YEO JING WEN

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INTERVIEW DONE BY LEE SUJIN

Jingwen is currently a member of the Actis Energy Infrastructure Private Equity team, specialising in Southeast Asia. His extensive finance career includes roles as a Mergers and Acquisitions Associate at KPMG Corporate Finance LLC, an Analyst in Southeast Asia for Leveraged and Acquisition Finance at HSBC, and an Investment Banking Associate Director at Standard Chartered. With over four years of experience in the finance sector, Jingwen brings a wealth of expertise to his current role.

WHAT MADE YOU PURSUE ACCOUNTING AND ALSO SECOND SPECIALISE IN FINANCE?

During my national service, I spent a lot of time thinking about what I wanted to do after university. Chemical engineering was one of my choices, but I eventually chose accounting as I felt I was good with numbers and the degree allows for flexibility to pursue multiple career paths post-graduation. I took up my second specialisation in finance in year 3. From my perspective, specialising in accounting and finance is highly synergistic as accounting gave me a good foundation in understanding financial statements, while finance allowed me to apply my accounting knowledge in real life applications.

YOU HAVE MANY OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS, INCLUDING BEING PLACED ON THE DEAN'S LIST 3 TIMES. HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO BALANCE YOUR TIME BETWEEN ACADEMICS, CASE COMPETITIONS AND CCAS?

I stayed in Sheares Hall for 4 years. It was a challenge balancing hall commitments and studies and I definitely sacrificed some sleep along the way. On days where I do not have lessons, I will try to squeeze in time to complete my tutorials and prepare for upcoming seminars / lectures. The key to excelling while staying in hall is to realize that there is always a time to play hard and a time to work hard. You also need to learn how to say ‘no’ to certain things and not over commit. You should aim to choose CCAs in hall based on the level of commitment you feel you can put in.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE M&A COMPARED TO OTHER BANKING FIELDS?

M&A involves brokering the purchase and sale of companies. As an investment banker, you act as the intermediary between buyer and seller and work with corporates and private equity firms on a myriad of transactions. The reason why I chose M&A as a career is for the rigour, exposure, client centricity and also dynamic nature of the work.

CAN YOU SHARE MORE ABOUT THE JOB PROGRESSION IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY?

In banking, your foray into the job will be

as an analyst for 2-3 years before becoming an associate for another 3 years. Progression is merit based and is highly competitive. As long as you work hard and show good attitude, there is no reason why you will not progress in banking!

HOW IMPORTANT IS GPA IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY?

A good GPA is a plus, but working experience and a good attitude matters as well. I recommend all aspiring bankers to ensure that you undertake relevant internships while in NUS and focus on picking up valuable technical knowledge and soft skills.

IS THERE ANY PARTICULAR THING YOU MISS FROM SCHOOL?

I miss having more control and freedom I have with my time as well as hanging out with friends in hall / school! One of my most memorable experiences will be going on a semester exchange in the Netherlands and summer exchange in Korea!