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How I Became a Quant: Insights from 25 of Wall Street's Elite

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Praise for How I Became a Quant

"Led by two top-notch quants, Richard R. Lindsey and Barry Schachter, *How I Became a Quant* details the quirky world of quantitative analysis through stories told by some of today's most successful quants. For anyone who might have thought otherwise, there are engaging personalities behind all that number crunching!"

--Ira Kawaller, Kawaller & Co. and the Kawaller Fund

"A fun and fascinating read. This book tells the story of how academics, physicists, mathematicians, and other scientists became professional investors managing billions."

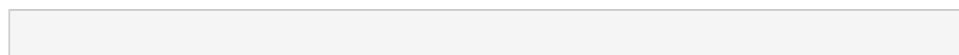
--David A. Krell, President and CEO, International Securities Exchange

"*How I Became a Quant* should be must reading for all students with a quantitative aptitude. It provides fascinating examples of the dynamic career opportunities potentially open to anyone with the skills and passion for quantitative analysis."

--Roy D. Henriksson, Chief Investment Officer, Advanced Portfolio Management

"Quants"--those who design and implement mathematical models for the pricing of derivatives, assessment of risk, or prediction of market movements--are the backbone of today's investment industry. As the greater volatility of current financial markets has driven investors to seek shelter from increasing uncertainty, the quant revolution has given people the opportunity to avoid unwanted financial risk by literally trading it away, or more specifically, paying someone else to take on the unwanted risk.

How I Became a Quant reveals the faces behind the quant revolution, offering you the chance to learn firsthand what it's like to be a quant today. In this fascinating collection of Wall Street war stories, more than two dozen quants detail their roots, roles, and contributions, explaining what they do and how they do it, as well as outlining the sometimes unexpected paths they have followed from the halls of academia to the front lines of an investment revolution.



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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

The "quants"—Wall Street's disciples of quantitative analysis—have become the market's new superstars. Their mathematical models are now the basis for such financial market innovations as exotic derivatives, structured investment products, quantitative trading strategies, and portfolio selection.

What brought about this path-breaking investment revolution? Some cite the beginning of trading in exchange-listed equity options in 1973, while others credit the arrival of desktop computing around 1980. But perhaps the most important factor was the dramatic increase in the volatility of prices. It was this aversion to increasing uncertainty experienced by financial market participants—real, living, breathing people—that led to the quant revolution. So who are these people who develop the mathematical models that create new ways to allow people to modify their exposure to risk? How do they do what they do? Where did they come from? In *How I Became a Quant*, you will find firsthand accounts direct from the people who were swept into, and then helped fashion, today's "quant-driven," dynamic world of finance.

More than two dozen quants tell their stories here and detail the varying paths they have followed—often from university graduate departments of physics, mathematics, and engineering—to Wall Street. Peter Carr, head of Quantitative Financial Research at Bloomberg, tells of his progression from cornering the local paper delivery market as a boy in Toronto to teaching at Cornell to ultimately helping Bloomberg start up its quant group. Leslie Rahl, President of Capital Market Risk Advisors, describes how she excelled in math and science as a girl, went on to MIT—so as not to be seen as "weird," as she thought might happen at other schools—and joined Citibank at a time when they had only two women VPs in the entire worldwide organization. Andrew Weisman, Managing Director of Merrill Lynch, reveals an academic background that began with study of the classics—Plato to Popper, Beowulf to Virginia Woolf, and oddly enough, swimming lessons.

These unlikely superstars of Wall Street now provide the intellectual horsepower to fulfill the dream of unlimited ability to manage risks through trading financial instruments. These are the stories behind their careers.

From the Back Cover

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"Quants"—those who design and implement mathematical models for the pricing of derivatives, assessment of risk, or prediction of market movements—face the unprecedented challenge of navigating some of the most volatile markets we have ever seen.

How I Became a Quant reveals the individuals behind this revolution, offering you the chance to learn firsthand what it's like to be a quant today. In this fascinating collection of Wall Street war stories, more than two dozen quants detail their roots, roles, and contributions, explaining what they do and how they do it, as well as outlining the sometimes unexpected paths they have followed from the halls of academia to the front lines of an investment revolution.

About the Author

Richard R. Lindsey, PhD, MBA, is President and CEO of the Callcott Group, LLC, a quantitative consulting firm. For eight years, he was president of Bear, Stearns Securities Corporation. Dr. Lindsey is also Chairman of the International Association of Financial Engineers. Prior to joining Bear Stearns, Dr. Lindsey was the director of market regulation for the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Before joining the SEC, he was a finance professor at Yale University in the School of Management. Dr. Lindsey has done extensive work in the areas of market micro-structure (the design and regulation of securities markets) and the pricing of derivative securities.

Barry Schachter, PhD, is Director of Quantitative Resources at Moore Capital Management. He is on the advisory board of the International Association of Financial Engineers and is cochair of its Education Committee. Schachter spent the early part of his career in academia, most of that time on the faculties at Simon Fraser University and Tulane University. He also founded and maintains GloriaMundi.org, a Web site for risk managers, and BelRanto.typepad.com, a Web log on risk and hedge funds.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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