JESHUA KOH

LINKEDIN



INTERVIEW DONE BY ANNABEL TAN

Jeshua currently holds the position of Institutional Fixed Income Sales at MUFG in Singapore. Prior to this role, He was a Fixed Income Specialist at HSBC, with a focus on Fixed Income Execution Trading. He also worked as an Investment Counselling Analyst at HSBC, specialising in Multi-Asset Portfolio Advisory for Ultra-High-Net-Worth clients. Jeshua's internships include a Summer Analyst role at HSBC, a Fixed Income Sales Analyst role at DNB, and a Market Risk Summer Analyst role at ING.

CAN YOU SHARE WITH US MORE ABOUT YOUR CURRENT ROLE AND RUN US THROUGH A REALISTIC AND UNFILTERED DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FIXED INCOME SPECIALIST AT HSBC PRIVATE BANK?

I am currently working under the MA programme, after converting to full time post graduation. Under this MA programme, I rotate through 3 roles, and am currently on my last rotation, as a relationship manager. My roles and responsibilities differ according to my current rotation, but since I am most interested in the fixed income sales department, I can share with you more about that specifically. Usually, I go into the office at around 8am, and respond to client enquiries that are handed over to me through the relationship manager. This involves a lot of emails and calling of clients to follow up with them and answer their queries. I then cover and find different bonds based on client requirements and needs, and sometimes also send out emails on potential bond recommendations, if any.

HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT PRIVATE BANKING WAS THE PATH FOR YOU? (THOUGHTS ON EXPECTATIONS VS REALITY OF PRIVATE BANKING?)

Since I was in Y1 of University, I knew that I wanted to do finance. Then I met a year 4 senior in FIN2704, who was doing a private banking internship at JP Morgan then. Through my conversation with him, I realised that this was a role that I would be interested in, and hence decided that it was the career I wanted to pursue. Then I landed a summer analyst role in HSBC, and was converted full time afterwards.

I think an 'expectation' of private banking that many have is that it is very client facing and mostly a front office job. However, it is very common to have more middle end jobs within private banking, especially as a junior who recently just joined the bank. Since you would have to be more senior and experienced to be able to interact with most of these high networth clients, usually you would start out doing more middle end jobs, such as covering certain specialties such as the fixed income sales that I am currently

doing, and it would take a while for you to start speaking to clients directly. Hence, there is a stronger emphasis on more technical stuff such as specific investment strategies that you would be dealing with instead of purely maintaining relations with clients etc.

HOW DID YOU SECURE YOUR FIRST BANKING INTERNSHIP IN UNIVERSITY? WHAT DO YOU THINK STOOD OUT TO THE RECRUITERS DURING THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS, SEEING THAT YOU HAD NOT HAD ANY PRIOR EXPERIENCES?

My first internship was actually a Markets role in DNB. Through these interviews, I think that the company is just looking for someone who can relate, someone who they can communicate easily with.

While it is important to know your stuff and have sufficient technical knowledge, such that the interviewer knows that you are really interested in the job, it is not everything, especially in an internship where the company is aware that you are also going in to learn. So many people have similar accolades and credentials. Instead, who you are as a person and whether you are culturally fit for the company will be what makes you stand out from the other interviewees. My advice would be to not be too hung up and stressed over rejections, as it might just be because the interviewers don't think that you can fit into the company's culture, more than your skills and abilities. Something that could cause you to be rejected in one bank can be the main reason why another hires you, so don't worry too much about it! Just be yourself and equip yourself with sufficient knowledge about the job scope and industry.

HOW WOULD YOU SAY YOUR EXPERIENCE IN NUS BUSINESS OR HALL (KENT RIDGE) HELPED YOU EXCEL IN YOUR CAREER?

In NUS, and especially staying in hall, I was able to learn how to talk to people, and hone my interpersonal skills, which is very important and crucial anywhere you go in life, and really allow you to excel in any job you prefer. NUS Business also gave me a platform to meet with a lot of seniors who were able to help, through sharing their personal experiences or even giving tips and advices throughout.

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR UNDERGRADUATES SEEKING A CAREER IN PRIVATE BANKING? ANY SKILL SETS THAT STUDENTS SHOULD FOCUS ON DEVELOPING IF THEY ARE INTERESTED IN THIS CAREER PATH?

My advice would be to focus on the main reason why you went to university, which is to get a job! So do things that will help u get there, choose the right modules and join the right CCAs to enhance your skills and ensure that you don't waste your time in school. Even for exchange, it is important to plan your time so that you are able to come back in time for internships (if you're going in Semester 2). Do things outside of school that can aid in your job search as well, that's important !

In terms of skill sets, I think a very important one would be people skills. It is a skill that's transferable to any industry and field you could be applying for, and can really bring you a long way. All the best!