



A Day in the Life of an Investment Banking Associate at Harris Williams

Bethel Hailemichael is an associate in the Healthcare & Life Sciences Group at Harris Williams, a global investment bank specializing in M&A advisory services. Since March, Bethel has been working remotely from his home in the Church Hill neighborhood of Richmond, Virginia, the firm's headquarters. Recently, we spoke with Bethel from his home, via Zoom. Below is an edited version of that conversation.

7:00 a.m. I wake up and check for any emails that came across the night before.

7:30 a.m. After a quick breakfast, I take my dog out for a short walk before heading to the quote unquote office—which is the upstairs office in my house. Before the pandemic, I was lucky enough to move into a new area—the Church Hill neighborhood of Richmond. This gives me an opportunity see some nature each day as I take morning walks with my dog, which has been great.

8:00 a.m. I start the workday by checking to see if any new emails came across during the preceding hour. I see an email from a VP on one of my deals with a couple of bullet points for a call we have in the afternoon. So, in the next few hours, before the call, I'll need to draft an outline for the call and review the work from one of my colleagues, which was completed the night before.

10:00 a.m. We have our weekly firmwide morning meeting. We interface with leadership and discuss deal activity, market themes, as well as get a general pulse of the firm.

These meetings usually start off with Ned Valentine, our executive managing director, discussing broad market themes and performance to date. It's also an opportunity to announce any firmwide initiatives. After the initial announcements, we ask Industry Groups to share any relevant details from the deals they're working on. This allows us to share key highlights across the firm.

I think these meetings are a key differentiator for associates joining the firm. The consistent communication allows you to understand what's happening across the full firm and how your day-to-day activities contribute. I think that this level of transparency with all the employees really sets us apart, and it's impactful when you're new to the firm. In the virtual world, these meetings have proven to be even more important. They're great forums for everyone to get insights from each other.

11:45 a.m. I check in with the analyst that I'm working with to write a confidential information memorandum (CIM). We align on the day's critical tasks. We update financial projections, incorporate market study research, and finalize some key data points.

1:30 p.m. While eating lunch, I scan industry news—MergerMarket, Google alerts, PitchBook, and Bloomberg.

2:00 p.m. I lead a full-time analyst interview. Since joining the firm, I've taken the great opportunity to be heavily involved with Harris Williams' recruiting efforts and join the firm's recruiting committee. This has given me the opportunity to help build the firm's culture and further its growth.

3:30 p.m. Our deal team has our weekly client call. This is a great opportunity for us to connect with our client and discuss the agenda for the week ahead, as well as highlight key work streams and deliverables.

4:30 p.m. I lead our data room call with a client and our client's CFO as we prepare to go to market in a deal. We're working closely with our client to finalize the data room in preparation for due diligence.

5:00 p.m. Again, I scan news to see if there are any breaking events relevant to the deals I'm working on. I come across a new travel advisory, which may impact one of our deals. I forward a summary of the article to my deal team.

5:30 p.m. I have a chat with a prospective summer analyst. One benefit of sitting in the seat as an associate is being able to support the next generation of analysts; I do my best to connect with analysts who proactively reach out to schedule coffee chats.

6:30 p.m. My VP and I have a quick call to discuss a supplemental analysis that we're completing—a partnership with a third-party consulting firm. On the call, we discuss our initial analysis and outline our next steps and key deliverables.

7:00 p.m. I check in with a colleague I'm working with to discuss a marketing project—we're drafting a white paper for publication. We've been continuing to build out our healthcare and life science sub-vertical expertise, which has been incredibly exciting. Being a part of sub-vertical development at the associate level has been very impactful.

8:00 p.m. Before dinner, I get in a quick home workout. Since working from home has limited our normal mobility around the office, I try to be as active as I can during the week—even if it's carving out 15 or 20 minutes each day. Today, I have a 30-minute break, so I take full advantage of that.

9:00 p.m. I review the updates we made to the CIM and make final changes before sending it around to the team.

10:00 p.m. I prepare for tomorrow and sign off for the night.

This post was sponsored by Harris Williams.