



Informational Interviewing

In order to make this kind of interview work for you, follow this guiding principle:
Never ask for a job. Always ask for information, advice, and referrals.

1. Start with friends, parents, professors, alumni, etc. While these people may not have job openings in your area of interest, they do have important resources (information, advice, and networks) relevant to your job search.
2. Make a positive and professional first impression (show up early, dressed professionally, notepad in hand).
3. Keep the interview brief (20-30 minutes at most).
4. When you get a lead, show that you appreciate it by actually following up on it.
5. Send a thank you letter after an interview. keep in touch with your new contact via email or LinkedIn – that's how you maintain the network you're building.
6. Be prepared. Research the person, the company, and make a list of questions before the meeting.

Formulating Questions

You are the interviewer. Consider asking these questions to gather helpful info.

Career Specific

- Describe your career path. How did each job lead you to the next?
- How did you decide to pursue this path?
- How did you find this particular job?
- What is the employment outlook in your field?
- Could you describe a typical day?
- What parts of your job do you find challenging?
- What do you find most enjoyable?
- Is there a busy season for this career?

Responsibilities

- What are your responsibilities?
- How would you describe your work environment?
- What are the job duties/titles of your co-workers?

Industry Questions

- What future opportunities are there in this field?
- Why do people leave this field or company?
- Who are the current important people in this field?

Training and Preparation

- What educational preparation would you recommend for someone who wants to advance in this field?
- What type of skills and knowledge are needed to perform in this career?
- How do most people enter this profession?
- What types of positions would my education and experience qualify me?
- What do you think of my résumé?
- Do you have any suggestions regarding specific experiences I should seek for improvement?
- How can students find summer opportunities in this field?
- What advice do you have for those preparing to enter this field?
- How would I best acquire the skills necessary for this job?
- Do you know of other professionals with whom I might speak for more information about this field? When I call, can I use your name?