



Justin Overdorff

Business Development and Finance

BBA '04

Justin Overdorff has always had a mind for math problems. Throughout his career, Justin has switched industries and firms several times, but he always relies on his quantitative background and ability to make strategic decisions without complete information.

Justin began taking classes in the business school during his sophomore year and decided to focus on finance. He enrolled in Professor Agnew's Money and Debt Market course where he was introduced to bond math and the fixed income capital markets. He quickly appreciated this math-centric approach to finance and began conducting informational interviews with alumni, like older fraternity brothers, who worked in the field. These conversations helped to narrow his interests and search for a summer internship. In the fall of his junior year, he participated in the Wall Street Program, which helped him determine that he was not interested in working as an investment banker.

Justin was fortunate enough to have connections to a few trading desks through a relative who ran a mortgage lending business. After networking, he received offers from three banks and decided to accept an offer to join Wachovia in Charlotte in their mortgage-backed security trading group. Justin had a successful summer with a great team and was surprised by the freedom he was afforded. In the fall, the entire desk at Wachovia was moved to Bank of America, which extended an offer to Justin.

After graduation, Justin joined Bank of America on their trading floor. He excelled at trading and enjoyed the work, but realized that he had limited exit opportunities. After speaking with friends, he decided to explore Private Equity and Growth Equity. He was able to interview for a few positions and ultimately accepted a position in the Growth Equity firm Summit Partners in Boston. The job was similar to a corporate finance role because he was building models in Excel and learning a lot about software, technology, and health care IT firms. Over the course of four years, he worked with seven companies on live deals and helped consider more than one hundred transactions. The most important skill that he learned was how to make risky decisions without perfect data and be comfortable with ambiguity.

After a few years with Summit Partners, Justin decided to return to school to pursue an MBA at The Wharton School. He was unsure at the time if he wanted to return to investing or work directly for a company that was in Summit's portfolio, like a software or Internet company. He ultimately decided to join TechStars in New York City, a start-up accelerator that offers entrepreneurs mentorship and access to angel and venture capital investors. Justin worked with about a dozen start-ups at a time to help to evaluate investments and execute business development deals. Justin was able to bring his business acumen and client facing experience to firms that were usually composed exclusively of three to five technical engineers. After a year, Justin accepted an offer from a former colleague at Summit Partners to move to San Francisco to work for Yelp as the Head of Mobile Business Development. He currently leads a large team that is focused on mobile distribution, product strategy, monetization and growth in new markets.

