Aptitude tests are online or written tests given by investment banks that consists of a combination of numerical, verbal and logic questions. You will almost always be asked to do those tests online first once your CV has been shortlisted by banks. Once you pass those tests and are invited to come to the assessment centre, you will be usually asked to take them again on a piece of paper (which is sometimes more difficult or longer). This process is to ensure that you didn't ask a friend to take the test online for you.

Why do investment banks use those tests?

Each year, tens of thousands of students apply to investment banks. Those tests are a way for investment banks to make a first selection in their large applicant pool. They usually have a cut-off or minimum pass grade that students need to meet or exceed in order to go to the next stage of the interview process.

Do not underestimate those tests, even if you are doing extremely well at school. Those tests can be notoriously difficult, especially under stress, and will demand a great deal of preparation. Indeed, it would be a shame to fail an interview because of something that is in your control! In fact, the main reason why so many students fail investment banking interviews is due to the lack of preparation or overconfidence with regard to those tests.

Can you give me an overview of those tests in more detail?

The tests are generally provided by SHL, an organisation that creates those tests; usually, there are three kinds of tests.

Numerical

In a numerical reasoning test, the examinee is required to answer questions by using information presented in statistical tables and graphs. Questions are given in a multiple choice format

Verbal

In SHL verbal reasoning tests, you are usually presented with a passage and required to evaluate a set of statements

by selecting one of the following possible responses

Logical

These logical tests evaluate cognitive abilities that rely on pure logic, without the use of written texts or numerical data. In the course of these tests you will be asked to recognize patterns that are presented by series of shapes and thus induce and predict which shape should come next in line

I want to practice, can you recommend me a good website?

JobTestPrep, a UK website, does a good job of helping students prepare for those tests.

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