

Equity Research and the Top-Down Investment Approach

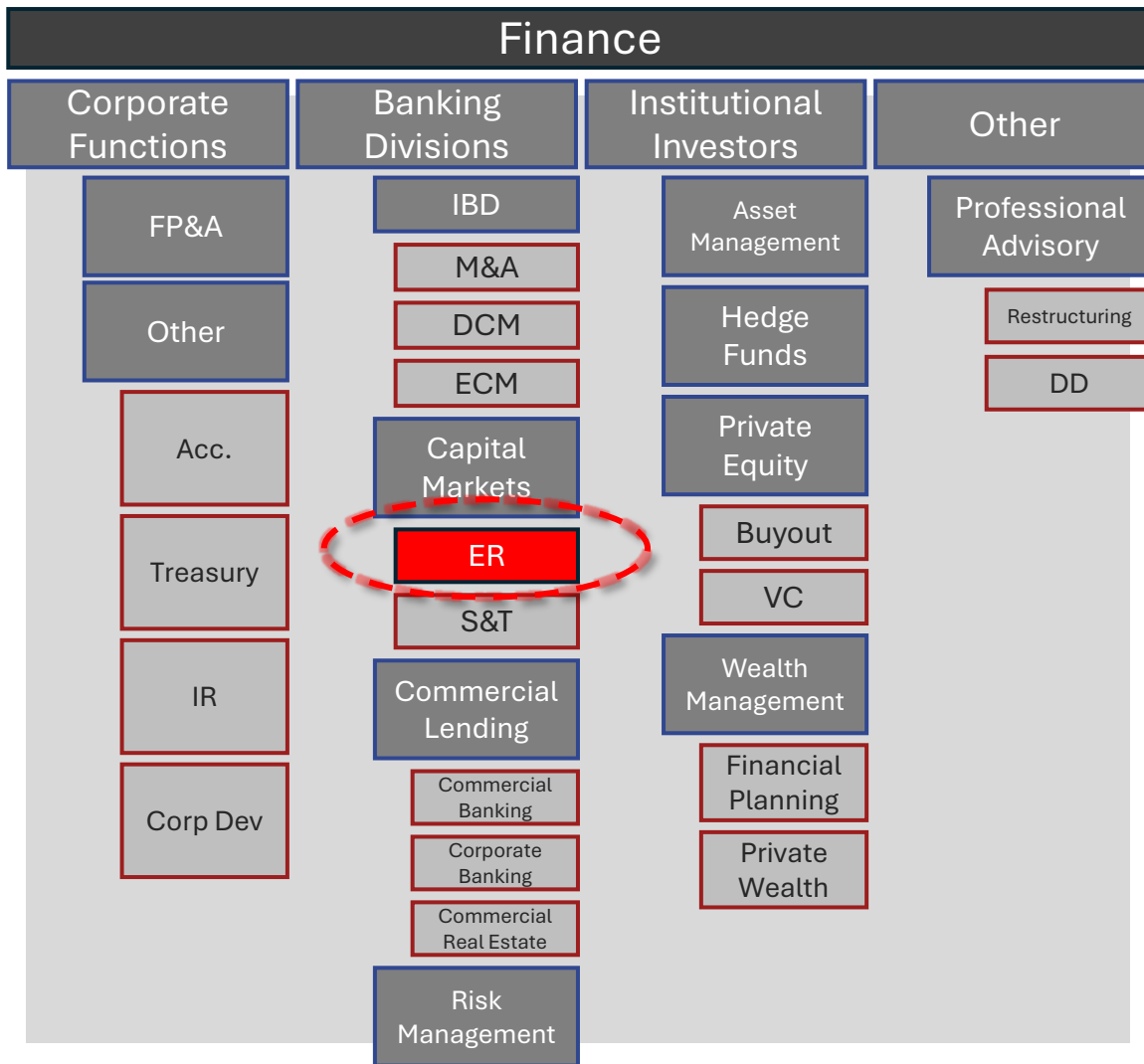
October 2025



UTMCap Alumni Justin D. – Studied Financial Economics – Investment Banking Analyst at LBS

Equity Research 10,000ft Primer

UTMCAP Workshop #1



Equity Research

- Is the process of analyzing companies and other data to produce investment insights and recommendations
- Combines modelling, valuation and other research into published reports – often on a quarterly basis
- Meant to inform investors and support decision making, and to support other business lines within the bank

Interactions

- Retail market -> buys and reads reports to follow recommendations
- Company -> pay you to publish reports (sell side analysts)
- Institutional investors -> pay you for research (buy side analysts)
- Other bank teams -> also ask thoughts on things (steal your models) and ask for advice

ie. ER analysts are the company (and sometimes industry) experts, who lend their advice to anyone who is willing to pay for it

**A note on the current state of ER

Sources: CFI Career Map



ER Primer

Approaches

Top Down

Example

Pointers

Takeaways

There are approximately **[]** publicly listed companies worldwide as of April 2025, according to [Investopedia](#). This number is tracked by the [World Federation of Exchanges](#), which monitors 78 major stock exchanges globally.

Sources:



ER Primer

Approaches

Top Down

Example

Pointers

Takeaways

53,795 companies

1 day each

147 years



Why Explicit Approaches?

Efficiency

- Without anywhere to start, the process can be overwhelming
 - There's a lot of data points that exist in the world
- We need a way to ensure we don't miss anything, and we can keep the same quality of work over multiple projects

Learning and Career Relevance

- Learning how to invest and learning how people look at companies is a universal skill, even if you don't work in finance
 - ✓ To understand the news better
 - ✓ To understand personal finance better
 - ✓ To understand your big purchases better

Justification

- Methods and explicit processes help us justify, explain and persuade others that we are correct, and we have thought of everything even if we aren't or haven't
- Can't just point to results or returns as a reason to invest

Collaboration

- Outside of school, things are done in teams, with lots of interaction and collaboration
- Understanding of [] will help you be well liked and make your interactions more successful
 - Other people
 - Other jobs
 - Other processes

20%
content

40%
talking around it

40%
making it look good

** A note on investing and finance glue

Sources:



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Approaches

Top Down

Example

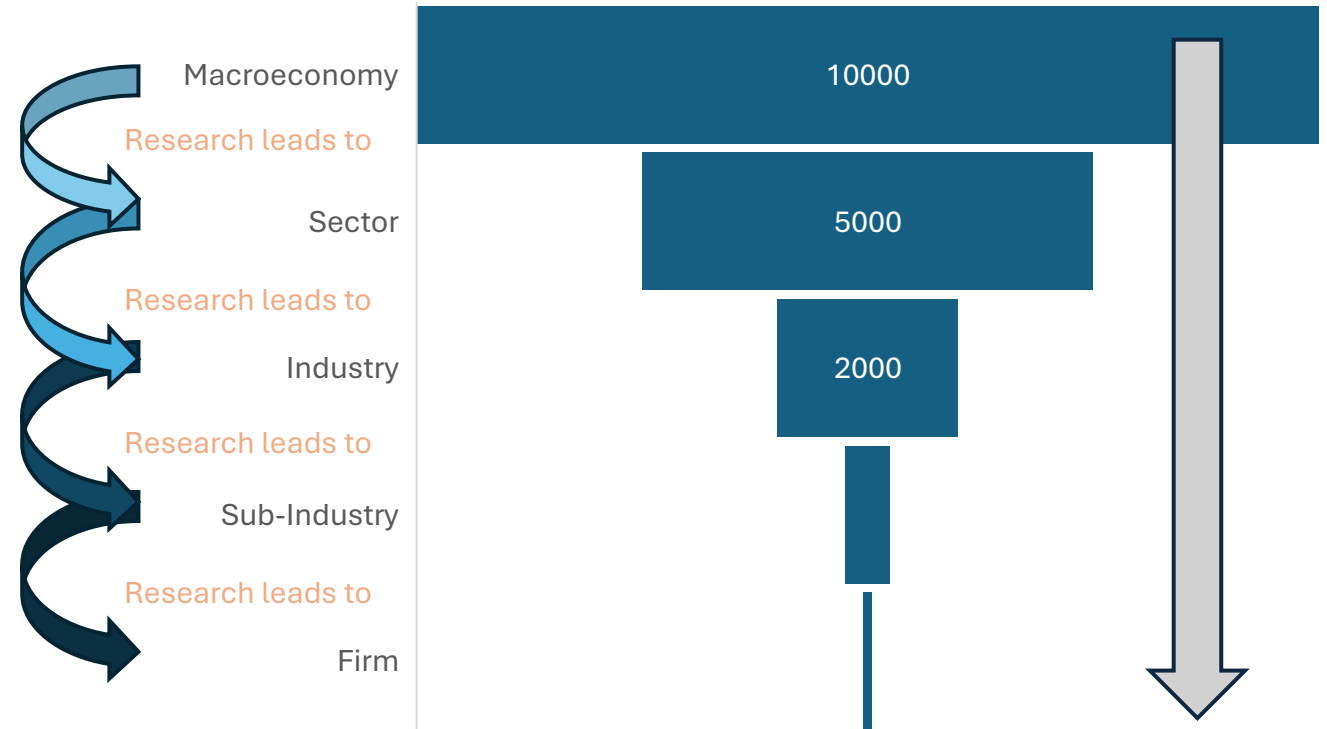
Pointers

Takeaways

The Top-Down Approach

Characterization

- A stock selection process that involves starting the study by looking at macroeconomic factors before working down to microeconomic factors and then firm specific metrics
- UTMCap is organized like this, with some adjustments
- The top-down approach is contrasted with the “bottom-up” approach, which is characterized by:
 - Focusing on individual companies in extreme detail
 - Looks for mispriced securities
 - Asks what companies can succeed in any context, rather than what companies will succeed in this context



Pros

Lessens risk by examining context

Cons

Could miss outlier companies who do really well

“Rather than looking for the needle in the haystack, better to find the haystack with the most needles in it”

– Some Wealth Mgmt Firm



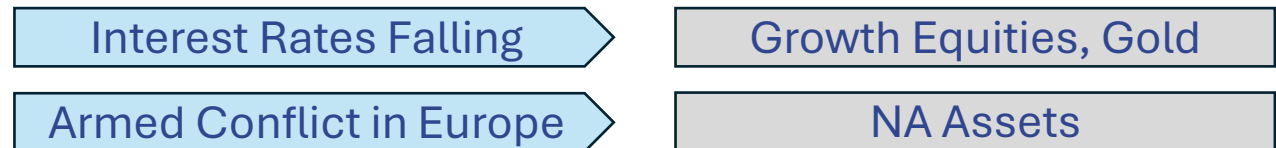
Factors

- ☐ Gross Domestic Product
- ☐ Geopolitical Risks
- ☐ Countries growth profiles and asset condition
- ☐ Local Currency Climate
- ☐ Policy
- ☐ Trade Balances
- ☐ Inflation
- ☐ Interest Rates
- ☐ Demographics
- ☐ Employment Rates
- ☐ Energy Prices
- ☐ Government Spending

Focus and Goals

- **To develop an opinion**
- To narrow down the ‘investable’ universe
- Identify asset classes, countries and regions which will outperform the rest (or your benchmark)
- You are looking for the highest risk:reward ratio

Example



Indicators

Leading Indicators

- Change direction before the economy
- Used to anticipate business cycle movements

Coincident Indicators

- Change direction with the economy
- Real-time assessment

Lagging Indicators

- Change direction after the economy
- Confirm past movements



Factors

- ☐ Cyclicalitay
- ☐ Interest Rate Sensitivity
- ☐ Commodity Exposure
- ☐ Regulatory Environment
- ☐ Secular Growth Themes
- ☐ Capital Markets Activity
- ☐ Global Competitiveness
- ☐ Technological Disruption

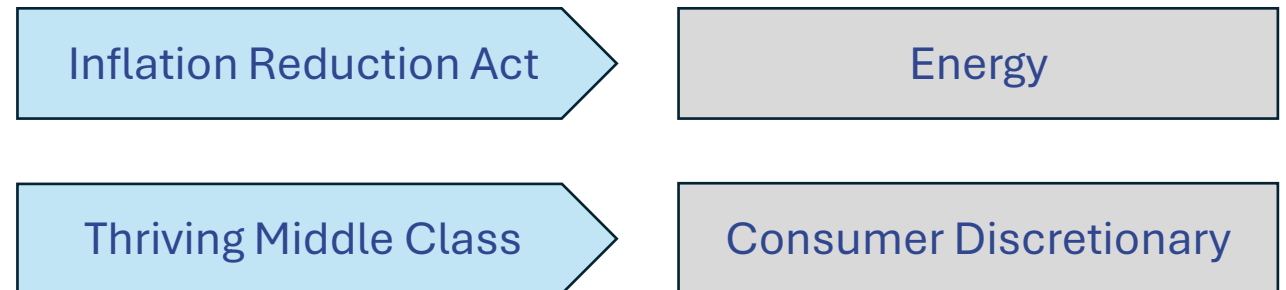
Indices

- When comparing sectors, a strong consideration is to compare the index that tracks that sector
 - ie. [MSCI Indices] are designed to capture the depth, breadth and evolution of industry sectors and markets. ... Sector classifications are non-overlapping, allowing for a complete building block approach to an investment universe [Link](#)

Focus and Goals

- To develop an opinion
- To narrow down the 'investable' universe
- Compare the sectors in that place, or other 'sections' in the asset class
- You will find some areas are booming and some are particularly interesting or opportunity-filled
- Identify:
 - What KPIs matter, and
 - Trends in the space
- You are looking for the highest risk:reward ratio

Example



Industry Screening

This is first major team decision – i had people pitch industries and we picked best one based on a vote

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Focus and Goals

- To develop an opinion
- To narrow down the 'investable' universe
- Find particular areas that are booming and some areas that are filled with opportunity
- Spot trends and disruptions
- You are looking for the highest risk:reward ratio
- Consider using IBISWorld

Indices Con't

- Within a broader sector, it is helpful to have numbers to compare industries
 - I.e. Within the [materials] or [metals & mining] space, we have the GDX and the GDXJ to represent gold mining and junior gold miners
- Also helpful to compare against the broader sector index again

Example

Energy Sector – Oil Producers vs Renewable Power

- Oil producers benefit from higher commodity prices and global demand growth, but face policy risk from decarbonization
- Renewables gain from government subsidies, carbon pricing, and ESG capital inflows – could also be more attractive to institutional investors if they have low exposure (part of my UTMCap thesis)

Consumer Sector – Luxury Goods vs Discount Retailers

- The luxury end of retail thrives on strong GDP growth and rising wealth (emerging market demand especially)
- Discount/value retail outperforms in recessions or inflationary periods, as consumers trade down and have less to spend

Sources:



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Company Screening

This is a major team decision – i had people present preliminary findings and voted best one

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Value Investing

- Finding companies trading below their intrinsic value
- Low multiples, but not low quality
- This should backdrop every level of research and decision making
- *The Intelligent Investor – Ben Graham*
- *One Up on Wall St – Peter Lynch*

Final Screening

- The last step is centred around doing a screen, and building a comp table – this could also be the one you use in your final presentation
- The screen could contain every company in the (now small) ‘investable universe’, but will likely be narrowed down based on some additional criteria (no penny stocks, nothing owned by PE, etc.)
- Can do as deep a dive from here as you want, but could be a valid strategy to invest in 4/5 stocks on the screener

Focus and Goals

- **To develop an opinion**
- To narrow down the ‘investable’ universe
- Define your investment philosophy and complete a thesis
- Create a watchlist
- **Now listing out all the companies and comparing them**
- You are looking for the highest risk:reward ratio

Example

- Deciding between five different non-alcoholic, US beverage companies with a comp table – you decide that Dr Pepper Snapple is undervalued and buy it

Company Name	Market Data			Financial Data				Valuation			
	Price	M Cap	TEV	Sales	EBITDA	EBIT	Earnings	EV/Sales	EBITDA	EBIT	P/E
	\$/sh	US\$M	US\$M	US\$M	US\$M	US\$M	US\$M	x	x	x	x
The Coca-Cola Company	38.14	168,041	185,122	46,854	13,104	11,127	7,381	4.0	25.1	14.1	22.8
Pepsico	81.37	123,883	143,824	66,415	12,344	9,878	5,618	2.2	25.6	11.7	22.1
Dr Pepper Snapple Group	52.31	10,326	12,764	5,997	1,319	1,103	620	2.1	20.6	9.7	16.7
Monster Beverage Corp	69.62	11,618	11,004	2,246	606	584	357	4.9	30.8	18.2	32.5
National Beverage Corp	20.81	964	968	645	78	66	41	1.5	23.6	12.4	23.5
Median	52.31	11,618	12,764	5,997	1,319	1,103	620	2.2	25.1	12.4	22.8
Mean	52.45	62,966	70,736	24,431	5,490	4,552	2,803	2.9	25.1	13.2	23.5

Sources: CFI Comparable Company Analysis Page



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Macro View

Why Canada?

- Canada experiencing economic shift?
 - GDP per capita
 - Government/policy reform
- Tax Reasons
- Government spending forecasts

Macro Factors:

- GDP flat or fallen recently, and we expect an uptick now
- Currency is stable
- BoC cut rates in their last meeting, signaling a turning point
- Energy prices falling

ie. Canada is poised for relative increase in economic activity while other countries are trending the opposite way

Industry

Mining?

- Top mining jurisdiction
- TSX/TSXV are mostly mining companies
- Commodity cycle turning from the bottom upwards

Gold Mining

- Perfect storm rallying gold to ATHs
 - Geopolitical instability
 - Interest rates
 - USD weakening
- Current environment of slowing global growth and continued rate cuts favor gold over base metals

KPIs

- AISC
- Production Growth
- Reserve Life
- Leverage

Company

Jr. Gold Mining

- Greater leverage to gold prices
- Overlooked and undervalued
- Equity prices not aligned (lagging) commodity prices currently

Wesdome

- Producing + development assets
- Trading at discount to NAV to peers
- Strong AISC
- Growth pipeline not fully priced in
- Manageable leverage

ie. Wesdome is in the 'investable universe' of Canadian Jr. gold miners, is cheaper than the others, and is of equal or greater quality than the others



Overfit

- Balance the macro and the fundamentals
 - Don't force one to fit when it doesn't
- Remember that the market is forward looking, and a lot of things are priced in – need to be a bit creative

Master of None

- Start to decide what sectors and industries you have a personal interest in, and learn about them
- By the time you recruit or find a job post-grad, you should have a deeper understanding of some industries than others
- Learn about yourself – don't be wishy washy

Investor Lens

- Develop a personal 'investment lens' as soon as you can
- Just like *gamesense*, over time you will notice what are good investments and what aren't – not always a science

**A note on mining IRRs and NPVs

Collaboration

- **Talk to people**
- If you want to know about KPIs or what is happening in an industry, ask an expert in addition to doing your own research
- If you want to know more about a company, call an ER analyst who covers them or the company IR team
- Remember, everyone in finance is also an investor



Takeaways & Connections

Takeaways

Persuasion

- Structure improves pitches and makes you more convincing
- Allows you to talk around things more easily
- Makes disagreements and changes easier
- Makes learning and improvement easier

Interconnected-ness

- Lots of jobs are in constant communication with each other, rely on each other and work together in some way
- Knowing more about their connections and their jobs will benefit you, even if you don't work it

Connection to Industry

- The workflows in UTMCap are very similar to the real world
- The club acts as a stepping stone from school -> UTMCap -> work
- Without it, you are behind more serious people
- Better to learn and make mistakes here than at work or during an interview
- Access to resources + each other

Connections to Real World

The Club

- The club is a stepping stone
- The club connects you with like-minded students
- The club provides resources to you
- The club gives you feedback

Equity Research

- Understanding of the ecosystem
- Impress equity research analysts
- Explore a new career path

Top-Down Style Investing

- Build an investors lens
- Talk more logically and persuasively about companies, markets and investing

Sources:



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Research, Pitch, Compete: The Analyst Experience

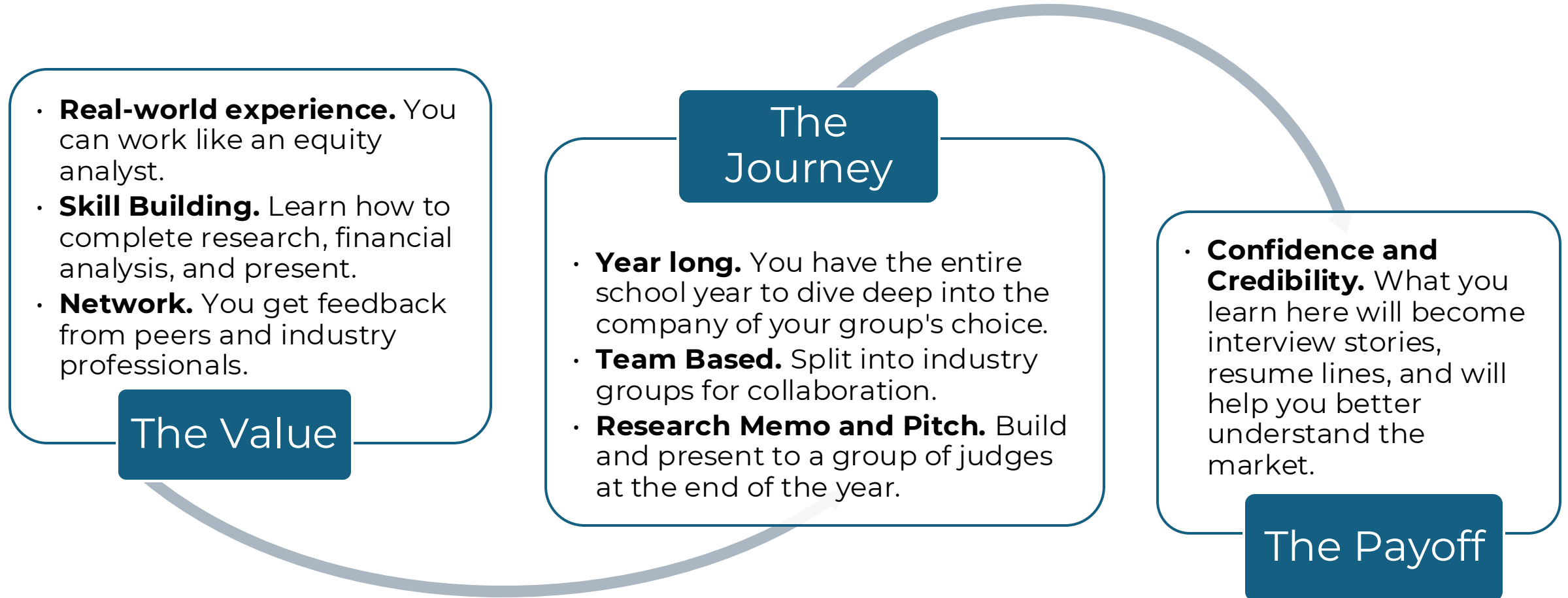
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UTMCap Alumni – Nicole Hua, CIBC Relationship Manager

Why are we here?

This is not just a school project – it's real-world practice.



Company

- How does the company make money?
- What are its key products and segments?
- Who manages the company?
- What is the strategy or vision management is pursuing?

Industry

- How large is the market and what speed are they growing at?
- What trends are shaping the industry?
- What role do regulators play?
- Industry fragmented or consolidated?

Before you value it, you must understand it.

Competition

- Who are the main competitors?
- What differentiates this company from them?
- What are the barriers to entry in this market?
- How is market share shifting (who's winning/losing)?

Opportunities and Challenges

- Where are the biggest growth opportunities (new markets, products)?
- How exposed is the company to changing consumer preferences?
- What external shocks (e.g., supply chain, geopolitics) could impact performance?



What Could Go Wrong

Credibility comes from acknowledging risks and giving the judges confidence in your decision.

— How many risks to list? —

- **3 key risks** — no more.
- Too many risks makes you sound uncertain or defensive.
- Too few risks makes you sound naïve.

— How to Frame Risks —

Risk: Short, specific, and realistic downside.

Mitigant: 1-2 clear points explaining why the risk doesn't break the thesis or how you accounted for it in your valuation.

Don't just name risks, explain why you remain comfortable investing despite them.

— On Cloud Example —

Risk 1: Overdependence on Brand & Growth

Risk: On's valuation and momentum rely heavily on continued sales growth and brand recognition — if growth drivers slow, performance could falter.

Mitigant: Strong brand equity, diversification into lifestyle/apparel, and consistent track record of execution reduce downside risk.



Financials, comps, and DCF analysis lay the foundation to build your case.

Financial Analysis

- *Analyze how the business really performs*
- Focus on revenues, margins, and cash flow trends — avoid surface-level “elevator” analysis

Comparable Analysis

- Benchmark valuation multiples (P/E, EV/EBITDA)
- Compare vs. peers (e.g., Nike, Adidas)

DCF Models

- Project and discount future cash flows
- Estimate intrinsic value based on fundamentals



Convince the Jury

State the Recommendation: Buy / Sell / Hold?

Primary Advantage:

What makes the company compelling in the first place?

On has built a premium lifestyle and performance brand with strong sales growth, positioning it for expansion in emerging markets and new categories.

Financial Foundation:

Prove what you are saying is sustainable with numbers.

Strong balance sheet and cash flows enable reinvestment without additional debt.

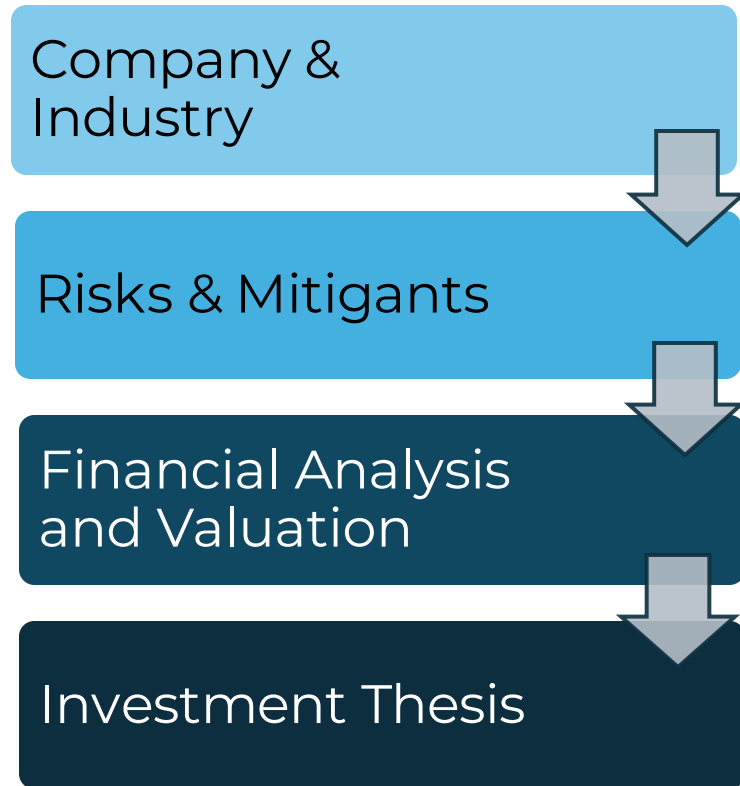
Near-Term Drivers: Why is this the moment to make the decision?

Accelerating DTC sales, lifestyle expansion, and global initiatives create near-term catalysts.

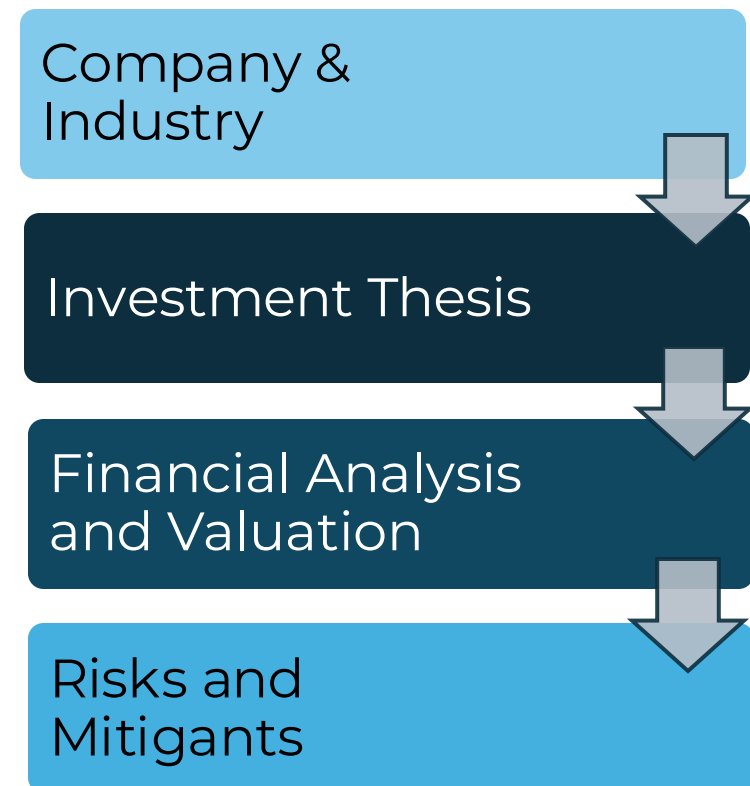


Putting It All Together

Research Order



Presentation Order



Prep like an analyst. Present like an investor.



Creating the Closing Ceremony Investment Pitch

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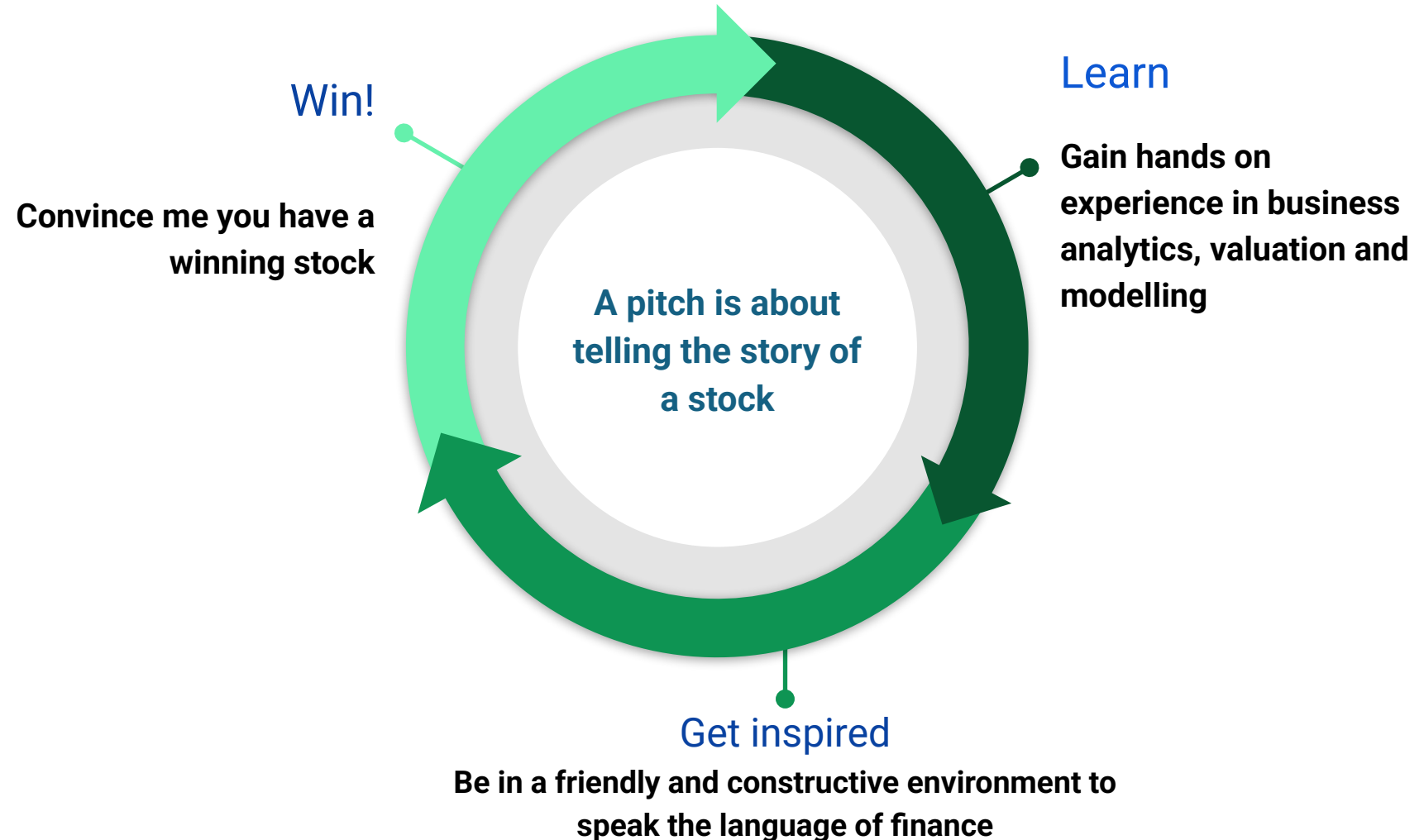


UTMCAP Alumni - Adam Fedoruk - Senior Analyst, NASDAQ

Pathway to success

What is vital:

- Great Visuals, Concise Flow, and Engaging Speakers
- You only have 10 minutes make it count!
- Participation is key



Sources:



Pitch
Overview

Common
Structure

Adding
Flexibility

Slide Design

Do's and
Don't's

Examples

Big Picture and Precisely Zoom In

Section	Purpose	Common Components
1. Title & Team	Intro Slide	Company Name, Ticker, Group Name, Team Members, Recommendation
2. Executive Summary / Key Highlights	Top-level snapshot	Target Price, Upside, Thesis Summary, Key Drivers
3. Company Overview	Business foundation	History, Business Model, Leadership, Geography, Segments, Subsidiaries
4. Industry Overview / Macroeconomics	Contextual backdrop	Market Trends, Growth Drivers, Regulation, Tailwinds
5. Strategic Positioning	Company differentiation	Strategy, Partnerships, Core Strengths
6. Competitive Analysis	Benchmarking peers	Comparable Companies, SWOT, Porter's 5 Forces
7. Growth Catalysts / Tailwinds	Upside factors	Demand Drivers, Policy Support, Technology Edge
8. Financials & Valuation	Quantitative support	Revenue, Margins, Multiples, Valuation Summary
9. Investment Thesis	Quantitative support	Buy rationale, 2–3 key points
10. Risks & Mitigations	Downside protection	Market, Regulatory, FX, Competition
11.. Appendix (if any)	Supporting detail	Charts, Maps, Segment Breakdown

Sources:



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Do's and
Don'ts

Examples

Industry Specific Slides:

- REITs (Macro + Interest rates and REIT Metrics)
- Metals + Mining (Maps and Commodity Market)
- Healthcare (Drug Pipelines and Addressable Market)

Valuation Specific Slides:

- SOTP
- NAV
- DDM



Two Paths

Research Report Style

- More like a sell-side report / cheat sheet
- Less slides
- Better for publishing



Quick Hit Visual Style

- Shorter points
- Bigger visuals
- More slides
- Kind of useless without the speaker

Disney: 26 Slides

TCL for CFA competition: 45 Slides

Neurocrine - 23 Slides

Constellation Energy: ~43 Slides

Lithium America: 23 Slides

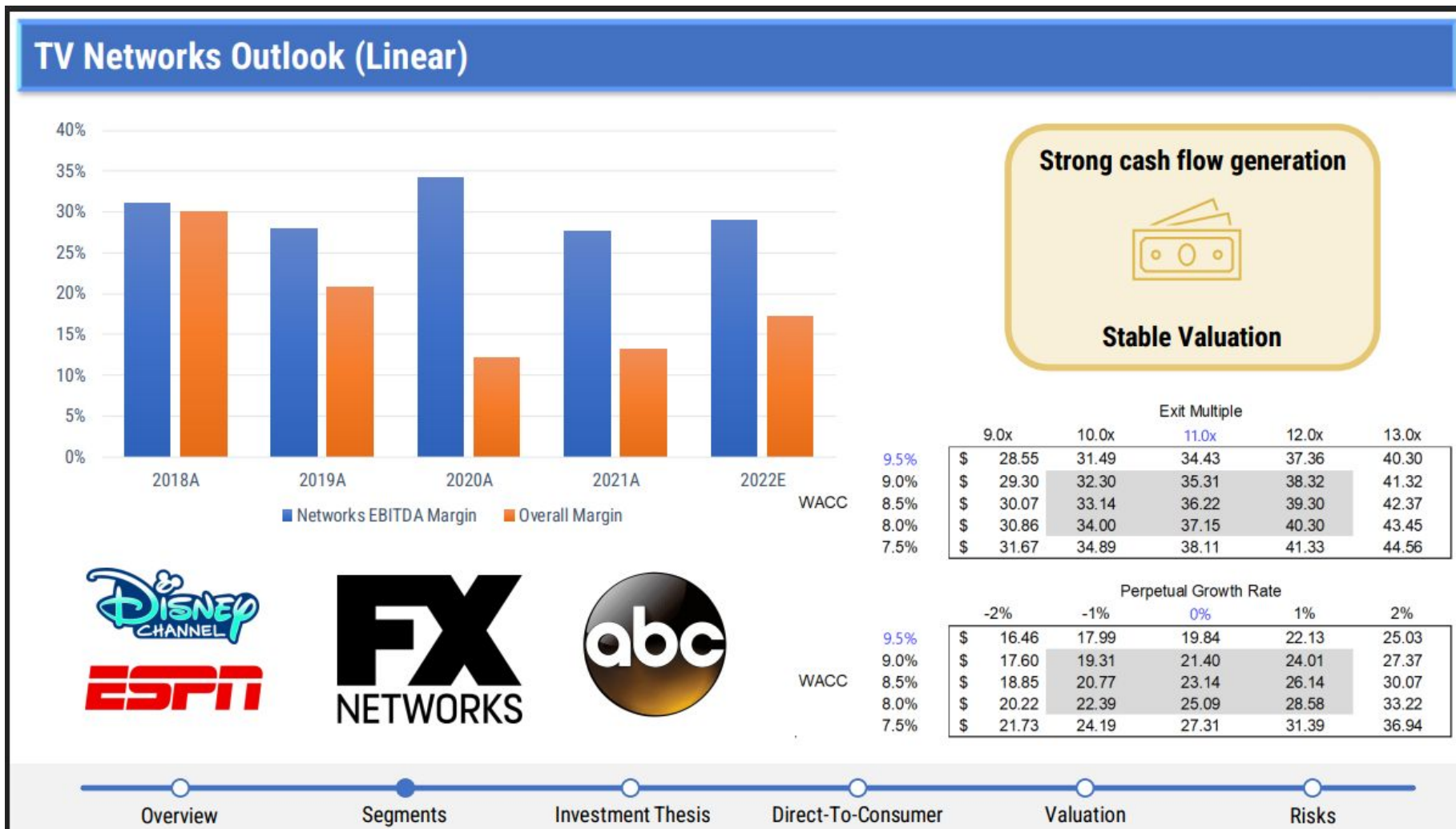
Choice: 19 Slides

Itron: 16 Slides

American Homes 4 Rent: 13 Slides



Slide Design - Minimalism



Sources:



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Slide Design

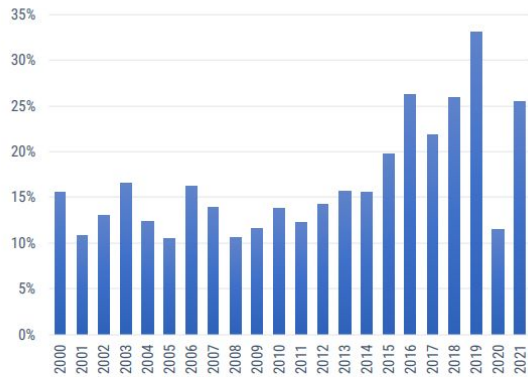
Do's and
Don'ts

Examples

Slide Design - Minimalism

Studio Outlook

Disney Domestic Box Office
Market Share 2000-2021



Source: Company Information

2009 – Marvel acquired for \$4.40b

2008 Budget: \$140 Million

2008 Box Office: \$585.8 Million

Disney

MCU produced 23 Films
Total Box Office: \$22 Billion
Content Scalability ✓



12x TV/EBITDA
5.33x TV/Rev

Studio Segment

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Amazon Closes Deal to Acquire MGM

Tech giant will use the movie and TV studio's content to beef up its Prime Video streaming platform

Content Scalability?

James Bond
Tomb Raider
Rocky

Content Library

Over 4,000 Films

2022 – MGM acquired for \$8.5b

2015 Budget: \$300 Million

2015 Box Office: \$880.7 Million

40x TV/EBITDA
5.66x TV/Revenue



WACC	Exit Multiple				
	20.0x	30.0x	40.0x	50.0x	60.0x
9.5%	\$ 14.91	22.35	29.80	37.24	44.69
9.0%	\$ 15.29	22.90	30.52	38.14	45.76
8.5%	\$ 15.68	23.47	31.27	39.06	46.85
8.0%	\$ 16.08	24.05	32.03	40.01	47.98
7.5%	\$ 16.49	24.65	32.82	40.98	49.14

Source: Bloomberg

Sources:



Pitch
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Don'ts

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Slide Design - Extreme Minimalism

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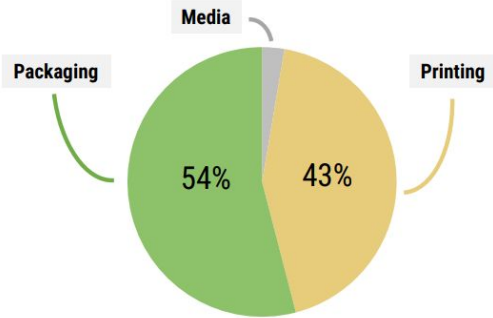
Business Overview

Packaging Sector (B2B)



Core Industries
Food
Beverage
Consumer products

Segmented Revenue Contribution (2021)



tc • TRANSCONTINENTAL

Printing Sector (B2B)

Print Media
Books
Magazines
Newspapers

Marketing Products
In-store marketing
Print advertising

Retailer-Related Services
Flyer distribution
Newspaper distribution
Premedia (graphic design)

Source: Company Information

Well-Established Leader in Printing

Pan-Canadian distribution network reaching 12.4 million households

Extensive mass marketing capabilities

Flyer distributor of choice among blue-chip retailers

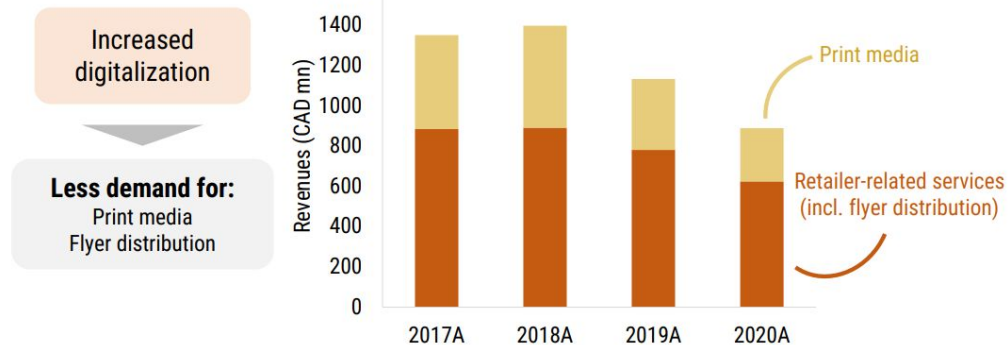


Source: Company Information

Overview ESG Printing Packaging Valuation Risks

Printing Headwinds For Core Offerings

Declining Printing Segments



Source: Company Data

Overview ESG Printing Packaging Valuation Risks

Sources:

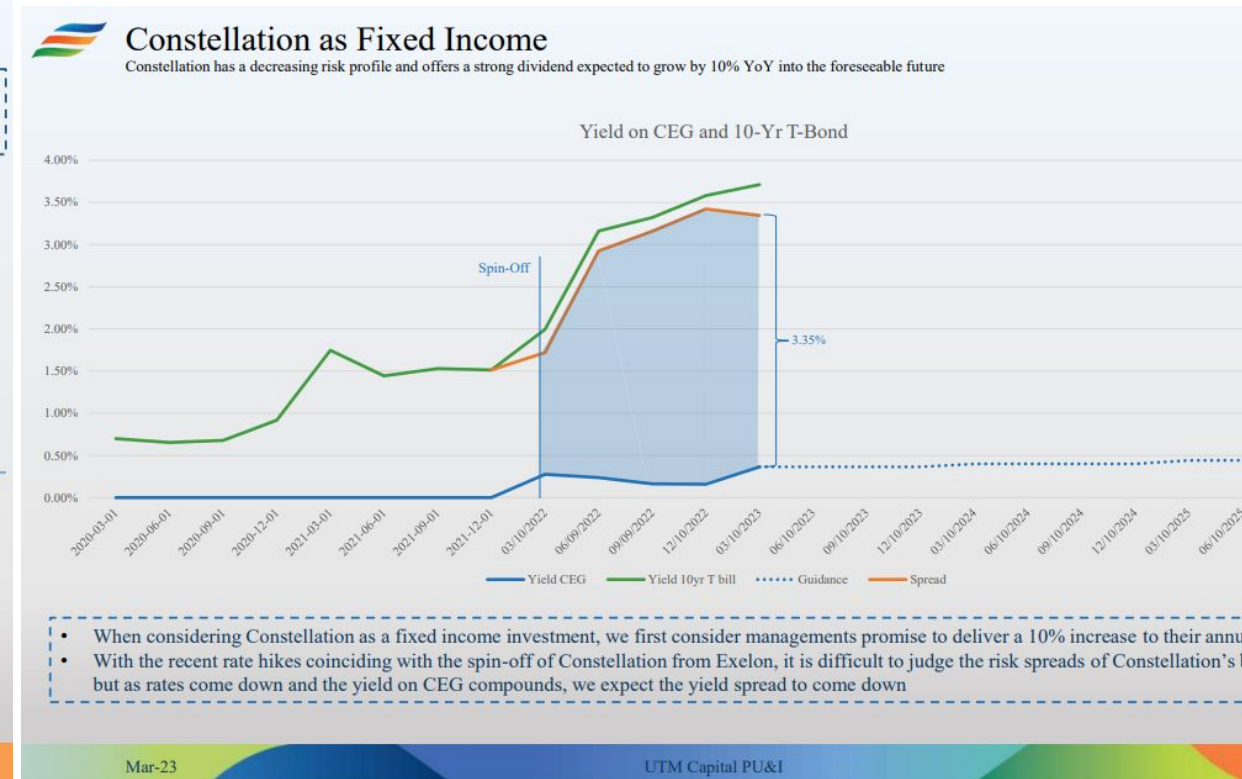
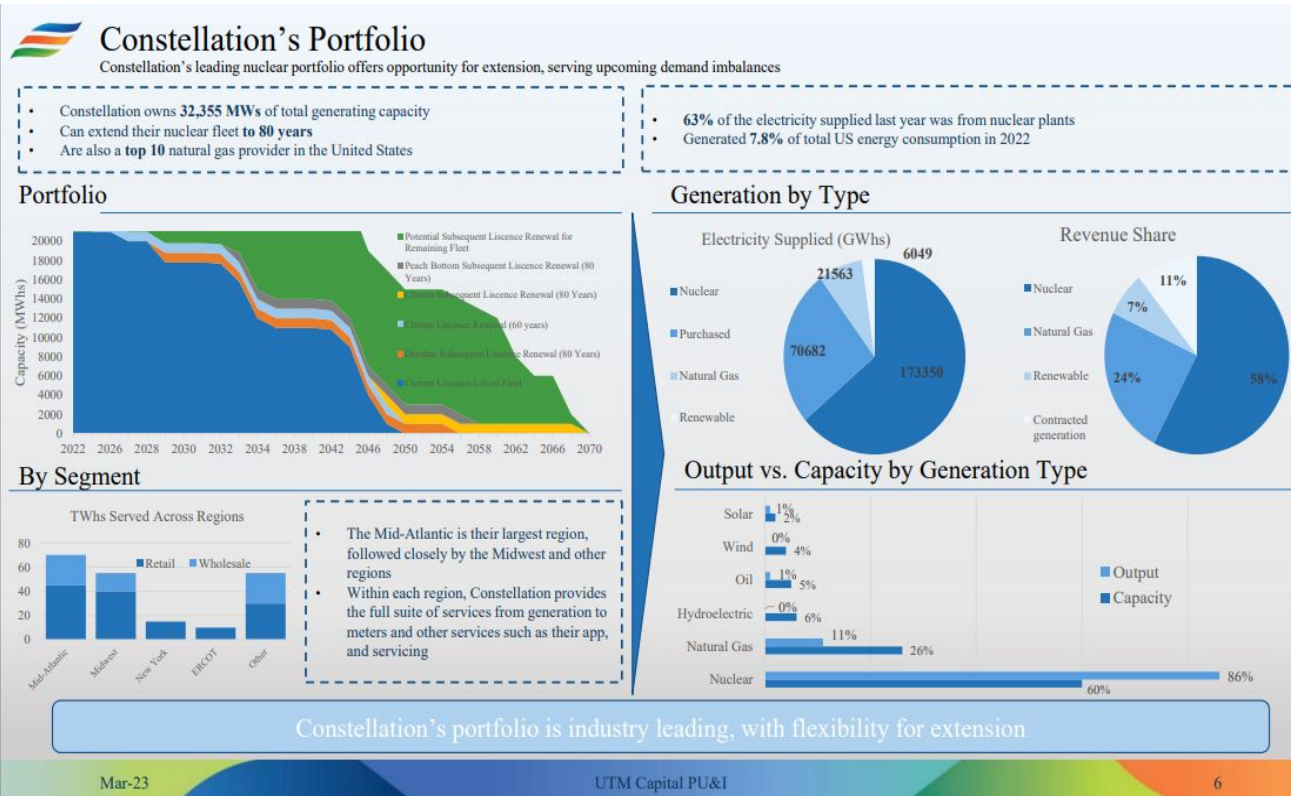


Pitch
Overview

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Slide Design - Mix



Sources:



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Slide Design - Heavier Text

Uses of Lithium

LithiumArgentina

Most of the lithium use is for lithium-ion batteries for use in heavy and light use electric vehicles. This has been the main source of growth in demand for lithium and LCE over the past decade. The growth in lithium demand is also due to the growth in different battery chemistries, of which most use lithium

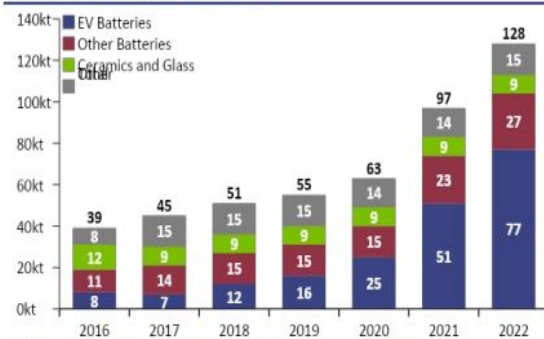
Main Uses of Lithium Carbonate

End Use	Trend	Description
EV Batteries	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Most electric vehicles use lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery chemistriesTypical EV batteries contain ~8kg of lithium
Other Batteries	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cell phones, laptops, and other consumer-use batteries rely on Li-Ion chemistries⁽¹⁾
Ceramics / Glass	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lithium greatly lowers firing temperatures of glasses and ceramics
Other	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Includes: Greases, polymers, metallurgical powders, and other industrial uses

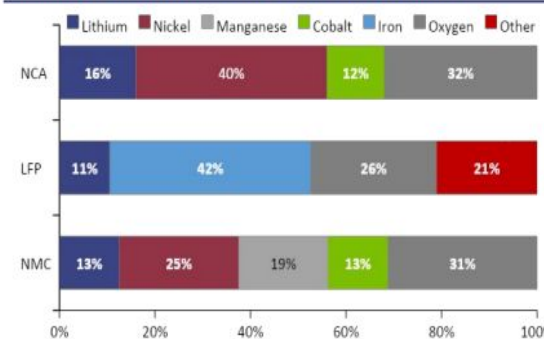
Battery Chemistries

Chemistry	2018 Market Share	2022 Market Share
Lithium-Nickel Manganese Cobalt Oxide (NMC)	78%	66%
Lithium-Iron Phosphate (LFP)	7%	27%
Nickel-Cobalt-Aluminum Oxide (NCA)	11%	4%
Other	4%	3%

Demand by End Use (kt LCE)



Material Content in Different Anodes and Cathodes



1) Some consumer-use batteries rely on lithium-metal chemistries that are not rechargeable
2) LFP battery chemistries contain approximately 21% material content of phosphorous

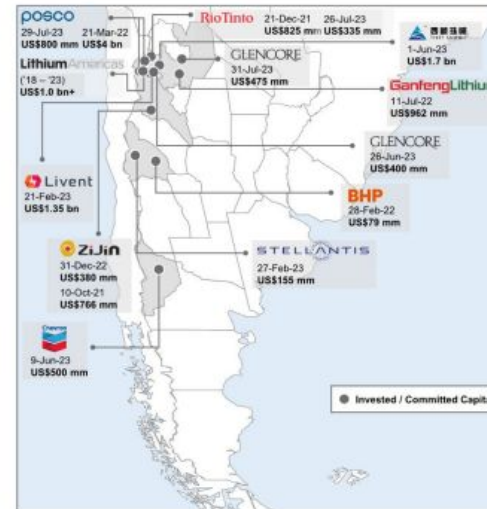
Argentina Overview

LithiumArgentina

Argentina is a tier-one lithium mining jurisdiction with low tax rates, stable mining regulation, and a history of lithium brine and hard rock production. Argentina is one of the best jurisdictions for lithium production worldwide; we have seen massive consolidation in lithium production within the country

Argentina's Lithium Triangle

- The lithium triangle is an extremely lithium rich region in the Andes encompassed by the borders of Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile
- This area is thought to hold around 54% of the world's lithium reserves
- Lithium Argentina's **Pastos Grandes** and **Sal de la Puna** projects are within the lithium triangle placing these projects in areas with extremely high exploration upside potential



Argentina as a Lithium Mining Jurisdiction

Legal Environment

- Mining activity is declared of public utility; mining activity has priority over activities performed on surface land
- Land concessions have no expiration or limits on resource extraction
- Public entities are obliged to grant mining and exploration rights to private third parties upon request

Taxes and Subsidies

- 30-year tax stability period from filing of the feasibility report
 - Cauchari-Olaroz filed in 2020
- 3% cap on governmental revenue royalties
- Accelerated depreciation on infrastructure investments
- Prospecting, metallurgical test, pilot plant, and scoping work costs are 100% deductible for income tax purposes

Safety and Stability

- One of the safest jurisdictions in South America; near-lowest crime rate in the region⁽¹⁾
- Mining declared an industry of "national interest" in the National Constitution of 1852
- Track record of property right stability in mining

Argentina's new president, Javier Milei, has vowed to implement many pro-mining policies:

- Expressed great interest in supporting the mining industry
- Revocation of costly requirements for mining companies⁽²⁾
- Will prohibit customs restrictions that would limit the export of lithium
- Spurred conversation between US and Argentina to support the lithium mining industry⁽³⁾

1) Crime incidence rate of 4.62 per 100,000 population compared to United States' 6.81 (2021)
2) Plans to revoke the National System for Mining Trade and the National Mining Data Bank which require high amount of data collection to be done by Argentinian mining companies
3) Milei stated that the US was willing to support Argentina above their current production capabilities

Sources:



Pitch
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Slide Design Final Notes

UTMCAP Workshop #1

- No right answer in terms of design
- Pretty slides earn you some goodwill
- Don't read the slides
- Have a key point every slide
- Visuals should be used to emphasize a point

Sources:



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Do's and
Don'ts

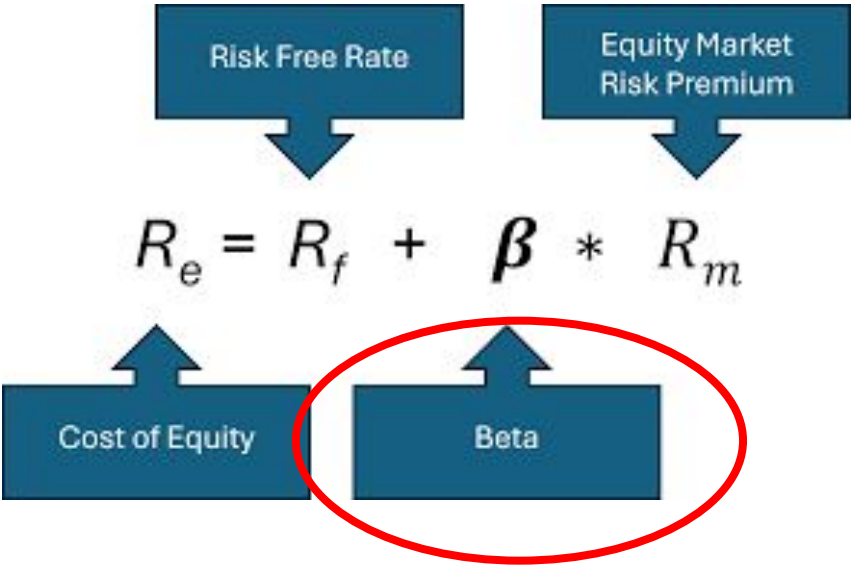
Examples

My Pet Peeves - WACC



WACC Formula

$$WACC = \left[\left(\text{Weightage of Equity} \times \text{Cost of Equity} \right) + \left(\text{Weightage of Debt} \times \text{Cost of Debt} \right) \right] \times (1 - \text{Tax Rate})$$



Category	Common Themes	Typical WACC Range (Nominal, USD terms)
Low Risk / Mature / Utility	Regulated or predictable cash flows (e.g. utilities, pipelines)	5% – 7%
Stable Blue-Chip / Consumer Staples / Industrials	Moderate leverage, stable earnings	6% – 9%
Technology / Growth / Cyclical	Higher equity beta, less predictable cash flows	8% – 11%
Emerging / High Growth / Early-Stage	High uncertainty, limited track record	10% – 14%+
Emerging Markets Exposure	Added sovereign/country risk premium	WACC + 1–3%

		Exit Multiple				
		20.0x	30.0x	40.0x	50.0x	60.0x
WACC	9.5%	\$ 14.91	22.35	29.80	37.24	44.69
	9.0%	\$ 15.29	22.90	30.52	38.14	45.76
	8.5%	\$ 15.68	23.47	31.27	39.06	46.85
	8.0%	\$ 16.08	24.05	32.03	40.01	47.98
	7.5%	\$ 16.49	24.65	32.82	40.98	49.14

Sources:

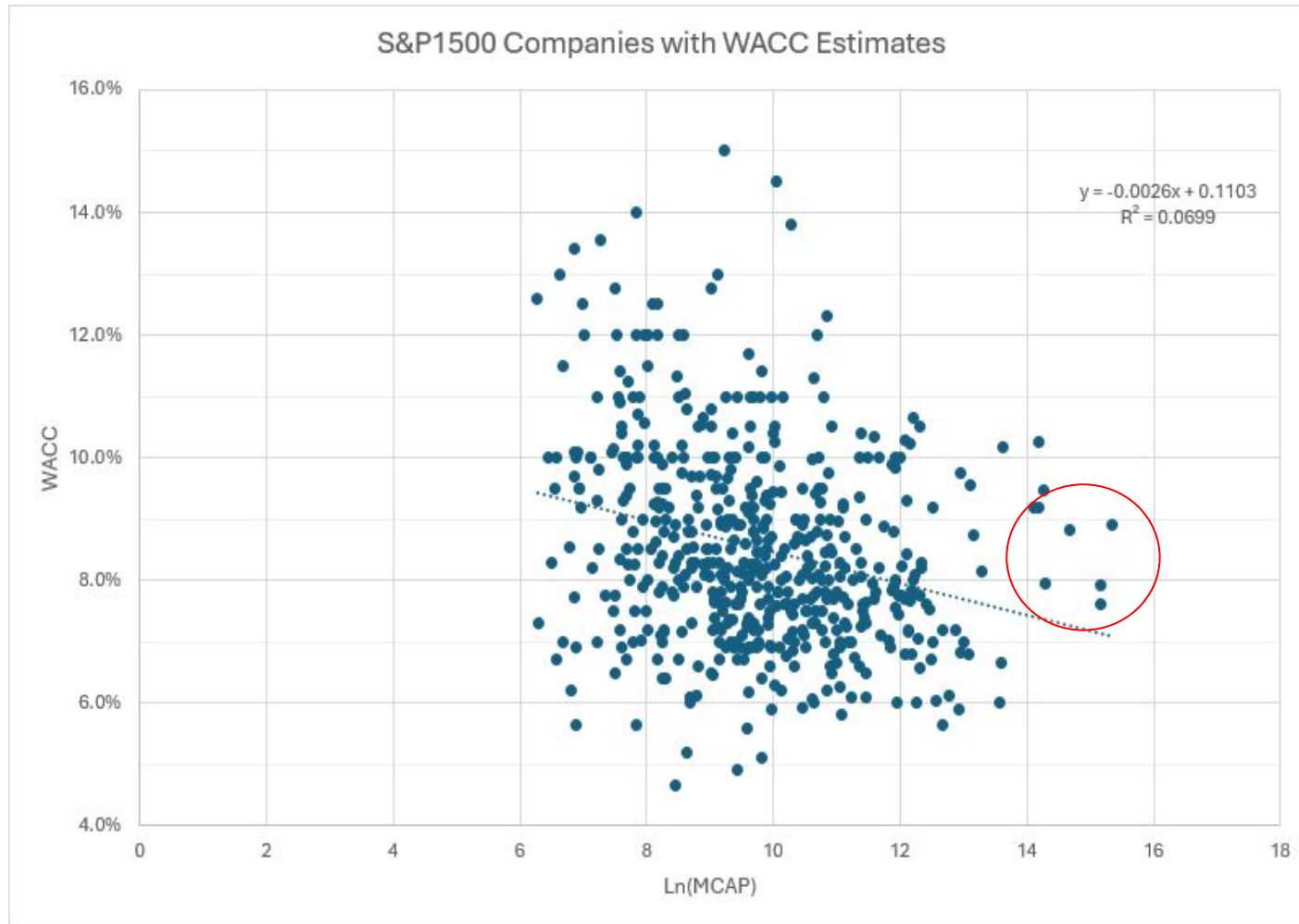


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My Pet Peeves - WACC cont.

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GICS Sector	Avg WACC Estimate	Count
Energy	10.04%	23
Information Technology	8.98%	87
Communication Services	8.93%	39
Financials	8.78%	21
Health Care	8.68%	84
Consumer Discretionary	8.56%	83
Materials	8.51%	35
Industrials	8.45%	70
Real Estate	7.64%	37
Consumer Staples	7.25%	48
Utilities	6.74%	7
Avg or Total	8.52%	534

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Examples

Perpetual Growth to infinity

Academic and corporate finance literature converges on a few rules of thumb:

- Damodaran (NYU Stern):
"Long-term growth cannot exceed the growth rate of the economy (nominal GDP). For developed markets, that caps g around 2–2.5% today."
- McKinsey, Koller et al. (Valuation 7e):
"Choose a perpetual growth rate consistent with long-term inflation plus real GDP — typically between 2% and 3% for mature firms."
- Empirical Studies (survey of analysts):
 - 2023–2024 averages in U.S. DCFs: 1.5 %–3.0 % for nominal models
 - Analysts rarely exceed 3.5 %; anything above 4 % is often flagged as overly aggressive

$$TV = \frac{FCF_{t+1}}{(WACC - g)}$$

Firm Type	Developed Markets	Emerging Markets
Mature / Stable	1.5 %–2.5 %	2.5 %–4 %
Moderate Growth	2.5 %–3.0 %	3.5 %–5.0 %
High Risk / Cyclical	1 %–2 % (conservative)	2 %–3 %
In Decline / Shrinking	0 %–1 % or even negative	n/a

Sensitivity Analysis

Target Share price		WACC				
		7.20%	8.10%	9.00%	9.90%	10.80%
Terminal Growth Rate	2.40%	280.3	242.3	214.3	192.7	175.5
	2.70%	296.4	253.7	222.8	199.3	180.8
	3.00%	314.8	266.4	232.1	206.5	186.5
	3.30%	336.0	280.7	242.5	214.3	192.6
	3.60%	360.7	296.9	253.9	222.9	199.3

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My Pet Peeves - C-Suite Resumes



First Solar Company Overview: Executive Board



First Solar's Board Overview

Mark R. Widmar has been a CEO of First Solar since 2016. He has over three decades of experience in corporate finance and leadership across the technology and manufacturing sectors. **Before joining First Solar in 2011** as CFO, he served as CFO of GrafTech International and held **senior financial roles** at NCR, Dell, and Lucent Technologies.

Alexander R. Bradley is the CFO of First Solar since 2016. He has extensive experience in corporate finance, treasury, and project financing within the energy sector. **Since joining First Solar in 2008**, he has played a key role in structuring and financing over \$10 billion in solar projects. Before First Solar, he worked in **investment banking and leveraged finance** at HSBC in London and New York.

Georges Antoun is the **Chief Commercial Officer** of First Solar since 2016. With over 30 years of experience in operations and technology, he first joined First Solar as **Chief Operating Officer in 2012** before becoming President, U.S., in 2015. Prior to First Solar, he was a Venture Partner at Technology Crossover Ventures and held **leadership roles** at Ericsson, Redback Networks, and Cisco Systems. He began his career at Nynex (now Verizon) in its Science and Technology Division.

Michael Koralewski is the **Chief Supply Chain Officer** of First Solar 2022. With over 25 years of global operational experience, he has been a key figure in the company's manufacturing expansion and supply chain development. Since **joining First Solar in 2006**, he has held senior roles in **operations and quality management**, including Chief Manufacturing Operations Officer and Senior Vice President of Global Manufacturing.

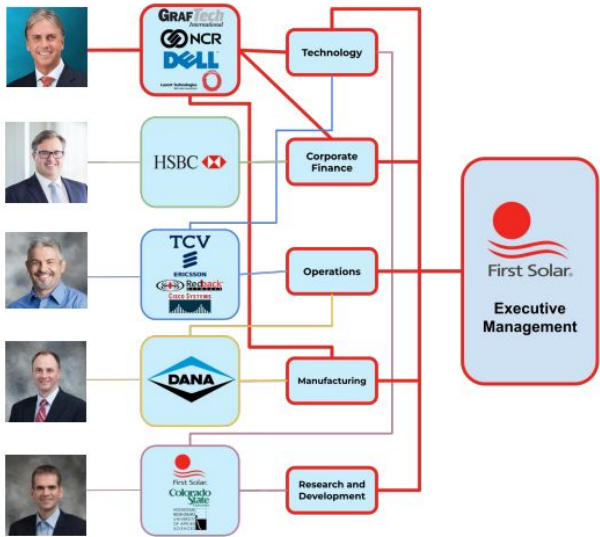
Markus Gloeckler is the **Chief Technology Officer** of First Solar, a position he has held since November 2020, after serving as Co-Chief Technology Officer starting in **July 2020**. With extensive experience in research and development, he has been **instrumental in advancing First Solar's thin film PV module technology**. He previously served as Vice President and Chief Scientist, and later Senior Vice President of Module Research and Development. Gloeckler played a key role in achieving world records for CdTe solar cell efficiency and led the transfer of thin film technology from General Electric to First Solar in **2013**.



Executive
Summary

Operations
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Industry
Analysis



Tailwinds and
Risks

Financials
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Investment
Thesis

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My Pet Peeves - My C-Suite Checklist

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I want to know:

- New vs Old
- Outsider or Insider
- Strategic Shift?

Rare Cases:

Voting Power
Shares/Incentives
ESG???

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Do's and
Don't's

Examples

My Pet Peeves - Good C-Suite Example

The Strategy - Content, Content, Content!



BOB IGER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
2005 - 2020

2019 - \$71.3b



Long-Term Plan

2006 - \$7.4b

P I X A R
ANIMATION STUDIOS

2012 - \$4.05b

STAR
WARS

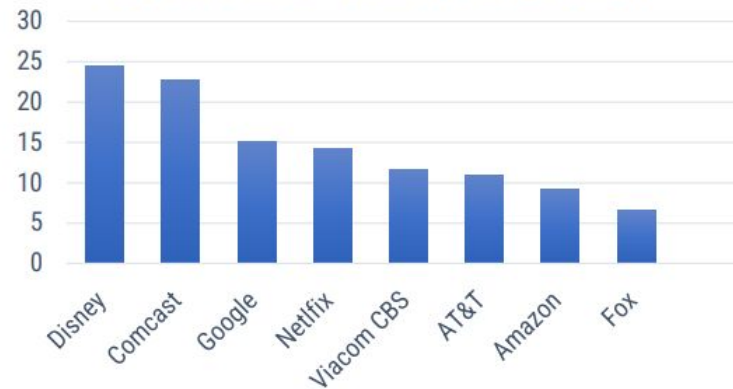
2009 - \$4.40b

MARVEL



BOB CHAPEK
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
2020 - PRESENT

2021 Est. Content Spending (in USD Billions)



Disney
\$33 Billion
committed in 2022

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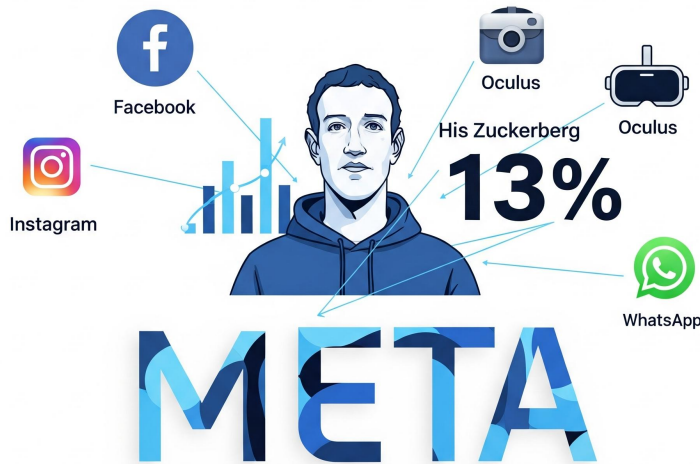
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Examples

My Pet Peeves - Other C-Suite Cases

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Dual Class Shares:

Zuckerberg voting power has majority voting power (>50%)

Many stocks have founders (or families) retaining voting control through dual class shares

RAILROADER



Industry Legends:

Hunter Harrison for Railways

Commands a valuation and pay premium

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Do's and
Don'ts

Examples

My Pet Peeves - Bad Peer Group/Comps

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Industrials company with Tech company peer group, then you will spike valuation

Growth versus Mature

Real problem in the industry and in IR

Fixes:

Look across many sell-side reports

Justify the multiples

Use indexes to benchmark and isolate factors



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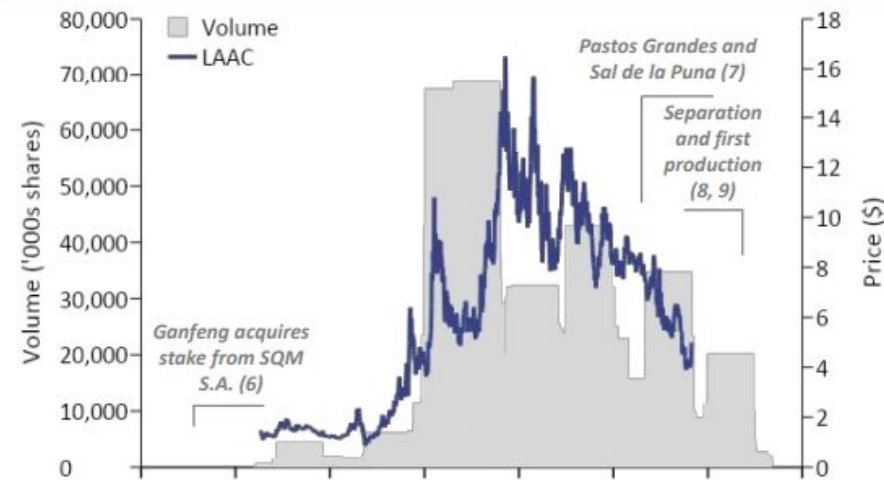
Do's and
Don'ts

Examples

More of this: Price Timeline Charts

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Lithium Argentina (NYSE: LAAC)



Timeline

1. Lithium Americas is incorporated with a \$20 million financing (2009)
2. Lithium Americas raises \$45 million in their IPO (2010)
3. Pilot plant and first evaporation pond at Cauchari-Olaroz ("Cauchari") (2011)
4. Lithium Americas forms a 50/50 JV with SQM S.A. to jointly develop Cauchari (2016)
5. Definitive feasibility study (Phase I) at Cauchari is completed (2017)
6. Ganfeng Lithium ("Ganfeng") acquires SQM's stake in Cauchari (2018)
7. Pastos Grandes ("Pastos") and Sal de la Puna land package acquired from Arena Minerals and Millenium Lithium (2021)
8. Cauchari produces first lithium carbonate (2023)
9. Lithium Americas separates into Lithium Americas (NewCo) and Lithium Argentina (2023)

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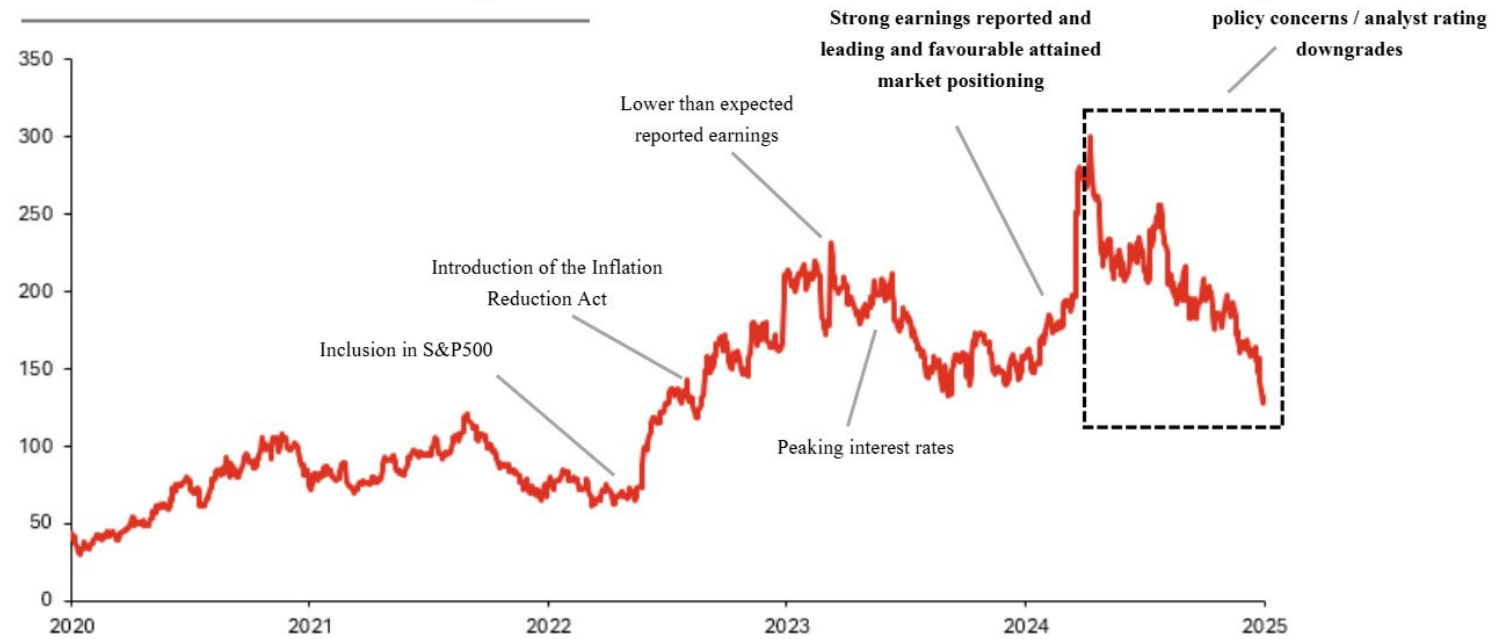
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Do's and
Don'ts

Examples

Stock Price Performance Summary



Gives audience the market's take on key topics

Pricing vs Valuation

Appendix

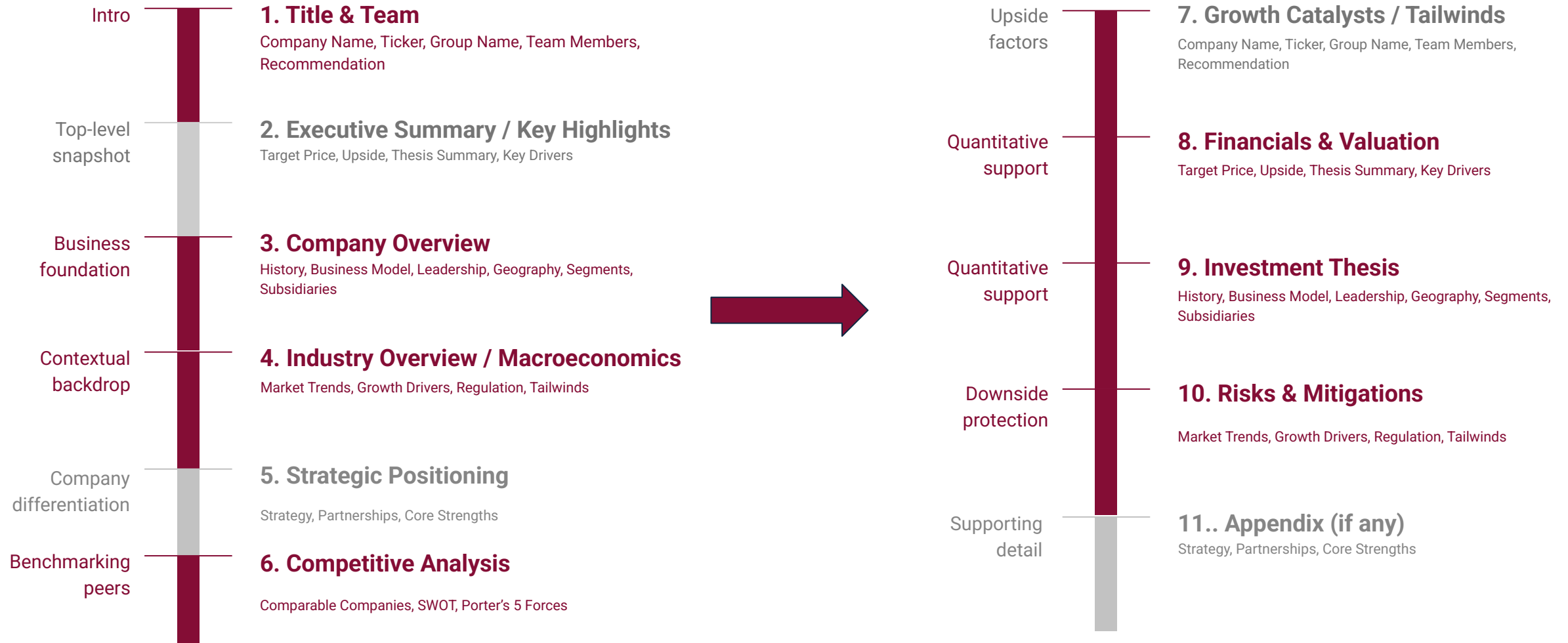
October 2025



UTMCAP Alumni - Adam, Nicole, Justin

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