

good mentor will help in the choice of a career. This is the only sector where growth is vertical and knowledge gained is virtually tested every day on the work floor.

To opt for a career in finance one needs to typically choose a commerce stream at the high school level and get on with a graduation in commerce or management. The mother of all careers in the finance sector, one that most commerce students aspire to, is Chartered accountancy, a Cost Accountancy or a Company Secretaryship. It is widely known that to pursue the above three not only has the student to be hardworking and persevering but should have the necessary family support too. Salaries in these job profiles are phenomenal.

There are many other courses that students could opt into to pursue a career in finance. A graduation in commerce or management, with a post graduation in management and a specialization in finance, is the best combination. There are many

profiles that would trigger off activities in finance and a few profiles of these are discussed below.

Commercial banks, especially private ones provide the largest number of jobs in the financial services industry. The ranges of opportunities available are plenty. You can train to be a pure banker and concentrate on retail banking services or can choose to operate from the field, or could specialize in compliance and regulations. With many other new options being thrown open it is worthwhile to go through the profiles that are being offered and attune specialization to what is required of the industry.

Fund manager: The shift from traditional saving to high return earning investments needs a facilitator, a person who is qualified enough to know the nuances of investment returns and how they can be maximized. A fund manager is basically a specialist who knows the macro market and manages the funds of the investor. The market is flooded with stocks and debt securities. A good fund manager creates a repute of prudence and aggression.

Equity Research: the dream of every individual to make a quick buck in the shortest possible time. The stock markets have proved that good knowledge of trading could bring in windfall profits and this has made this career profile highly remunerative. The profile requires that the equity researcher knows the fundamental and technical analysis of trading. This career option is a highly respected one and much in demand.

Another popular profile is that of an asset liability manager / working capital manager, suitable for specialists in finance especially with an eye for budgeting. A financial risk manager is required to know and create economic value using financial instruments to manage both the credit and the market risk. The risk manager will have to know when and how to hedge financial instruments and the various regulations and compliances that go with hedging. Some of the portfolios mentioned above are very specialised. However they all require a very analytical bent of mind and a nose for smelling risks. The other opportunities that one could seek that of a wealth manager, a project financial consultant, a strategic cost manager, a financial statement analyst to mention a few specialist profiles. All these require the professionals or practicing financiers to have that extra knowledge that would make him excel in his chosen profile.



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