

# Finance Careers

Are you good at math? Do you like working with numbers and data? Are you interested in investments and how they work? You may want to explore a career in finance. Finance/Math is the basis of science, engineering, and technology. Finance workers use numerical, spatial, and logical relationships to study and solve problems and draw general conclusions about data, to test mathematical relationships, and to model the real world.

There are three main areas of finance; personal, public, and corporate finance:

- **Personal Finance:**  
Decisions are made about paying for education, financing goods such as real estate and vehicles, buying health and property insurance, and investing and saving for retirement.
- **Public Finance:**  
Financial dealings of states, as well as related public entities such as school districts or government agencies.
- **Corporate Finance:**  
Providing the funds for a business' activities; Balance risk and profitability, Review company reports and suggest efficiencies.

## What are some popular titles in finance?

- **Chief Financial Officer:**  
Responsible for the administrative, financial, and risk management operations of the company, including the development of a financial and operational strategy, and the ongoing development and monitoring of control systems designed to preserve company assets and report accurate financial results. Ensure all financial activities are in line with company goals and objectives, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles, and complying with government regulations and covenant obligations. Provides executive management with strategic, investment and operating analysis to make effective decisions.
- **Controller:**  
Responsible for developing, implementing and recommending policies and procedures for the financial function, and safeguarding company assets. Plans, organizes, and directs the activities of the finance department. Ultimately responsible for all monthly, quarterly and year-end closings including the year-end audit and the preparation of internal Operating Statements.
- **General Accountant:**  
Responsible for managing, reporting and safeguarding the Company's inventory assets, as well as assisting with the maintenance, analysis and control of all standard costs. Prepares asset, liability, and capital account entries by compiling and analyzing account information. Documents financial transactions by entering account information and recommends financial actions by analyzing accounting options. Summarizes current financial status by collecting information; preparing balance sheet, profit and loss statement, and other reports.

■ **Financial Analyst:**

Responsible for the preparation, review, analysis and distribution of financial statements associated with various costs as well as the preparation and analysis of various quarterly management reports. This position actively participates in the coordination, development, compilation, and analysis of the Company's Business Plans. Determines cost of operations by establishing standard costs; collecting operational data. Identifies financial status by comparing and analyzing actual results with plans and forecasts. Guides cost analysis process by establishing and enforcing policies and procedures; providing trends and forecasts; explaining processes and techniques; recommending actions. Improves financial status by analyzing results; monitoring variances; identifying trends; recommending actions to management.

■ **Tax Accountant:**

Responsible for the collection of tax-related information, reporting to taxation authorities at the federal, state, county, and local levels. Advise management on the tax impact of various corporate strategies. Devise tax strategies and create tax data collection systems. Prepare and update tax provision schedules, and tax filings. Advise management on the impact of new laws on tax liabilities.

*Note: Many finance professionals that wish to advance their career to a senior and/or management level position will become a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). CPA is a certification granted to qualified accountants who pass the Uniform Certified Public Accountant Examination and have met additional state education and experience requirements for membership in their respective professional accounting bodies and certification as a CPA. In most U.S. states, only CPAs are legally able to provide to the public attestation (including auditing) opinions on financial statements. Many CPAs are members of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants or their state CPA society.*

■ **Financial Planner:**

Responsible to guide individuals and companies in making budgetary, savings and investment decisions. Working with individuals, interview clients, analyze their financial information, recommend financial plans and monitor outcomes, to meet short- and long-term financial goals. Certified financial planners also have a good command of investments and security planning, estate planning, tax planning, employee benefits planning and insurance planning.

*Note: Many Financial Planners go for certification credentials to earn respect from clients and/or to open their own private practice. The Certified Financial Planner (CFP) designation is a professional certification for financial planners conferred by the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards. The individual must meet education, examination, experience and ethics requirements, and pay an ongoing certification fee.*

**Earning a Bachelor's degree is your entry into a career in finance. Typical topics of study include financial management, technology, and investments. A Master of Business Administration (MBA) with a focus in finance or a master's degree in finance is your next step to advancement in your career. These majors' help you to applying the principles you've learned in the business world to create strategic plans, design new programs, create policies, and think about the big picture and how to achieve positive end results. Most people who earn a Bachelor's and or Master's degree in finance work in areas including commercial banking, financial planning, investment banking, money managing, insurance and real estate.**