XAN AWE

LINKEDIN



INTERVIEW DONE BY LEE SUJIN

Xan, a Finance Graduate Analyst at Nomura with 9 months of experience, boasts a strong finance background. He completed internships at Citi in Personal Banking & Wealth Management and SMBC in Internal Audit. Xan's remarkable academic achievements include being on the Dean's List thrice. His awards include winning the ICAEW 100 SEA Curious Learner Award and earning the 2nd Runner-up position in the Sea Finance ACCkathon in 2021.

YOU WORKED IN SMBC AND CITI BANK FOR YOUR SUMMER INTERNSHIPS, WHICH ARE REALLY IMPRESSIVE. WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE SOME QUALITIES OR INSIGHTS OF STUDENTS THAT THE BANKING INDUSTRY IS LOOKING FOR?

While having a decent GPA is definitely a criteria, I think having relevant prior internship experiences or competing in case competitions are a great way to differentiate yourself from other candidates. Aside from summer internships, I strongly recommend students to also consider taking a LOA to pursue a 6-months long internship as it can be a great way to break into an industry. I also encourage students to take advantage of the various early career events organized by the banks as a good opportunity to network.

FROM YOUR LINKEDIN, I NOTICED THAT YOU HAVE A LOT OF SCHOOL EXPERIENCES AND AWARDS, INCLUDING BEING ON THE DEAN'S LIST THREE TIMES. COULD YOU SHARE WITH ME, HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO BALANCE YOUR ACADEMICS AND CCAS?

I believe I was really fortunate to have the chance to stay in RC4 throughout my university studies. By staying on campus, I was able to save time commuting which gave me the chance to dedicate more time to studies while still pursuing various club activities. At one point, I was actually part of the exco 4-5 CCAs at the same time which required extensive commitment and time juggling skills, so I always tried to schedule my time in advance as much as possible. I think University is one of the rare few times you'd have the free time and opportunity to pick up new hobbies, for instance I actually picked up coffee making by joining a coffee making club in my dorm and even ran a board game club. So I really recommend you to try joining as many clubs as you can before you get bogged down with adulting.

COULD YOU SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF COPING WITH HIGH LEVELS OF COMMITMENT AND STRESS DURING WORK?

After working for a few months and from my past experience running a few clubs, I've learnt that the "to do" list will always

continue growing and I think whats really important is learning how to triage and prioritize your tasks. And if you need help or more time to complete tasks, don't be afraid to communicate this to your fellow team mates, seniors or even your manager as most people are quite understanding and are willing to help out where they can.

I'VE NOTICED THAT YOU USED TO WORK IN THE AUDIT INDUSTRY BUT JUMPED INTO BANKING LATER ON. COULD YOU EXPLAIN WHY AND HOW DID YOU DO THAT?

As an accounting major, my first internship was an external audit internship with PwC. But since my seniors advised me to try as many industries as possible, I decided I wanted to try out the banking industry. So I went to pursue an internal audit internship at SMBC since I thought my prior experience in external audit would be somewhat relevant and helpful. After that internship, I realized I wanted to pursue a career in Banking which is what drove my decision to pursue another banking internship with Citi and to take up my current job with Nomura. On that note, I think its perfectly okay for students to go through university without a clear roadmap on what they want to do for the rest of their life, and I think taking up as many internships as possible is a good way to find out what you like doing. And if you are graduating soon, I also recommend you to join one of those graduate programs that let you rotate around different departments. For instance, my current graduate analyst program in Nomura lets me rotate around within various departments in Finance and I think these programs can be a great way to find out what you enjoy doing.