

Breaking into investment banking in the US

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Taosif Amin Khan began his career in commercial banking in Bangladesh before moving into investment banking in the United States after completing his MBA there. He started at a leading full-service investment bank and now works at one of the largest independent advisory firms.

For Bangladeshi professionals hoping to make a similar move, his experience offers a practical look at what investment banking involves, how MBA recruitment works, and what it takes to build a sustainable career in a demanding industry.

What investment banking involves

Investment banking is broadly about advising companies on major corporate finance decisions and helping execute high-stakes transactions. This can include raising capital through equity or debt, advising on mergers and acquisitions, and supporting strategic matters such as shareholder-related transactions and engagements.

"From a work point of view, investment banking isn't fundamentally different from other client-facing banking roles, because a lot of it is still client and relationship management," Taosif said.

The work spans business development, relationship management, investor outreach and transaction execution. In everyday terms, bankers stay close to clients, understand their businesses and industries, share market updates, and identify opportunities where the bank can help. For analysts and associates, much of the workload involves building presentation decks and carrying out the detailed analysis behind them.

Once a bank is selected for a transaction, the work moves into execution. Bankers coordinate with internal teams, accountants, lawyers and regulators to draft contracts, manage workstreams and complete the deal.

Taosif said the value of investment bankers lies not only in technical advice, but also in market access and judgement. Bankers can bring a wider universe of investors and buyers to the table, provide underwriting capabilities many companies do not have in-house, and support negotiations in ways that can help clients achieve stronger outcomes.

Life inside investment banking

Investment bankers usually work in coverage groups, product groups or a combination of both. Coverage groups focus on specific industries, such as healthcare, technology or consumer goods, across the full range of banking products. Product groups specialise in particular transactions, such as equity capital markets, debt capital markets or mergers and acquisitions, across different industries. These teams work together, drawing on each other's expertise.

"Being in investment banking gives exceptional exposure and a very steep learning curve," Taosif said. "I get to partner with companies at the edge of innovation, work with top management of Fortune 500 companies, and be part of conversations that are crucial for these companies' financial futures."



The trade-off is intensity. Investment banking can involve demanding periods, unpredictable schedules and a high level of pressure. Given the nature of the work, Taosif believes discipline is essential.

"Knowing how to use time well and how to balance priorities are important differentiators in having a sustainable long-term career," he said.

The industry is also highly competitive and fast-moving, requiring teams to collaborate closely and make decisions quickly. "In many ways, it mimics competitive sports, where the intensity of working closely toward a common goal makes success particularly energising," Taosif said.

How to make the move from Bangladesh
Taosif began his career in Bangladesh at HSBC. He said much of that experience proved useful in investment banking.

"The knowledge from banking in general, reading financial statements, gaining industry knowledge, managing seniors, peers and juniors, working with lawyers, clients and stakeholders — a lot of these were highly transferable," he said.

His CFA qualification also helped him perform well in technical interviews, although he does not see it as a prerequisite for entering the industry.

Taosif later completed his MBA at the University of Virginia Darden School of Business. For those hoping to break into investment banking through an MBA, he said the first step is choosing a school with a strong record of placing students into the industry.

In his view, MBA programmes for investment banking broadly fall into three categories: core targets, semi-targets and non-targets. NYU Stern, Wharton, Columbia Business School, Chicago Booth, Darden, Cornell Johnson, Dartmouth Tuck and UCLA Anderson are often considered core target schools in the US. Attending a target school can significantly increase access to alumni

support and interview opportunities.

"The most reliable way to identify true feeders is to speak to students and recent recruits, study placement patterns and garner insights from Wall Street Oasis, GMAT Club, etc.," Taosif said.

Once enrolled in an MBA programme, the investment banking recruitment process is usually structured and often supported by the school's finance club and career services team. These groups help candidates prepare through résumé reviews, technical practice, coffee chats and networking events with bankers.

The final round of recruitment is often known as "Superday", when candidates are assessed on behavioural qualities and technical competence. Successful candidates secure internships, which can lead to return offers depending on performance.

Taosif believes Bangladeshi candidates should also speak to others from Bangladesh who have already made the move. Such conversations can provide practical advice grounded in the Bangladeshi context and help candidates frame their local work experience more effectively.

"There can sometimes be a tendency among Bangladeshi candidates to understate their experiences," Taosif said. "In a competitive process like this, it is important to clearly and confidently articulate your achievements, seek support when needed, and make the most of your network."

What it takes to thrive

A strong work ethic, technical ability, analytical skill and interpersonal confidence are all important in investment banking. But Taosif places particular emphasis on organisation.

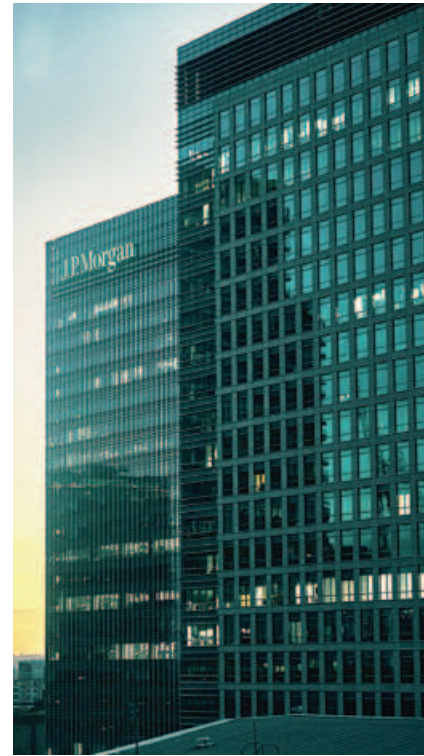
Given the workload, bankers need to reduce wasted time, plan ahead and prepare for the next day. They also need to anticipate what might go wrong and build contingencies accordingly.

Attitude matters too. "You can either choose to dwell on how demanding the lifestyle is, or you can choose to accept that the role comes with challenges and focus on managing it well," he said. "The one thing I'm very strict about is this: whenever you get a pocket of free time, use it intentionally — if I'm free by 6pm, I will go home, make a plan, or do something productive."

Advice for aspiring investment bankers

Taosif's main advice is to pressure-test your motivation before pursuing investment banking. Candidates should ask themselves whether they understand what investment bankers do, whether they can see themselves enjoying the work, how much effort they are willing to put into their careers, and how the role fits into their long-term goals.

While much of the preparation happens during business school, he said it helps to build technical skills in advance, particularly in presentations and spreadsheets. Candidates should also strengthen their financial knowledge and market awareness through regular reading and exposure to resources such as Wall Street Oasis, The Wall Street Journal and The Economist. He also



recommended watching *The Big Short* and reading *Liar's Poker*.

As a final piece of advice, Taosif said candidates should pursue investment banking for the right reasons and be honest about what motivates them.

"Whether the job feels draining or energising depends on you," he said. "If you thrive in a fast-paced competitive environment, the work can actually feel quite exciting and it can be a highly engaging career."

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LinkedIn CEO Ryan Roslansky steps down after six years

NEXT STEP DESK

Ryan Roslansky has stepped down as chief executive of LinkedIn after six years leading the world's largest professional networking platform, with chief operating officer Dan Shapero assuming the role immediately.

Roslansky joined LinkedIn in 2009 as one of then-chief executive Jeff Weiner's first hires, and spent more than a decade working across nearly every part of the business before taking the top job in June 2020, at the height of pandemic-era labour market upheaval.

He inherited a platform with 700 million members and roughly \$8 billion in annual revenue. He leaves with 1.3 billion members and more than \$17 billion in revenue. That growth coincided with a significant shift in the platform's



Dan Shapero (left) with Ryan Roslansky (right). IMAGE: LINKEDIN

character, as LinkedIn evolved from a jobs board and professional directory into a social network where executives regularly share personal essays, career

advice, and opinion—a transformation that has attracted both loyal users and widespread mockery in equal measure.

Roslansky also holds the title of executive vice president at Microsoft, which acquired LinkedIn in 2016. In a post on the platform, he indicated that his role within Microsoft is expanding, with Shapero now reporting directly to him. The transition therefore marks a change in operational leadership rather than a full departure from the company's orbit.

Shapero, who has served as LinkedIn's chief operating officer, takes over a platform navigating significant uncertainty in the jobs market, including a roughly 20% decline in hiring since 2022 and ongoing questions about the long-term impact of artificial intelligence on employment.

OpenAI releases GPT-5.5 in move towards AI superapp

NEXT STEP DESK



IMAGE: UNSPLASH

OpenAI has released GPT-5.5, its newest AI model, describing it as the company's most capable and intuitive model to date and a step towards its stated goal of building an AI superapp that consolidates its core products into a single unified service. OpenAI co-founder and president Greg Brockman said the release was an additional step towards building a superapp — a multi-purpose, unified programme combining ChatGPT, Codex, and an AI browser into one service primarily aimed at enterprise customers, reports TechCrunch.

OpenAI released its previous model, GPT-5.4, only last month, with prior releases in December and November. According to OpenAI, GPT-5.5 is designed for a broad array of applications, including agentic coding, enterprise knowledge work, mathematics, and scientific research.

GPT-5.5 is available to Plus, Pro, Business, and Enterprise users in ChatGPT, while a GPT-5.5 Pro tier is rolling out to Pro, Business, and Enterprise subscribers. OpenAI's published benchmark data shows the model outperforming recent models from rivals including Google and Anthropic across a range of evaluations.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

University of Asia Pacific

Admin Officer, Office of the Registrar

Deadline: April 30

Eligibility:

Master's degree from a reputed university, with prior experience in the administration of university ranking-related activities.

Minimum experience: 1-3 years



Nuvista Pharma PLC

Executive, Central Brand Management

Deadline: May 2

Eligibility:

M. Pharm/ B. Pharm (5-year professional degree) from any reputed university.

Minimum experience: 2 years



International Rescue Committee (IRC)

Protection Manager, PROf.

Deadline: May 3

Eligibility:

Master of Social Science in Development Studies, Gender Studies, Psychology, Anthropology, Social work, or Bachelor of Law, any other related field.

Minimum experience: 2-5 years



US Embassy Dhaka

Program Management Specialist

Deadline: May 6

Eligibility:

Bachelor's degree, or international equivalent, in public administration, business management or business administration, economics or finance.

Minimum experience: 3-5 years



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Meta to cut 10% of workforce as it redirects spending towards AI

NEXT STEP DESK

Meta is planning to cut approximately 10% of its global workforce, amounting to around 8,000 employees, as the company moves to reduce costs and redirect investment towards artificial intelligence.

According to an internal memo sent to staff last week and reported by Bloomberg, the cuts will begin on May 20.

Meta will also leave 6,000 currently open roles unfilled. Chief people officer Janelle Gale told employees: "We're doing this as part of our continued effort to run the company more efficiently and to allow us to offset the other investments we're making. This is not an easy tradeoff and it will mean letting go of people who have made meaningful contributions to Meta during their time here."

The announcement follows years of heavy spending on the metaverse, a bet that has largely failed to generate the returns the company anticipated. Meta has simultaneously had to make significant investments in AI infrastructure and products to keep pace with rivals, including a ground-up overhaul of its AI assistant platform launched earlier this month.



IMAGE: UNSPLASH



IMAGE: UNSPLASH

Microsoft offers voluntary retirement to over 8000 employees

NEXT STEP DESK

Microsoft has offered voluntary retirement buyouts to a portion of its US workforce for the first time in its 51-year history, in a move that would allow the company to reduce headcount without resorting to compulsory redundancies. According to an internal memo reported by CNBC and Bloomberg, employees are eligible for the programme if the sum of their age and years of service at Microsoft totals 70 or more. Under that formula, a 52-year-old employee with 18 years at the company would qualify.

With an estimated 125,000 US employees as of last June, the buyout programme could affect up to 7% of that workforce, equating to approximately 8,750 people. The voluntary redundancy programme follows several rounds of compulsory job cuts in recent years, including the loss of 9,000 roles last summer. By offering a buyout, Microsoft can reduce its US headcount without the reputational and operational disruption that accompanies mass layoffs.