

Featured Interview

Charles Alvarez, CAIA
Associate Director of
Financial Research



Hye Young Jeong, CAIA

Hye Young has over 12 years of financial industry experience, of which 8 years have been devoted to asset management. Hye Young is currently in Client Services & Marketing role at Western Asset Management in Singapore, in charge of North/South Asian institutional clients for all fixed income strategies which also include structured products. Prior to joining Western in 2016, she served as a Senior Client Service Officer for Mutual Fund Business at Baring Asset Management in Korea. She was responsible for overall management of relationship with distribution partners.

After her MBA, Hye Young took a challenge and became a credit analyst in Shinhan Bank Singapore branch, where she performed credit analysis to assign risk ratings. From 2007 to 2012, she held positions as a Relationship Manager and Infrastructure Fund Manager at Shinhan BNP Paribas Asset Management in Korea, where she developed relationship with clients for expansion of retail fund business and analyzed infrastructure projects for investment in fund. Hye Young started her financial industry career with JPMorgan Chase Bank in Korea.

Hye Young earned her MBA from Melbourne Business School in Australia and Bachelor of Business Administration from Ewha Womans University in Korea. She is a charterholder of Chartered Alternative Investment Analyst (CAIA) and associate member of American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA).

We recently distributed a Joint Task Analysis survey (JTA) which collected inputs from fellow CAIA members and investment professionals to determine the future course of the CAIA curriculum. In appreciation for participating in this survey, we sat-down with Hye Young Jeon and got an opportunity to better understand what led her down the path of Alternative Investments. Below is a transcription of the Q&A session we had.

What inspired you to go in to the financial field?

My personal interest in finance started when I was attending the university. While studying at Ewha Womans University in Korea, I simultaneously started to work towards the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) to strengthen my financial knowledge. Secondly; at that time the financial industry in South Korea was growing rapidly, so it was a great way for me to capture the opportunities that were going to become available.

What were your biggest challenges to get here?

I started my career with JP Morgan Chase Bank in South Korea, which required people with extensive experience and a high degree of financial knowledge. Entry level jobs have a chicken and egg problem. Big companies would like someone with experience at an entry level position, but you can't get the experience for the entry level role. However; since I had my AICPA it helped paved the way for me to start my career.

Where do you believe the industry is going? Where do you see the most room for growth, and how do you see yourself being a part of it?

Since the financial industry is rapidly changing, you really have to keep learning. I strongly believe, especially in this field that I would never be able to say I know it all. Given the many changes after the global financial crisis, I see a lot of the growth in compliance. I also see a growth for non-traditional or customized products for clients, hence the importance of continuing education.

What advice would you give your younger self on the first day of working in this industry?

Doing the job task well should always be the primary responsibility. However; if I could go back I believe I would emphasize with great importance networking. Looking back now I can see how networking would have broaden my contacts in the industry and would have been a definitive positive in my career.

Which countries do you believe provide the best opportunities now for a person who is entering the financial industry and why?

The financial industry in Asia has been growing rapidly, that helps developing Asian countries to create opportunities. And although I came to Singapore for personal reasons, so far, I enjoy working in Singapore. And I am seeing a lot of real estate and hedge fund companies expanding here. I also network and participate in our local CAIA chapter events here in Singapore. I would also explore working in the US and Europe, as I'm sure it will be very different from everything I have experienced.

Finally shifting gears to CAIA, what made you work towards the CAIA designation?

How has CAIA furthered your career?

I started my career mainly working with structured products such as ABS, which initially gave me exposure into the world of alternative investments. Also, in my second job at BNP Paribas Asset Management in South Korea, I was an infrastructure manager. I was lucky to have exposure to the alternative investment field. From then on, I wanted to learn about other alternative investment assets, this is when I started to pursue the CAIA designation. In terms of education and preparing for my role it has helped tremendously. While I was getting my MBA in Melbourne I was simultaneously looking for a job. My approach for looking for a job was to first look for CAIA members in my community; which turned out to be a very warm and welcoming group. In fact, when I came to Singapore I continued to remain connected with the CAIA community and frequently attend the educational/networking events, which without a doubt has helped my career greatly.