Top Fund is seeking an analyst to join the Risk Management Group. Risk Management is responsible for risk identification/aggregation, limit monitoring, and advising on risk appetite/asset allocation. This role is responsible for maintaining risk data and reporting infrastructure and assisting with daily review of portfolio risk and performance:

      Maintain existing risk reporting framework and supporting data/processes

      Partner with team members to enhance/automate risk processes

      Work independently on projects to improve reporting, risk data accuracy, performance attributions, stress scenarios, etc

      Interface with Technology teams to monitor and improve day to day operations and create new tools and processes

      Proactively review portfolio risk and performance

Requirements:

      A successful candidate will have a strong financial background and an ability to create and maintain data and reporting processes:

      Understanding of a variety of asset classes with strong knowledge of Fixed Income products

      Knowledge of market standard pricing/risk models

      Basic understanding of risk measures (VaR, Sensitivities, Stress Loss, etc)

      Excellent Excel / VBA Programming skills.

      Programming experience in one additional language

      Experience with Bloomberg a plus

**The Prep:**

I recommend preparing for a high energy, thought provoking, positive and intelligent conversation that gives them a good sense of your background and experience as well as your enthusiasm for the opportunity.

Here is a list of some specific suggestions to help you prepare:

* Dress very well.
  + Best suit, shoes, accessories, etc.  Make sure you have a good inventory as well for round 2, 3.
* Personality is of course extremely important!
  + Get into a sincere conversation with them right from the start.  Look them in the eye as it shows your genuine.
  + They want to hire people they would enjoy working with every day.  Be positive and genuine in both how you ask questions (don’t read them) and your responses to their questions.
  + Again, be enthusiastic about the opportunity, show personality, be confident and genuine - find a way to connect with them right from the start.   Don’t be negative about anything, always present your past experiences positively.
* Be prepared.
  + Preparation will ensure you are not surprised by their questions enabling you to focus more on how you are responding than what to say...
  + Know your resume, inside and out - be able to tell stories (not facts) of your background in general or on any bullet as needed.
  + Have examples of projects / initiatives you led that demonstrate your competencies as a high performer.  Read over your past reviews to help you prepare.
  + Don’t be casual about your interest in the position.  Let them feel that you are engaged, prepared, curious, professional, enthusiastic and confident, but not a suck up either.
  + Have 8-10 questions (mix of high, mid, detailed level) that you would want to learn about the firm, the role, etc.   Always thread your questions into the conversation and if there are any unanswered at the end and they fit, then ask them.
* Additional thoughts:
  + Treat each interview individually.
  + Every minute is important.  You can rest later. Don’t leave anything on the table.  Your competition is fighting to win this, if you don’t come in ready to win, you won’t.
  + Your goal is to of course sell you – both your past experience and personality!  Any minute you are not doing this (without coming across liked a used car salesperson of course!), you are losing your chance to be in the driver’s seat.

As for how to handle questions you may receive, see below for some thought starters.  You will of course want to come across genuine in your responses. Having said that, these were developed from best practices developed over many years.

* **Tell me about yourself**:  Harder than it sounds – give them a high level summary in about a minute of where you have worked, how long you were at each firm and a general description of what your responsibilities were while you were there.   They are assessing your ability to communicate well, so let them drill deeper on a specific question after this summary.

I’ve been working with mutual fund – AllianceBernstein for a year and a half, as a quantitative risk analyst. My focus is on firmwide market risk oversight across all equity and multi-asset portfolios. During my time there, I contributed to improve and systemize the risk oversight process with technology and quantitative mindset/methods. For instance, comparing to traditional reporting process – the risk manager gets a report from a third party risk model vendor, that might not fit a specific reporting purpose in most cases. Instead, a well-customized version is necessary. I created an interactive web dashboard for my manager, with the well designed data infrastructure, I managed to deliver daily reports to management level in an efficient way. The platform I created provided searching functions where any historical data could be pulled out and shown in a chart clearly.

Prior to AB, I had a summer internship with TCW Group, an asset management firm in New York. I was with their equity team and did a project seeking alpha from company supply chains, I constructed and back-tested a long-short portfolio based on the prediction and achieved a better average annual Sharpe ratio.

I have a blend skill set of math, finance and computer sciences. My undergrad major was statistics, and I built up financial modeling and programming skills when I was in UCLA doing master of financial engineering program. I have strong interests in financial industries, I am CFA level 2 certified and planning to take level 3 exams next year. I’d like to continue working in this field to leverage my skills as well as to make changes and add value to the firm.

With a well-designed data infrastructure, any analyst can build an interactive web dashboard for their manager within a day. Moreover, managers can ask questions about the data, which results in an elegant chart, making everything clear within a glimpse.

Prior to this job, I had been a summer intern with another asset manager - the TCW Group, where I focused on a project seeking alpha from company supply chains.

My background is a mix of math, CS and finance. I finished my under-grad study in stats and right after that I came in the state for graduate study in Financial Engineering.

* **What do you know about us?**  They will want to know that you understand what they do.  They of course want you to be genuinely interested in them.

Everyone knows who George Soros is and there are many versions of his success stories. His fund has been performing well for the past decades in the hedge fund industry. However it is quite low profile in the job market, I never heard anyone around me had an interview here. I felt lucky and honored when the headhunter approached me last week for this role.

**Are you happy with you career?** They are gauging self-esteem, confidence, past success and if you are positive or a downer.  Saying anything but yes. If you’ve hit a plateau where you are, it’s ok to qualify your answer.

In terms of what I can do for the team, I am quite satisfied with my current role. It’s about the sense of fulfillment. After many seeable improvements I have made this year, my manager gives a lot of positive words in my year-end review, saying I am technically very strong, and I am highly self-motivated in using technology to automate and enhance risk analytics.

* **What do you like / dislike about your current/most recent role?**  Likes can include the people, the work that you are doing, the space you are in, the recognition you have received as a high performer.  Think through dislikes without sounding negative.

I am happy with my current role as a risk oversight analyst. I am exposed to different investment teams, interacting with portfolio managers and researchers on a daily basis, from whom I learn a broad spectrum of investment philosophies. On top of that, I enjoy the work environment at AB where people are open-minded and collaborative. Innovative proposals are always respected and encouraged. Through monthly sharing sessions, new projects and achievements will be presented across different functions.

* **What are your strengths, your development areas?** Think about your reviews your Managers have shared with you – quick learner, tech savvy, etc.  Tell them that you were considered the go-to person in your team there. ‘My Managers have shared with me that that I am \_\_\_\_\_\_ ie. Extremely reliable, efficient and they have great confidence in me to get my work done the right way, the first time’.  I have a ‘do whatever it takes’ mentality, I work well with my colleagues, etc. Development areas – always a tough one so think about this one so it doesn’t concern them or equally, doesn’t sound genuine.

I am a detail-oriented person, I like to bring changes and make improvements here and there. I am very meticulous, and good at quantitative stuff. My manager has shared with me that,

In the area of using technology to improve investment analytics and processes, he has become a sought-after resource among his peers.

I am not an originally knowledgeable person. But I am a fast-learner, and I am willing to dig into the details, which make me well-versed in the area I have experiences.

* **Why would you be open to looking to make a move from your current position?**  Don’t be negative.  Let them know that you have learned a lot, have done very well, but want to increase your level of responsibility and join a firm with good infrastructure, a focus on quality, a place where you can make a difference.  You are well prepared for it given your experience.

I am open to better opportunities. And I like to talk with people to know more about the industry. If there is a good chance I definitely want to leverage my skills and take more challenges / responsibilities, all experiences will help me build a better career path in the future.

* **How have you been rated in your current firm?**  This one is extremely critical - be sure you can comfortably, professionally and confidently speak about your strengths sharing how you have exceeded expectations and what your Managers in the past have highlighted as to why you are a strong performer – it is hard talking about yourself, but if you are not confident in yourself, no one else will be...

We just had the year end review recently. I did demonstrate the capability in building up models such as XXXX and the webpage/platform which provides XXXXX. I have meet all expectations by delivering XXXX number of deliverables. name a few here.

* **What interested you in this role?**  Come up with a specific answer – ie. it allows you to have the opportunity to gain broader exposure at a firm that is making its name in the industry for doing it the right way, good leadership, good culture, good systems...

I am interested in doing all quantitative research work, I could apply the knowledge I learnt to daily job and I think risk management is critical in a firm, it acts as a defense line and protection the firm’s assets and investments. Therefore I’d like to leverage my skills in this field. After reading the job scope, I think I am a good fit since I am doing those things on a daily basis.

* **What you’ve enjoyed most about your prior roles, what you’ve enjoyed least?**  As for most, be sure to cover what you genuinely enjoy and why – ‘You enjoy the challenge, the space I am in, and the recognition you have received as a high performer, etc.  As for least - never say ‘working long hours’, but you can say something like, ‘I really enjoy the subject matter and doing whatever is necessary to help our team win. If I had to say something I don’t like, perhaps that you prefer to focus your attention on what benefits the firm and that sometimes it seems people are not as focused on trying to help us all win together against our competition.

My manager trusts me a lot. Everytime I propose new ideas, she definitely support me and encourage me to make more changes and refine the current process in my current work. I feel that I am needed and continue adding value to the firm.

Our firm is huge and there are many departments and functions, it is hard to implement and make huge changes across different functions as even for small changes here might cause big impact somewhere else. We are particularly careful about those things and trying the best to minimize the negative impact and hope to bring more positive good changes to the firm.

* **People you liked working for the most/least and why?**  I enjoy working for leaders who are excited about winning.  They focus on the long term value of a great, cohesive team environment and the team thrives on communication, respect and an overall desire to do well together.

I enjoy working with smart people and supportive leaders who have good understand of a firm’s vision and could demonstrate great leadership.

* **Work environment you enjoy / thrive in?**  ‘I thrive in an environment where people have the energy and commitment to exceed expectations, where we are challenged, can learn, grow, the bar is set high and people want to be there.  Work is work, it is all a matter of how you want to look at it and I would rather positively add to the chemistry of the team.’

Cooperative colleagues and good working environment.

* **What people (colleagues, former leaders, and friends) would say about you, your strengths, development areas, etc?**  Be able to confidently share some strengths of yours.  You can also add some humor into the answer to this question, which shows personality.

My friends and colleagues know that I am a person with strong determination, I always complete tasks and deliver good quality work efficiently.

* **Personal - what you do for fun, how you spend your free time, etc?** Traveling, eating out, etc.  Whatever you say, be able to back it up.

Besides work, I spent time in Gym and outdoor activities. I am also curious about the world, I traveled to many places and enjoy talking to local people there. I enjoy good food, both dine in and dine out. sometimes I cook meals for my family and friends.

* Others:
  + Where would you like to be in your career in five years?

I could see myself in an organization doing XXXX work, hopefully I could have more responsibilities and contribute more as a senior person in the management level.

* + How would your colleagues describe you? Your subordinates?
  + Why should I offer this job to you?
  + How do you feel about working long hours/weekends? Be very careful not to emphasize your work-life balance needs until the employer expresses serious interest in your candidacy.
  + What can you bring to this organization?
  + Which part of this role is least attractive to you?
  + Do you prefer to work alone or in a group? Why?
  + What are you looking for in a company?
  + Have you received any work-related awards for outstanding performance?
  + Have you taken any skills-related courses recently?
  + What are you making, what are you looking to make?  Tell them exactly what you are making, never more. However, never provide #’s as to what you are looking to make.  Simply say, “If a reasonable offer was presented to me, I would certainly consider it.”

While these are ideas to help, you’ll naturally want to come up with answers that are personal to you…having said that, these are based on best practices developed over many years.

As for questions to ask them, it is always best to come up with these on your own.  I will take you through some thought starters to help when we prep. Either way, it should never feel like a Q&A session, it should feel like you do when you meet someone at a party and you connect with them.  This is not by chance, you have to make this happen.

To summarize, you have what it takes, be confident in that.  Be able to discuss your experience, be prepared and genuinely enthused, connect right from the start, tell stories, and ask good questions so you have a business conversation with another professional.  Remember, your resume indicates that you have functional skills to do the work, the interviewer wants to gain the confidence that you would be an asset to the team and the firm, both in the work you would do, but just as importantly, that you are a high performing professional that the team would enjoy working with each day.