

January 2021 Issue. 1

ASCENDTALKS:

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Monthly Inspiration:

"Amateurs know that contributing something is better than contributing nothing... The best way to get started on the path to sharing your work is to think about what you want to learn, and make a commitment to learning it in front of others... Be on the lookout for voids you can fill with your own efforts, no matter how bad they are at first... Forget about being an expert or a professional, and wear your amateurism (your heart, your love) on your sleeve. Share what you love, and the people who love the same things will find you".

-Austin Kleon

Financial literacy is a journey without a destination, it is a commitment to lifelong learning and we hope the resources below can help grow your financial acuity



Partaking in the Personal Finance course offered by McGill University is a huge opportunity to gain invaluable experience with financial decisions. This helps give individuals an insight into what the financial world beholds and how to go about tackling it. *Next course offered in May 1, 2021.*



The Wealthy Barber is a beginner's guide to financial freedom. Providing concrete examples and insights, this book is certainly a step in the right direction for any students looking to enhance their financial knowledge.



iAscend Member Spotlight

Victor Ou - 2nd Year BBA Student at Wilfred Laurier University

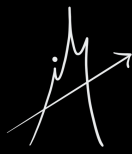
Tell us a little bit about how your experience has been working virtually during the pandemic for a startup, based in Singapore?

The start-up that I am working for in Singapore is called ClueUP. It's an ed-tech company that aims to gamify the learning process - helping users gain the skills that they need to succeed in their lives. The first thing that comes to my mind is that I learned a lot. The virtual environment and time zone differences made meetings difficult, however, we were able to manage. Working with people from Singapore and the UK provided me with a set of unique perspectives. I was given the opportunity to construct a financial model for them that mapped out their revenue streams and costs. I was also able to contribute to designing the product as well as develop a feasible pricing model. Currently, I'm working on a pitch deck that will be used for investors and all I can say is that it has been an absolute honour working for them and I am really looking forward to what 2021 holds for us.

What is the importance of having a mentor to you personally and how would you suggest one would go about finding one in the field of finance?

Having a mentor is like driving a Lexus in a race that's meant for Toyotas. I think having a mentor is extremely important due to the various benefits that are associated with being mentored. For myself personally, I would give credit to my mentor for a lot of my progress - I would say he showed me the basics and inspired me to take initiative to throw myself in the deep end. It's an amazing learning opportunity and your mentor would most likely expose you to his/her network or experiences which is extremely insightful.

I don't think there's an exact formula for finding a mentor. It's similar to how you find friends - once you realize you can click with them, it works! However, it is best to find someone who is a little more ahead of the game than you so that you can learn from them. Networking is a great way to find a mentor, perhaps after a coffee chat, you realize that you and the person you were chatting with shared the same professional interest and that you look up to them. If this is the case, reach out and try to maintain a relationship with them - if they also think you have potential, you got yourself a mentor!



In light of giving students advice, we all know that it can be demanding to decide your future with little insight into what the career will actually be like after graduation. What would you recommend to students getting into the field of finance and does pursuing personal projects aid in finding out about your passions?

Figure out what you're passionate about. My philosophy is that as long as you're passionate about your work - progress and abundant results are sure to follow. In finance, there are a variety of fields - there are capital markets where you find the investment bankers, traders, and asset managers, there's risk and quantitative finance where you deal with complex financial instruments, models, and a lot of numbers, and many more roles such as wealth management or treasury. Make sure you know what you want to do, why you want to do it, and most importantly, that you enjoy it. I strongly recommend against going into a field just for the name or the salary - you most likely won't enjoy yourself in the end.

Personal projects are a subject that people in the world of technology are familiar with. Software engineers, product managers, front-end designers, and other technology enthusiasts have their resumes decorated with personal projects. It's not something that is common on a business resume. However, I genuinely believe business students can learn a lot and definitely find their passion through personal projects. Take myself as an example - I wrote equity research reports in my free time and this really developed my passion for buy-side finance. These were my personal projects that I used to get a more profound sense of what some of the roles in capital markets do. I encourage students from any field to pursue their own passion projects - there are an endless amount of upsides to pursuing these projects.

Thanks for writing in Victor.

Do you have any parting words for our readers?

Be curious, driven and authentic.
Impatience with actions, patience with results.

Feel free to reach me at "Victor Ou" on LinkedIn
and my email is thevictorou@gmail.com



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