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THE RESUME OF THE QUANT ANALYST

of [Quantitative Hedge Fund Training](#)

Show Your Stuff

How do you make a resume stand out when applying for a job in quantitative finance, especially if you have never taken a business, economics or accounting class? Is it even possible for a science, math or engineering major to transition to a career in finance—especially if he or she has had no experience or training in finance?

The short answer is: **absolutely**. Surprisingly, coursework in finance, while helpful, is not the most important skill set for a quantitative job searcher to have on his or her resume. Additionally, training talented quantitative job applicants in the core finance skills they need on the job is not that difficult—what is more difficult to do is to find top quantitative talent.

As one leading Quantitative Hedge Fund highlighted in its job application:

“Successful quant candidates have traditionally been exceptionally talented students at the top of their respective math, physics, engineering, and computer science programs; a considerable number have also competed successfully in the United States and International Math Olympiads as well as the Putnam Competition. Members of our highly versatile technical staff possess the wide range of quantitative and programming abilities necessary to tackle challenging problems that are critical to the firm’s continued success.”

Or how about the skills needed in order to respond to this job posting for a Quantitative Researcher?

“Top proprietary trading firm is seeking an experienced fixed income quant researcher or analyst with strong OTC (over the counter) products and modeling experience. Candidates will develop pricing and trading models as well as enhance the risk management infrastructure for the group. Candidates should come from a Ph.D. in a quantitative field and have at least 3 years of experience at a bank or hedge fund pricing OTC fixed income products. Experience with systems trading and close interaction with traders is a plus.

Additionally, candidates should have a combination of modeling (Matlab, R, Mathematica) as well as object oriented (C++, C#, Java) experience as well.”

These examples are not the exception—they tend to be the rule in Quantitative Recruiting.

The main takeaway for any quantitative finance job applicant is that academic quantitative experience and on-the-job computer skills will count a lot more for these roles than a summer internship at a prestigious investment bank or consulting firm. If you have any programming experience—whether in Excel VBA, Linux or SQL, or even creating apps for cell phones, make sure these skills and experiences appear on your resume. Firms are looking for Quantitative Analysts with these skills, and since many firms use electronic resume search software, if you don’t list them on your resume, you may not get chosen to interview with the firm.

Do you have experience in econometric modeling? Neural networks? Advanced statistics? Have you ever competed in a mathematics or physics competition? Any of these examples—anything that says “quantitative”—should be highlighted on your resume. If you have a thesis or any research papers that have been published, make sure you include links that a hiring manager can click on to read. In short—bring these skills and experiences to the attention of someone at the firm.

Prepare to Explain your Stuff

Do your homework! Just as you should bring your quantitative bona fides to the attention of people at the firm, you should also be prepared to explain a real-life quantitative analysis or modeling project you worked on—either in school or in the workplace—even if it wasn’t related to financial assets. For example if you tell a hiring manager that you built a yield curve model, be prepared to explain both your yield curve model and how yield curve models work in general. You may even want to prepare to answer questions on existing yield curve models in the academic literature. It pays to do this review before you head into the interview; you’ll look foolish if you didn’t do your homework.

One final, related point that might seem obvious: Don’t embellish. For example, if your resume shows that you know MATLAB (and the job requires or strongly prefers knowledge of MATLAB coding), don’t be surprised if you’re shown a piece of MATLAB code during the interview and asked to explain what the code does or how it could be made more efficient. One sure way to get rejected for the job is to claim to have experience on your resume, and then turn out not to know it. It also wastes time and resources.

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