What is Financial Services?
Financial services comprise many different sectors including: investment banking, corporate finance, asset management, venture capital, equity research and sales & trading, to name but a few. Although each sector within financial services is quite different, all functions require sharp analytical skills, a desire to work with numbers, attention to detail, accuracy, a sense of urgency, spreadsheet skills and an appreciation of all things “financial.”

Interview Preparation
The best preparation is to practice through mock interviews and by going through lists of potential questions employers may ask. You must be able to talk someone through your resume quickly and concisely, while at the same time getting across all of your key strengths and successes.

You need to be able to:
1. Have an understanding of what is entailed in the job.
2. Explain why you are well suited for it.
3. Explain why you want to work there.
4. Name the CEO and give a brief history of the company (mergers and acquisitions for instance).
5. Talk about a recent deal involving the company.
6. Know what the following are:
   • Dow Jones Index
   • 10-year bond
   • The company’s stock price
   • The U.S prime rate
   • LIBOR
   • The U.S.$ against the yen, Canadian $ and Euro
7. Look and sound professional (modest, conservatively dressed; easy on the aftershave/perfume; don’t say “like” every other word).
8. Ask good questions that differentiate you from the other applicants.

Practice Your Interviewing
1. Review the sample questions attached to this document.
2. Boot Camp: Career Advancement holds a mock interview boot camp for undergraduate and graduate students who are seeking full-time positions in financial services and consulting each fall quarter. Students can register on Chicago Career Connection via the Career Advancement website.

Careers in Financial Services
There are numerous careers available in financial services: www.careers-in-finance.com provides an overview, including information regarding skills required for each function, various positions, salaries, and links to other resources.

Resumes and Cover Letters
Develop a resume that highlights a strong track record of success, that demonstrates analytical and problem solving skills, and shows both leadership and self-initiative. Be ready to prepare cover letters as well. Keep both documents to one page only.

Have a Career Advancement counselor review your resume and cover letter before applying for a position. A Career Advancement counselor can help you understand how to discuss your experiences and skills in a way that is compelling to employers. Call 773-702-7040 to make an appointment.
3. Practice Interviewers: Career Advancement has practice interviewers on staff to conduct mock interviews. To schedule a practice interview call 773-702-7040.

4. InterviewStream: You can also do practice interviews using InterviewStream, (available on Chicago Career Connection, which you can access via the Career Advancement website. This online tool allows you to record answers to common interview questions, questions specific to financial services, and then send that recording to whomever you like (including Career Advancement counselors) to get feedback. InterviewStream is a great place to start practicing, but make sure you get some practice interviewing with an actual person, since interviews are often dynamic.

Tips on Beefing Up Your Knowledge and Skills

- Read the Wall Street Journal daily. Get a different perspective by reading the Financial Times. Other good economic political publications include The Economist and The New Republic.
- Subscribe to a quality newspaper such as the Washington Post. You can sign up to receive free e-mails alerts and it has excellent news covering the latest M&A, IPO and Private Equity and Venture Capital deals. It is more oriented towards investment banking but still provides great information for everyone interested in finance-related careers.
- Take an accounting class (financial accounting if possible). You may think it’s where fun goes to die but it is the very foundation of finance.
- Look at Vault. http://www.vault.com/wps/portal/usa/store/?utm_nooverride=1&gclid=CLiVuO2A-KICFQseDQodoziHqA You would be well advised to buy the vault guide that specifically addresses the area you aspire to work in. They are relatively inexpensive and worth their weight in gold.
- Familiarize yourself with the Morningstar and Bloomberg applications, which are used to research and analyze equities and markets.
- Read through an introductory book on finance and accounting to learn the basics. Do you know what an income statement, balance sheet, and cash flow statement are? Do you know the key finance statistics that are used and how they are calculated? What are EBITDA, Net Income, Price / Earnings Multiple and the Net Present Value of a Cash Flow? Some good overview books include Barron’s Business Review Series: Finance and Accounting as well as The McGraw-Hill 36 Hour Course in Finance and The McGraw-Hill 36-Hour Accounting Course.
- Understand how Excel / PowerPoint / Word are used in the workplace. Do you know what it means to model in the workplace? The book Excel Data Analysis by Jinjer Simon is a good resource to refresh your Excel skills. Also, consider attending one of the computer workshops sponsored by Information Technology Services (ITS), https://itservices.uchicago.edu/services/training/courses/.

Finding Job Opportunities

- Participate in on-campus recruiting (OCR) and attend career fairs. Note: In order to participate in OCR, you must sign an OCR agreement form. See a Career Advancement counselor for details.
- Sign up for Career Advancement email listhosts (see below)
- Read company websites – they are a great source of information. Many of the larger firms have structured hiring processes for undergraduates along with recruiting schedules available online.

Additional Reading:

- The Way of the Turtle, Curtis Faith – 2007 (trading)
- A Random Walk Down Wall Street, Burton Malkiel – 2007 (investment guide)
- Forecasting Company Profits, Fred Wellings - 1998 (securities analysis)

Career Advancement Services and Resources

See a Career Advancement Counselor

All students are encouraged to see a Career Advancement counselor at some point in their university career. Counselors are able to offer assistance with job application materials, including resumes and cover letters. Staff is also able to help discuss broader plans like graduate or professional school. Students are encouraged to make an appointment and can either call 773-702-7040 or do so online.

Walk-In Appointments

Throughout the year, Career Advancement counselors make themselves available for short, walk-in appointments. The hours vary from quarter to quarter but the website is always up-to-date with current hours. Students looking for brief assistance are encouraged to use these appointments as a way to quickly move forward in their search.
Career Advancement Programs and Resources
Career Advancement offers programs throughout the year designed to educate students about career options in a variety of fields, as well as build crucial job search skills (informational interviewing, networking, etc.). View the Career Advancement event calendar online to learn more. Be sure to browse our Career Resource Library as well as our website for additional resources.

Chicago Career Connection (CCC)
Accessible via the Career Advancement website, this online tool – specifically for University of Chicago students and alumni – lists full- and part-time jobs and internships, in Chicago, nationally, and even internationally. Jobs and internships listed are in business, government and nonprofits.

UChicago Careers In…
These series of University of Chicago programs helps undergraduate students learn about and prepare for careers in the arts, business, communications, education, health professions, journalism, law, non-profit/public service, science and technology, and social work. Some programs are selective and others are open to all students. To learn more about this great University of Chicago offering, visit the UChicago Careers In… section of the Career Advancement website.

Email Listhosts
Join the Consulting Career Advancement email list to get regular updates on career-related programs and job postings. You might also join the general business management listhost. Sign up via Chicago Career Connection (accessible via the Career Advancement website) and edit your profile to start receiving these emails.

Employer Information Sessions
Employers looking to hire students in consulting come to campus each year to host information sessions. This is a great way to learn about particular companies and network. View the Career Advancement event calendar online to learn more and see the schedule.

Researching Organizations
Know who the dominant players within the sector are as well as all the companies that are going to participate in on-campus recruiting. You can obtain first-hand accounts of the company’s culture and philosophy by talking to University of Chicago alumni who are working at the firm (see networking and informational interviewing above). A good understanding of the work environment will go a long way in answering “fit” questions during the interview process and will help you differentiate the firms to enable you to pick those that best fit your personality.

Networking and Informational Interviewing
Whether you just want to learn more about a career in consulting or you’re ready to apply for jobs, conducting informational interviews and networking with individuals already working in that field is a crucial part of the process. Career Advancement counselors can show you how to use the online alumni directory to identify University of Chicago alumni in this field; how to set up and prepare for an informational interview; and how to network effectively. Make an appointment by calling 773-702-7040.

Practice Your Interviewing
Practice Interviewers: Career Advancement has practice interviewers on staff to conduct mock behavioral and case interviews. To schedule a practice interview call 773-702-7040.

On-Campus Recruiting (OCR)
Every year employers come to campus to recruit University of Chicago students. In order to participate in OCR, you must be activated in Chicago Career Connection, which will allow you to view OCR-specific job postings. To become activated in CCC and to learn more about OCR, speak with a Career Advancement counselor.

Included in this Handout
- Financial Services Skills Worksheet
- Sample Behavioral Interview Questions specific to Financial Services
## Financial Services Skills Worksheet

Listed below are the main skills you need to excel in financial services, whichever specialty you choose. Meet with a Career Advancement counselor to talk in-depth about how to present your skills and experience to a potential employer or other individuals in the field. Call 773-702-7040 to make an appointment.

### Skills & Attributes Sought by Employers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytical Skills</th>
<th>Examples of How You Can Demonstrate that Skill on a Résumé</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Analyze both quantitative and qualitative data to arrive at sound recommendations for a project/business unit.</td>
<td>1. Constructed Matlab programs to apply Ronn-Verma's pricing model to deposit-insurance pricing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Be able to think more with a “business brain” instead of considering things so academically.</td>
<td>2. Developed IBM's first financial model to predict engagement expenditures for their consulting division, utilized to more efficiently allocate critical company resources.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Produced discounted cash flows to help evaluate a company’s worth.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Communication/Leadership Skills</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Clearly communicate ideas in both written and oral contexts to group members and senior management teams.</td>
<td>1. Led workshops on how to use relational databases such as Microsoft Access in order to bring technology into the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Effectively lead complex projects involving a cross-functional team(s) and/or</td>
<td>2. Presented findings to senior managers and created recommendations that led to changes in deal qualification process, allowing organization to identify and pursue profit maximizing transactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lead an organization/department with certain objectives.</td>
<td>3. Made PPT presentation to the Blue Chips student organization, pitching a stock, outlining and defending thesis, and recommending action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be able to listen in order to properly define tasks and projects.</td>
<td>4. Wrote up budget proposal for the needs and events sponsored by RSO that are viewed by Student Government; received full funding for annual fashion show.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Computer Skills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Display adequate knowledge of computer usage skills and ability to utilize Microsoft Office Suite.</td>
<td>1. Led workshops on how to use relational databases such as Microsoft Access in order to bring technology into the classroom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Superior knowledge of Excel.</td>
<td>2. Proficient in: MATLAB, Bloomberg, Programming (C++ and/or C Sharp).</td>
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<tr>
<th>Finance and Accounting Knowledge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrate an in-depth and strong understanding of financial accounting and how it can be used to aid managers in decision making</td>
<td>1. Relevant coursework, i.e. Statistics, Microeconomics, Business Ethics, Corporate Finance.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. MBA/Booth courses</td>
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<td>3. Internship experiences</td>
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<tr>
<th>Detail-Oriented Skills</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Work on financial projects that require great attention to detail</td>
<td>1. Conducted comprehensive analysis of potential fuel purchasing for United Airlines Express carriers for Vice President of Purchasing that led to in excess of $8,000,000 in savings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Must be able to multi-task, organize data and make appropriate assumptions in environments in which all information is not readily available.</td>
<td>2. Created automated spreadsheets for strategic outsourcing monthly deal measurements to more effectively analyze and update information about major active and closed deals, reducing update time by over 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Must be able to manage and mitigate risk based on incomplete information.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Business Savvy</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Keeping up to date with current events ongoing in the market by reading a cross-section of papers, periodicals and magazines, making sure to read foreign publications too.</td>
<td>1. Participation in Blue Chips, Women in Business, Eckhardt.</td>
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<th>Stamina/Perseverance</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Exhibit physical and mental ability to endure the rigorous demands in terms of working hours and project assignments.</td>
<td>1. Athletic achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to “play hurt” on occasion.</td>
<td>2. Extracurricular activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Demanding internships</td>
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Sample Interview Questions – Financial Services

I. BEHAVIOURAL QUESTIONS

Personal
1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Walk me through your resume.
3. What are you most proud of on your resume?
4. What are your career and educational goals?
5. Tell me what you have learned from your previous jobs and how that is going to benefit our firm.
6. Give me three words you would use to describe yourself? What three words would your best friend use?
7. Where do you see yourself in 5/10 years?
8. What are the three most important events in your life?
9. What new goals have you established for yourself recently?
10. If you could do ‘it’ all over again, what would you do differently?
11. What were you doing during this gap of time I see here on your resume?
12. Tell me about a decision you have made that you later regretted.
13. What are the three best ideas you’ve had in the past five years?
14. In what kind of work environment do you do your best work?
15. With what kind of people do you like to work?
16. What kinds of people rub you the wrong way?
17. What types of tasks and responsibilities motivate you the most?
18. What are the attributes of an ideal job for you?
19. Did you get an offer from the firm you worked for this summer?
20. Do you have other offers? Why would/wouldn’t you take our offer over one of the others?
21. What do you enjoy doing outside of work in your free time?
22. If you had six months ahead with no obligations and no financial constraints, what would you do?
23. If you could invite anyone you would like to a dinner party (famous/historical figures, dead or alive), which 10 people would you invite?
24. If you could trade places with someone for a week, who would it be?
25. What is your favorite book/movie/song/painting or author/actor/singer/artist?
26. Which magazines/newspapers do you read regularly?
27. Which books have you read recently?

Leadership Style
1. Define leadership.
2. Tell me about a time when you successfully resolved a conflict.
3. Give me an example of a leadership role you have held when not everything went as planned.
4. How would you define your leadership style?
5. What is an example of an experience in which you took on a leadership role?
6. How have you demonstrated initiative?
7. What are some key lessons you have learned about motivating people?
8. Tell me about a time you led a team/project.
9. Do you consider yourself a team player?
10. Tell me about your past experiences working in teams.

Strengths/Weaknesses and Skills
1. Are you creative? Give me an example.
2. What is your biggest weakness?
3. What can you do for us that someone else cannot do?
4. Name one thing you learned from your previous experience/internship.
5. Give me an example of one of your successes.
6. Give me an example of one of your failures.
7. Have you ever failed at anything?
8. Describe the accomplishment of which you are most proud.
9. What has been your greatest challenge?
10. What makes you different from the other candidates interviewing for this position?
11. Why should we hire you?

Interpersonal Style/Skills
1. How competitive are you?
2. How do you work under pressure?
3. What types of people seem to rub you the wrong way?
4. Define cooperation.

Education
1. What have you learned at University of Chicago that will help you on this job?
2. What extra-curricular school activities are you involved in? Do you hold any leadership positions?
3. What electives have you taken? Which class did you enjoy the most?
4. What is your favorite class?
5. Why did you choose University of Chicago?
6. How did you select your major?
7. Describe the course that has had the greatest impact on your thinking.
8. How did you become involved in your extracurricular activities?
9. If you could make a major policy change at University of Chicago, what would it be?

Job/Company/Industry
1. Why are you pursuing this field?
2. Given that you have no background in this field, why are you interested in it?
3. What do you predict is going to happen in this industry in the next 5 years?
4. What do you know about our company?
5. Do you know who our competitors are?
6. Who is our CEO?
7. What mergers took place to make this company what it is today?
8. What interests you most about this position?
9. What parts of the job do you think you would find least satisfying?
10. You have 5 minutes to describe the most relevant and specific items in your background that show you are uniquely qualified for this position.
11. What would you add to our firm?
12. Where would you like to be in ten years?
13. What do you like about our company?
14. Which division are you interested in? Do you know what the responsibilities of the position are?
15. What do you think differentiates our firm from the others?
16. What other jobs/fields are you considering?
17. What do you think you would like least about this job/company/field?
18. What industry publications do you normally read?
19. What company in the market do you admire most and why?

Locations
1. Do you have a geographical preference?

Wrap-Up
1. What would you like me to know about you that is not on your resume?
2. What would you like your lasting impression to be?
3. Do you have a final statement?
4. Do you have any questions you’d like to ask?
5. Favorite quote?
6. Who’s your idol/mentor?
7. Tell me a joke.
8. Sell me this highlighter.
9. What three things would you want stranded on a desert island?
10. What’s your personal discount rate?
11. What do you do for fun?
12. Suppose everyone has a chip on his shoulder, big or small. What’s yours?
13. What are you passionate about?
14. What would cohort mates, other than your Learning Team, say about you?

Investment Banking-Related
1. Would you take an offer from us now on the spot?
2. What don’t you like about banking?
3. Would you rather be on the buy-side or sell-side of a transaction?
4. What about your background will make you a good investment banker?
5. Of my colleagues who have interviewed you to this point, whom would you hire and why?
6. How many of your classmates are truly qualified to do this job?
7. How do you feel about taking orders from a VP or MD who is younger than you?
8. Tell me about some recent deals that have piqued your interest.
9. If you were the interviewer, what are the three most important criteria for hiring someone into this position?
10. How would you deal with an angry client?

II. TECHNICAL QUESTIONS
1. Which of the three methods of valuation is most robust? What are the pluses/minuses of each method?
2. If doing comparative analysis for a client, what are some ratios you would use and why?
3. What is minority interest?
4. What is the P/E ratio and why do analysts use it?
5. What is 43/64 in percentage terms?
6. If a company has three divisions and one is underperforming which causes depressed company stock price, what five things could I do to improve the firm’s stock price?
7. Describe some deals you have recently read about in the news.
8. If you could choose only one, which of the three financial statements would you choose to value a company?
9. Why would two companies merge? What major factors drive mergers and acquisitions?
10. What are some common anti-takeover tactics?
11. If using equity, what alternatives are there to using common equity?
12. What is the typical transaction process?
13. If you were valuing a private company looking to be acquired, what steps would you take?
14. What is an LBO?
15. Why leverage up a firm?
16. Say you have two high yield bonds with identical coupons and maturities, one from a supermarket and one from a high tech company. Which one do you buy and why?
17. Which would you prefer a bond or mortgage?
18. Describe the difference between issuing a bond at par, discount or a premium.
19. What could a company do with excess cash on the balance sheet?
20. How would you calculate a firm’s WACC? What would you use it for?
21. What is the Beta and where would you go to find a firm’s Beta? How and why would you unlever a beta?
22. What is the CAPM?
23. What is the calculation for EPS?
24. Company A wants to buy Company B for $400m, the max they think it is worth, Company B wants $430m. Company A could use stock v. cash for the additional $30m. Under what circumstances might Company A agree to the additional $30m?
25. Calculate the firm value for the firm described below using valuation techniques:
   Shares outstanding 100,000
   Stock price $20
   Debt $500,000
   Cash and equivalents $500,000
26. What did our firm’s stock close at yesterday?
27. What is the DJIA at today? NASDAQ? S&P500? What is the long bond at? Fed funds rate?
28. Where is the market going? Bond, equity and forex? Where will interest rates be in the next 12 months?
29. What happened on the markets in the past three months?
30. Do you read the Wall Street Journal every day? What’s on the front page today?
31. Do you follow an industry, a stock?
32. What is LIBOR?
33. What indicators will be considered by Bernanke when deciding on interest rate changes?
34. Why is everyone worried about inflation?
35. If I gave you $1 for 10 years or $1000 today which one will you choose?
36. Now if I gave you $1 everyday for life and $1000, which one would you choose?
37. What is terminal value and what is one way of calculating it?
38. What is EBITDA?
39. Walk me through the major line items of a Cash Flow Statement.
40. If you have closed the books of accounts and now you discover that $10 of depreciation expense was left out, how would you go about changing the Income Statement and Balance Sheet?
41. What is the difference between a balance sheet and an income statement?
42. What is goodwill? How does it affect net income?
43. What are deferred taxes? How do they arise?
44. What is working capital?
45. Who is in the bulge bracket?
46. What are the main three methods of valuation?
47. If you were doing comparative company analysis for a client, which ratios would you look at and why?
48. What is minority interest?
49. If it is 1:15 pm, how many degrees are between the two clock hands?
50. What is a P/E (Price/Earnings) ratio and why do analysts use it?
51. If a company’s stock price is depressed, how do you unlock value?
52. If I have a company with three divisions, and one of the divisions is underperforming, which leads to the stock price depression of the entire firm. What five things could I do to improve the firm’s stock price?
53. Of all your classmates, how many are truly qualified to do this job?

III. YOUR QUESTIONS
Make sure you always have a few questions for everyone you meet with during an interview. This signals to the interviewer that you have done your research. Here are a few to get you started, but you may compile additional questions as you do your research into both the industry and the company.
1. What are the firm’s biggest challenges and opportunities in the next two years?
2. What kind of person are you looking for? (This question will provide useful information on personal characteristics you should emphasize).
3. (If applicable) What new business has resulted from the merger? How well have the two cultures mixed?
4. What types of people perform best at the firm? How are analysts evaluated?
5. How has increased consolidation in the industry affected your firm, both positively and negatively?