BEFN CAREER STARTER SERIES

QUICK START GUIDE 2 • STAGE 2: EXPLORE

Where Could I Fit in Equipment Finance?

A student's Quick Start for exploring career possibilities

THE OUTCOME

Help students move from “this industry sounds interesting” to two or three career paths worth investigating—and a concrete plan for learning more.

CAREER ROADMAP • QUICK GUIDE • CAREER-MAP WORKSHEET
KNOWLEDGE CHECK • NEXT STEPS

STUDENT ROADMAP

Start Here

Guide 1 helped you discover equipment finance. Guide 2 helps you explore where you might fit. This Quick Start is an approachable entry point to the complete Careers in Equipment Finance guide, its audio and video explainers, and the larger BEFN journey toward internships and entry-level work.

Your 45-minute path

Step	Time	What you produce
1 EXPLORE	15 minutes	A working picture of four career families
2 COMPARE	15 minutes	A short list of roles matching your interests
3 APPLY	10 minutes	A personal career map and next action
4 CHECK	5 minutes	Evidence that you understand the choices

By the end, you should be able to

- Describe the four broad career families.
- Name at least two roles that deserve more investigation.
- Explain why a role may fit your strengths, interests, and preferred work style.
- Identify one skill to strengthen and one professional to learn from.
- Know how Guide 3 turns your direction into an internship or job-search plan.

YOUR LENS

Do not ask, “Which title sounds most impressive?” Ask, “Which kind of work would I enjoy learning to do well?”

THE LARGER BEFN JOURNEY

Your Roadmap From Discovery to Opportunity

Stage	Purpose	Milestone
1 DISCOVER	Understand the industry and why it matters.	You can explain equipment finance.
2 EXPLORE — YOU ARE HERE	Compare career families, roles, and work styles.	You have two or three paths to investigate.
3 PREPARE	Use Guide 3 to improve your résumé, LinkedIn profile, story, and search strategy.	Your materials and introduction are ready.
4 CONNECT	Build relationships through events and informational conversations.	Professionals begin to know you.
5 PURSUE	Target internships and entry-level roles; tailor and track applications.	You are actively pursuing suitable openings.
6 GROW	Use feedback, mentoring, projects, and experience to keep developing.	Each experience strengthens the next one.

STAGE 2 COMPLETION TEST

Continue when you can name two possible roles, explain why each may fit, identify a question to research, and commit to one exploration action.

READ, WATCH, LISTEN, APPLY

Use the BEFN Resources With Purpose

Resource	Job it does	How to use it
1 QUICK START	Orient and focus	Complete this first; mark roles that spark curiosity.
2 VIDEO EXPLAINER	Make roles visible	Watch for how different professionals contribute to one transaction.
3 AUDIO EXPLAINER	Reinforce and reflect	Listen again; pause to name roles you had not considered.
4 FULL GUIDE 2	Go deeper	Read the sections on your top two career families and use the comparison matrix.
5 CAREER MAP	Turn learning into direction	Record evidence of fit, skill gaps, questions, and people to contact.
6 GUIDE 3	Prepare to enter	Convert your short list into a practical internship and job-search plan.

Find the collection at befn.org through the Student Career Portal and Career Starter Series. The full guide is a reference library: read selectively now, then return as your interests develop.

QUICK GUIDE • 1 OF 4

One Industry, Four Career Families

Equipment finance is an ecosystem, not one job. A transaction succeeds because people with different strengths work together. Careers also move across families: an underwriter may become an originator, an operations professional may become a COO, and a technology analyst may move into product strategy.

Career family	Core contribution	Examples
Revenue-Producing	Creates opportunities and builds customer or partner relationships.	Originations, vendor finance, relationship management, brokerage
Analytical	Evaluates risk, businesses, equipment, and portfolio performance.	Credit, underwriting, portfolio and asset management
Operational & Strategic	Executes transactions, protects quality, and funds the business.	Operations, documentation, servicing, compliance, capital markets
Technology & Emerging	Builds the industry's future through data and digital tools.	Analytics, AI, automation, product, fintech, communications

IMPORTANT

These are starting points, not boxes. Your first role can teach you the industry and open doors you cannot yet see.

QUICK GUIDE • 2 OF 4

What the Work Actually Feels Like

Revenue-Producing

Best for people energized by relationships, opportunity creation, persistence, and business problem-solving. Strong performance requires curiosity and trust—not charisma alone. Compensation may include incentives, and results often compound over years.

Analytical

Best for people who enjoy financial puzzles, evidence, judgment, and learning how businesses operate. Credit and underwriting are especially valuable starting points because they build business literacy that transfers widely.

Operational & Strategic

Best for people who create order, protect accuracy, coordinate details, improve processes, and see how the whole organization works. These roles can lead to broad leadership responsibility.

Technology & Emerging

Best for people who combine business curiosity with data, technology, product thinking, automation, or communication. The field is changing rapidly, so learning agility matters more than knowing every tool today.

FIT IS MORE THAN PERSONALITY

Consider the daily work, learning curve, income style, collaboration level, tolerance for uncertainty, and paths forward—not only whether a description sounds like you.

QUICK GUIDE • 3 OF 4

Five Career Orientations

Orientation	You may enjoy	Explore first
Relationship Builder	Helping people, earning trust, finding opportunities	Originations, vendor finance, relationship management
Analyst	Investigating, comparing evidence, making judgments	Credit, underwriting, portfolio or asset management
Organizer	Coordinating details, improving systems, reliable execution	Operations, documentation, servicing, compliance
Entrepreneur	Independence, accountability, creating something	Brokerage, business development, specialty finance
Innovator	Technology, data, new tools, future-focused problems	Analytics, AI, product, fintech, digital strategy

Most people are blends. Select one primary and one secondary orientation, then test them through conversations, projects, coursework, and internships.

Three questions stronger than "What should I be?"

- What work gives me energy even when it is difficult?
- What skills do other people already trust me to use?
- What kind of challenge am I willing to practice for several years?

QUICK GUIDE • 4 OF 4

What Employers Actually Notice

Employers know early-career candidates are unfinished. They are evaluating whether you are likely to learn, contribute, and become trustworthy.

Positive signal	What it looks like
Curiosity	Researching the company and asking genuine questions.
Clear communication	Explaining your thinking simply and listening carefully.
Professionalism	Being prepared, punctual, responsive, and reliable.
Initiative	Taking useful ownership without waiting for every instruction.
Coachability	Seeking feedback, applying it, and improving openly.

Five practices to start now

- Return messages promptly.
- Follow up after professional conversations.
- Ask thoughtful questions in every learning setting.
- Request feedback and show what you changed.
- Build relationships before you need a favor.

EMPLOYER REALITY

Your degree may help you enter the room. Your preparation, attitude, responsiveness, and willingness to learn shape what happens next.

PRACTICAL WORKSHEET

Build Your Equipment-Finance Career Map

Part 1 • Notice your evidence

Complete each prompt with examples from school, work, volunteering, athletics, clubs, or personal projects.

Work I naturally enjoy:

____

____

Skills other people rely on me for:

____

____

Business topics or technologies I want to understand:

____

____

Work conditions that help me perform well:

____

____

A challenge I would willingly learn to handle:

____

____

WORKSHEET • CONTINUED

Compare Two Possible Paths

Choose two roles from different families. Use the full Guide 2, its media, or a professional conversation to complete the comparison.

Question	Path A: ________________	Path B: ________________
Career family		
What the professional does		

Why it may fit me	
Skill I already bring	
Skill I need to develop	
Question I still have	
Professional or company to research	

Your working conclusion

FOR NOW

The path I will investigate first is ________________ because ________________________________

My next action is ____ by ________________.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Career-Fit Scenario Challenge

A regional equipment finance company wants a student team to help evaluate and support financing for a growing medical practice group acquiring imaging systems. Match each task to the career family most likely to lead it, then explain which task you would most like to try.

Task	Work	Career family
A	Learn the customer's growth plans and maintain the relationship.	
B	Review financial performance and recommend whether the transaction should be approved.	
C	Coordinate documents, conditions, vendor payment, and funding.	
D	Analyze workflow data and help improve the digital application process.	
E	Research the equipment's useful life and likely future market value.	

Your choice

Which task would you volunteer to try first, and why?

What would you need to learn before doing it well?

COMPLETE BEFORE DISCUSSING ANSWERS

Knowledge Check

1. Which statement is most accurate?

A. Equipment finance offers one main career path. B. It is an ecosystem of interdependent careers. C. Every role requires selling. D. Career families never overlap.
Your answer: ________________

2. Which family primarily evaluates risk and transaction performance?

A. Revenue-Producing B. Analytical C. Operational only D. Marketing
Your answer: ________________

3. Which role may be a strong foundation for learning how businesses operate?

A. Credit and underwriting B. Only brokerage C. Only communications D. None
Your answer: ________________

4. Which is an early-career employer signal?

A. Pretending to know everything B. Avoiding questions C. Coachability and preparation D. Waiting passively
Your answer: ________________

5. True or false: Your first career-family choice permanently determines your career.

Answer: ________________
Your answer: ________________

6. Personal application

Name two roles you will investigate and one piece of evidence supporting each choice.

____

____

____

FROM INTEREST TO INFORMED DIRECTION

Your 30/60/90-Day Exploration Plan

Days 1–30	Days 31–60	Days 61–90
Research three paths; improve LinkedIn; follow BEFN and industry organizations.	Attend an event; conduct an informational interview; refine résumé and professional story.	Use Guide 3; identify employers and openings; apply selectively; continue relationships.

Your next three moves

- Read the full Guide 2 sections for your top two career families.
- Watch or listen to the Guide 2 explainer and record one new question.
- Ask one professional for a 20-minute informational conversation.

BRIDGE TO GUIDE 3

Guide 2 gives you direction. Guide 3: Breaking In: The Real Way helps you translate that direction into target employers, stronger career materials, meaningful relationships, and internship or entry-level role applications.

Your seven-day commitment

Within the next seven days, I will ____

____

About this Quick Start

This learning experience was developed from the BEFN Career Starter Series Guide 2: Careers in Equipment Finance. It provides an approachable learning layer around the comprehensive guide and does not replace it. Visit befn.org for the Student Career Portal, a complete guide, and related audio and video resources.