Alum leverages MFIN degree to launch investment banking career

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As a graduate student at the Freeman School, Guram Khatchapuridze (MFIN ’22) knew that to secure a job in investment banking, he would need to go all in.

That’s why he spent hundreds of hours networking, completing internships and studying to ace his B-school classes.



Guram Khatchapuridze (MFIN '22)

Ultimately, his perseverance paid off, landing him a job most finance students only dream of: Investment Banking Analyst at J.P. Morgan.

As a member of J.P. Morgan’s Mergers and Acquisitions team, Khatchapuridze now executes sell-side and buy-side transactions for an assortment of high-profile clients including Fortune 500 companies, governments and private equity firms. Working on multi-million dollar deals for major clients, he performs finance modeling and valuation to assess transactions and maximize value.

Khatchapuridze says that while every day at J.P. Morgan is different, one thing is certain.

“It’s busy. It’s high pressure and high intensity all the time. But that’s what I love about it. I like that kind of fast-paced rhythm. It’s very fitting for my personality.”

It was this full-steam-ahead attitude that propelled Khatchapuridze to one of the largest, most prestigious investment banks in the world.

Originally from the Republic of Georgia, Khatchapuridze attended the University of Derby in England for an undergraduate degree in accounting and finance. There, he

developed his passion.

“I got really interested in economics, and I wrote a thesis about the great financial crisis, and that was my gateway into high finance, investing and banking,” he says.

Hungry to learn more about the world of finance, he devoured books on investment and banking and even started his own finance club. “I just couldn’t stop consuming the information,” he says. “I loved it.”

After graduating from Derby, Khatchapuridze returned to Georgia to do a stint in finance consulting. While in that job, he decided to return to school to pursue investment banking in earnest.

Investment banking is notoriously difficult to break into, with the most prestigious bulge bracket banks typically hiring recruits directly from undergrad programs. But Khatchapuridze played his cards right. He considered several graduate schools, and in the end, the Freeman School’s curriculum and alumni network sold him.

As a Master of Finance student, he took advantage of all Freeman had to offer, completing two internships to jumpstart his career, one at Rice Voelker and one at Cherrywood Growth Capital.

“I've had a very unconventional path,” he says. “I started in consulting and then went to a very small boutique bank for my internship. Then, I leveraged those experiences and was able to land a role at larger banks.”

The Freeman network provided vital connections that helped Khatchapuridze advance in a competitive industry, although there was a learning curve involved.

“Networking is not really a thing in Georgia,” he says. “I had never come across that concept before I moved to the United States. I learned how to network through trial and error.

“I sent thousands of emails each week and tried to get on as many calls as humanly possible,” he explains. “I did a lot of research, looking into each person’s background and finding something interesting about them that I could bring up during calls.”

With the technical knowledge from his graduate coursework and support from the Freeman network, Khatchapuridze moved out of boutique banks and landed a job as an Investment Banking Analyst for Raymond James. After working for nearly two years at Raymond James, he got the call he had been waiting for. In 2024, he was offered a position as an Investment Banking Analyst at J.P. Morgan, one of the world’s most prestigious financial institutions.

“I really love it at J.P. Morgan,” Khatchapuridze says. “There are people here that I genuinely look up to. I’d love to become managing director someday.”

Khatchapuridze is well on his way to achieving that goal. And now, after successfully navigating the ins and outs of the investment banking job market, Khatchapuridze is the one making hiring recommendations.

So what does he look for in a job candidate?

“During interviews, I like to see someone who is very prepared,” he says. “One of the best candidates that I've ever interviewed brought up transactions that my team had completed, and he asked educated questions about those transactions. He was very technically prepared and very personable. That combination is key to success.

“You’ve got to keep applying and not get discouraged,” he adds. “It’s an iterative process that doesn’t happen in a day or a week or a month.”

But for Khatchapuridze it’s a process that’s worth the wait.

“As an investment banking analyst, you’re helping clients during the most important moments of their company’s lifecycle,” he says. “Sometimes it’s the most important decision they’re ever going to make, and they trust you with executing that process. It’s a big responsibility and a big honor.”