



**Financial Management Association**  
**One Washington Square**  
**Accounting & Finance Dept, BT 850**  
**San Jose, CA 95192**  
[www.cob.sjsu.edu/fma](http://www.cob.sjsu.edu/fma)

**Fall 2009 Alumni Panel Meeting Minutes**  
**Speakers: Charlie, Ezekial, Haywan, Veronica**  
October 27, 2009  
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM  
Held at BBC Room # 202

1. Speakers : Charlie , Ezekiel, Haywan, Veronica
2. Background:
  - a. Charlie: Member of FMA, Webmaster of FMA, AIS Major
  - b. Ezekiel: Member of ISACA, AIS Major
  - c. Haywan: Marketing Major
  - d. Veronica: Finance Major
3. Comments about AIS:
  - a. AIS background is a good degree to have.
  - b. The technical aspects of AIS is very helpful and makes you more marketable in the job market
4. Haywan: Works for Cisco. Works in their marketing organization. On the quantitative side of marketing.
5. What advice can you give students? (i.e classes, extracurricular)
  - a. Haywan: Formula for success:
    - i. Different variables that you have to take into account
      1. Academics. 3.5 GPA or above
      2. Leadership
      3. Volunteering
      4. Internship: something relevant to your major.
      5. Being able to multitask
    - ii. Haywan was held leadership positions for two years
    - iii. Networking
      1. It doesn't work when you try to contact someone after years of not talking to someone.
      2. Keep developing and growing relationships
  - b. Ezekiel:
    - i. It's great to have a very high GPA, but other things come into play, such as holding leadership positions, and extracurricular activities. Should be diverse.
    - ii. Networking is important
      1. Be nice to people
      2. Step out of your comfort zone
      3. Stay in touch with people
  - c. Charlie: Don't get to comfortable with any single thing you're doing.
    - i. Always put yourself through new situations and environments.
    - ii. The biggest enemy to success is complacency.
    - iii. Networking
      1. Be careful with what you put on your social networking page



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2. If you're with a company, you're a representative of the company, so the way you present yourself is important
  
6. What do you think an appropriate conversation starter is?
  - a. Charlie:
    - i. Research topics that are relevant to the person you're talking to.
  - b. Haywan
    - i. People like talking about themselves, so ask them a question about themselves
    - ii. Ask them for a business card and follow up
  - c. Ezekiel
    - i. Ask them a question about themselves.
  
7. How did you like the transition from the private industry to public accounting (directed at Ezekiel)?
  - a. In the private sector, at first it was challenging, but that challenge ended after a few years.
  - b. Working at the big four was a new challenge
    - i. Very dynamic work environment
  - c. Between the two, Ezekiel would rather work at the big four first.
    - i. Get to see a lot of different industries
    - ii. Hours are long, but worth it because of the experience and the opportunities
    - iii. Hours can vary if you communicate what you want with your managers.
  
8. How hard was it to find a job for you because of the job market (directed at Haywan)?
  - a. It was not hard at all, because she satisfied the formula for success
  
9. Advice for approaching negotiating a salary.
  - a. Ezekiel
    - i. Research the average salary of the position you're applying for
    - ii. If you did not do any research, ask them what salary is reasonable for that position.
    - iii. Ask people who are in that similar position
    - iv. Communicate with your manager if you do feel that you deserve a salary increase
  - b. Haywan
    - i. Asked what their pay scale is
      1. See where you stand in that pay scale
    - ii. You can get another offer and justify it
  - c. Charlie:
    - i. At PwC, the compensation schedules are very structures
    - ii. After getting your annual review, and you perform well, you can
  
10. Self employed, to big four, to self employed (directed at Charlie)
  - a. While in school, helped to automate systems at old high school
  - b. Applied for many companies, endured a lot of interviews, and finally got into PwC.
    - i. Most fast paced environments he has ever been in
      1. Traveled a lot and commuted from San Jose to San Francisco a lot.
    - ii. Learned the importance of being a self-motivated person



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- c. Took a break and visited uncle in Texas that runs a chain of supermarkets
  - i. Decided that the self-starter image was what he wanted to try, so he turned down offer by PwC.
- d. Now helps the family business

11. Where do you see yourself in 10 to 20 years professionally

- a. Haywan
  - i. Everything she is doing now is to set her up for an MBA degree
  - ii. Wants to be an executive
  - iii. Wants to start a nonprofit to help people
- b. Ezekiel
  - i. With position he is holding currently, there are a lot of choices
  - ii. Wants to be an IT or project manager
  - iii. You have to know what you want in life and realign your goals to get there
- c. Charlie:
  - i. Work life balance
  - ii. One of the reasons why he chose to run own business, is the flexibility of it.
    - 1. able to care for elders, as well as have a family

12. Veronica

- a. Graduated in spring of 2002 with finance
- b. Joined parent's company
  - i. Sheet metal company that was a sole proprietorship
- c. Wanted more public finance experience, so joined Ilog
  - i. Acquired by IBM
- d. Now works for IBM
- e. Work life balance
  - i. Be assertive with breaks when you need them
- f. Formula for success
  - i. Be yourself.
  - ii. Knowing what you want.
  - iii. Communicate what you need

13. How did you help your family business automate their business (directed at Charlie)?

- a. Created an excel spreadsheet to help keep track of sales
- b. Used Access to create daily reports

14. Why did you choose to start a nonprofit?

- a. Her experience and her lack of resources has inspired her to create resources for others.

15. Having mentors are important

- a. Find someone that you can look to as your mentor
- b. Some times they just appear when you don't expect it
- c. You can go to the HR department to find that help you need



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16. Announcement

- a. Please write an email to address to give her feedback on anything (can be from today's lecture or anything you'd would like to see again)
  - i. Vicepresident.fma@gmail.com

*Minutes submitted by:*  
*Elizabeth Le*  
*November 1, 2009*