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## *Post-MBA Recruiting Tips*

In this edition of Hirewire we have compiled key recommendations for MBA students pursuing full-time investing roles after graduation. With the close of 2024 and a new year on the horizon, we are entering the peak time for post-MBA recruiting. While hiring at the post-MBA level had shown a significant decline for the 2023/2024 MBA classes, we are seeing more investment firms jump into MBA 2025 recruiting. Now is the time for you to prepare for interviews and continue to strengthen your network.

### *Leverage Your Network*

When you arrived at business school, you brought with you a strong professional network from your undergraduate experience and early career. You will leave business school with a broader network, so nurture the old and new relationships that you have built. Whether reaching out to former colleagues, current professors, new classmates, or alumni of your school, every interaction builds valuable insights and connections that could help your job search. Some connections can guide you to the right role, while others will share valuable insights that could help you clarify and shape your career goals. While networking can be demanding, each interaction contributes value, expanding and strengthening your professional network.

## BE PREPARED

Anticipate questions around the 'why' behind your career choices – such as why you began in banking, why you chose (or didn't choose) private equity before business school, why you pursued an MBA, why you interned in a new strategy and why you want to join XYZ firm as an investor. Offer thoughtful, genuine responses that highlight your intent, curiosity, experience, and focus. Reflecting on your professional experience and goals can help you craft a clear 'mission statement,' aligning your strengths with the message you want to convey.

In addition to the 'why' questions noted above, firms will also want to understand your prior experience, with specific focus on your transaction experience and professional growth in the first few years of your career. Be prepared to discuss each deal on your resume and review prior roles in detail. Expect questions on how your responsibilities evolved and whether you were offered a promotion or a clear path forward at your previous firm. If you were invited back post-MBA, mention this to underscore the impact and value of your contributions. The same applies to your MBA summer internship – be prepared to talk about your experience, what you learned, and whether or not there is an opportunity for you to join them full-time – remember that doing references with your internship is also considered to be fair-game by potential employers.

Lastly, you might find it helpful to reference our [previous newsletter highlighting sample interview questions](#).

## CONSIDER SHORT- AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

When evaluating an offer, try to look beyond only cash compensation to assess both short- and long-term benefits. Each firm structures their offers differently, so weigh any perceived compromises or benefits with an eye toward future potential. For example, accepting a Senior Associate role over a Vice President role may still be worthwhile if the firm's past funds have performed well, and a clear path to promotion exists due to current team structure.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN EVALUATING AN OFFER

**TITLE:** Rather than focusing solely on title (typically senior associate or vice president), take time to understand the responsibilities of the post-MBA role, how it progresses, and what role you will play on the investment team. If you do not have pre-MBA investing experience, you will be considered an associate by many private equity firms. Remember that a short-term compromise on title can lead to long-term career opportunity.

**PATH FORWARD:** As you evaluate an offer, research the firm's current team tenure, retention, and promotion track record. Were the firm's senior leaders promoted from within, or were they hired from other firms? If you want to find a long term home post-MBA, these are important questions to discuss with your potential employer – make it clear to them that you want to build your career at their firm.

**FUND PERFORMANCE & DEAL VOLUME:** Best practice is to understand a firm's fundraising track record and growth potential. Throughout an interview process, you will naturally get a sense of the fund's health and its future. Be sure to discuss these points to fully understand the vision of the firm – for example, perhaps you are wondering why a firm's new fund is the same size as its prior fund. You might learn that the firm intentionally set the same hard cap to focus on doing more deals in the lower middle market. Though the fund size is not growing, you will receive carry in the firm's new fund, and you are likely to gain meaningful deal experience if they are high-velocity investors.

**STRATEGY:** When interviewing for a post-MBA role, assess the firm's strategy by exploring its investment focus (majority vs. minority), industry and geographic specializations, deal volume, investment horizons, and fund structure. Additionally, consider the decision-making process, level of deal autonomy, involvement with portfolio companies, and typical exit strategies. Understanding these points will help you determine if the firm's investment philosophy aligns with your career goals. Please review a [prior newsletter expanding on different strategies](#).

**CULTURE FIT:** While the interview process helps a firm get to know you, each conversation is also an opportunity for you to learn more about the firm. Do you feel an easy rapport with the team, or is there a cultural mismatch? If the cultural fit does not feel right, consider spending more time with the Senior Associates or Vice Presidents on the team to better understand their experience within the firm. You spend more time with your colleagues than anyone else, so it is important to feel comfortable with the culture.

**COMPENSATION:** As you consider your compensation, remember to weigh the importance of the above factors. A firm with a strong cultural fit that pays less may still offer valuable long-term career growth, potentially leading to a partner role. Assess the cash offer in light of your cost of living and life stage. Carry – and calculating different potential outcomes – is another important consideration. If you plan to negotiate, do so in good faith, and come prepared with data points, ideally from similarly sized funds.

**LOCATION:** Geography can sometimes be a secondary consideration in post-MBA recruiting but plays a critical role, particularly for those targeting roles in smaller cities. Firms based outside major financial hubs tend to adopt a more reactionary approach to their hiring, making it essential for candidates with a geographic preference to be proactive.

If you are determined to build your career in a specific city, start by identifying firms that align with your goals. Use your network strategically to establish connections at these firms early, even if they do not currently have open roles. While it is not always possible for your timing and their needs to align perfectly, your efforts can lay the foundation for future opportunities. Should you take a role in a less desired location in the short term, these connections could prove invaluable when opportunities arise in your preferred city in the future.

**LINKS TO PRIOR AMITY HIREWIRE VOLUMES:**

[Volume 1: Tips for interview success](#)

[Volume 2: Make your resume stand out](#)

[Volume 3: Interview question tips](#)

[Volume 4: Alternative strategies](#)

[Volume 5: Navigating recruiting timelines](#)