Banking and finance

From the start of his undergraduate degree, Taner Akcesme was keen to work in the world of finance, choosing to study business and economics. His decision clearly paid off, as he is now working as an Analyst in the Corporate Finance and Advisory department for Halk Yatırım Menkul Değerler A.Ş. (Halk Investment), the investment banking and brokerage arm of one of the leading banks in Turkey, T. Halk Bankası A.Ş. (Halkbank).

With competition for jobs in finance in the UK being so high, Taner was aware that trying to get into the banking sector would be tough. After applying for a number of positions he decided to change course and take advantage of being bilingual in English and Turkish. “With Turkey being an emerging market, I knew that there was a lot of business demand, therefore creating greater employment opportunities.”

However, despite having the right skills and qualifications, getting into finance wasn’t straightforward. “To be able to apply for jobs in Turkey I had to complete my military service, as I also had dual citizenship, which I completed within a month. From then on it took me seven months before I was hired by Halk Invest – whilst I had been offered other roles, I decided to wait until I was offered a position that would set me on the career path I wanted.”

Getting into the right role

Having been through the recruitment cycle, Taner knows how difficult it is to get into banking and finance. From his experiences he recommends that any graduates trying to get into this industry, either to start or change career, should brush up on their knowledge of the company and sector.

He also suggests speaking to HR departments directly: “I found it more helpful to find the contact details of those working within the HR department and to apply for a job this way, so that I could send my CV directly. When you face being eliminated from a job role by a computer, your chances of showing your skills is dramatically reduced thus limiting your chances to participate in a face-to-face interview. This is sometimes the only way to make personal contact.”

Future plans

In the future, Taner has no plans to move from Halk Invest: “The company has some big plans that I am involved in and these will help me achieve my goals, to hopefully have an active management role in an international investment bank. I have moved countries to achieve these ambitions so I will do whatever it takes to get to where I want to be.”

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