

Financial Management Takeaways

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We have been asked in our journal post this week, dear classmates, to reflect on the new knowledge and skills we have developed in our Financial Management course, and how these may impact the work we do now and in our future career goals (University of the People, 2026). I can not begin to tell you how happy this prompt made me feel, since the statement attributed to Socrates by Plato that “the unexamined life is not worth living” (Plato, 2020) resonates with me, and here we are being invited to examine.

As anyone reading my writing this term will clearly see, this course has been a huge challenge for me. It is not because I disagree with the opening sentence of the course description that “[m]anagers play a key role in resource generation and allocation and must be conversant with external economic influences and their relationship to the types of financial decisions made by organizations”, rather it is the specific type of organization that we studied, with our particular focus on the “real-world challenges of corporate finance”, that caused me such grief (University of the People, 2026). I have no interest in learning how to serve the interests of large corporations. On the contrary, my only interest is in learning just enough about these monsters, antithetical to democracy as they are, so that I can contribute in some small way toward their replacement with democratic community controlled forms of economic activity.

My motivation for enrolling in our University of the People MBA program was to be able to teach solidarity economy focused entrepreneurship and small business classes, and to start worker cooperatives myself. I did learn several things in this class that will stay with me and help me going forward, most especially finally wrapping my head around the accounting equation, and developing a solid understanding of assets, liabilities, and equity, and how their

relationships are captured in the balance sheet, and how income and expenses are captured in the income statement (Dauderis et. al, 2022 & Jonick, 2017).

Thanks to some of the more repugnant topics we studied, such as mergers and acquisitions, I will at least get more enjoyment out of watching *Wall Street*, now that I better understand at the practical level what Gordon Gekko was up to (Stone, 1987).

What I need now is another financial management course focused on the needs of smaller, democratically run businesses. I am hoping to take a course titled *Finance and Law in Cooperative Enterprises* through the City University of New York, which is directly aligned with my desire to learn to help build “community-controlled forms of economic development in the United States” (City University of New York, 2026). I am hoping University of the People will permit me to use this course as an elective in my program of study, which would greatly enhance the practical benefit of an MBA earned here toward what I hope to do with it.

Lastly, I posted almost weekly about how much I liked learning through reading and assessing the work of you, my fellow classmates. I found that it was through our weekly journal posts and reading your papers that I finally came to understand our weekly lessons. You provided clarity where I lacked it, and multiple perspectives that added interest to what were otherwise very dry topics for me, and for that, you have my undying gratitude.

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