

M&A Analyst, Goldman Sachs Hong Kong (moved from London)

Investment Banking › Interviews with M&A Bankers



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Askivy: Thank you for sharing your experience in Goldman Sachs with us. First of all, how is your experience of working at a top investment bank in Hong Kong?

It is very exciting, especially as I am working in a geographical location aligned to my long-term professional goals. The line between work and life is quite blurry colleagues rapidly become your intimate friends. Despite the long working hours, Hong Kong has a very diverse life with so many exciting things to explore. However be prepared, you will need to travel to mainland China very frequently.

Askivy: What are the key differences between working in London and Hong Kong, for example?

- 1) Longer hours in Hong Kong. It is normal to work for months without a single day off, depending on the deal volume of your team
- 2) Higher pay in Hong Kong. This is due to lower tax and a housing allowance from my employer. There are also potentially fatter bonuses when mega-IPO or landmark transactions happen
- 3) More client exposure and responsibility. Making calls to clients on a daily basis is normal. Even at the analyst level, you are stepping up client coverage responsibilities significantly compared to Londo. The ability to delegate responsibilities is key even at junior level, analyst delegating to interns or even more junior analysts happens every day
- 4) Work is more administration focused and unpredictable. Asia is an IPO driven market, and the sponsor system in HK means that more work streams need to be managed. I typically spend less time on building complex models and refining power points compared to London.

Askivy: What was your interview process like ?

I got in through as a lateral hire therefore the process might not be applicable for graduate hire. Two sources for job hunting: Company Website (yes, that works!) and Headhunters. The interview process is quite standard, but they will be very keen to understand why you are moving to HK from London (or anywhere else). The interview can be a combination of Mandarin and English. Lastly, given that Hong Kong is not the headquarter of Goldman Sachs, the process took very long. Once an offer is extended to you, the waiting time can easily exceed 1 month.

AskIvy: What are the key challenges you faced when you moved from London to Hong Kong?

1) cultural shock of living in a different part of the world

2) Longer working hours: working non-stop is expected. Dedication and resilience are very important characters in banking in HK

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