

Informational Interviews

Interview someone who is presently working in a job or career that you are interested in. By doing this, you will gain a greater understanding of your own pathway and career interests as well as expand your professional network.

Suggestions:

- Do not interview someone who you have an established relationship with already. In order to expand your professional network you should find someone new to you.
- Face to face interviews are most effective, followed by video-calling (Skype, Facetime, WeChat, etc.,) or telephone. Informational interviews are not effective over email.
- Dress professionally and be on time
- Keep the interview under thirty (30) minutes to respect the time of the interviewee;
- Do not use this time to ask about possible vacancies or job openings

Tips for a Successful Interview:

- Be prepared. Research as much as you can about the industry and the individual before you arrive at the informational interview;
- Practice with a friend beforehand;
- Prepare a list of questions beforehand, don't 'wing it.'
- Ensure questions are clear, concise, and professional;
- Let the interviewer do most of the talking;
- Do not ask personal questions;
- Relax, be yourself;
- Take time after the interview to really reflect on the experience;

Possible Interview Questions:

- What types of positions are most likely to be found in this industry?
- What specific skills are needed to be successful in this job/industry?
- Would you recommend any training or specific education for this field of work?
- What would a typical entry-level job in this industry look like?
- Are there any major challenges that the industry/company is facing now or in the future?
- What would you suggest is the most effective way to break into this field?
- Are there any professional associations I should join that would be helpful in this industry?
- Can you tell me about your personal career path?
- How does this company measure success?
- What types of training and development are available within the organization?

After each interview, ensure that you send a short thank-you note to the interviewee to thank them for their time. You can also ask if you could add them on LinkedIn or keep in contact with them as you progress through the industry and chart your own pathway.