

Informational Interviews

Purpose:

- to explore careers and clarify your career goal
- to discover employment opportunities that are not advertised
- to expand your professional network
- to build confidence for your job interviews
- to access the most up-to-date career information
- to identify your professional strengths and weaknesses

Guidelines:

- Know who to access and access a variety of professionals
- Know what goals you are seeking to accomplish and information you are wanting to learn from the interview
- Be clear on your mission, the goals you are seeking to accomplish and the information you are wanting to learn from the interview
- Be honest with the person by respecting their time, and don't have a hidden agenda
- Take notes, be open to suggestions as to who else you might contact and try to keep the meeting to a half hour
- Prepare your personal introduction and develop specific questions to ask, but also go with flow of the conversation
- Remember to thank them and keep that contact viable by exchanging contact information

Sample Questions:

Please describe your role within the organization.

Please describe a typical day in your position.

How did you begin your career path?

What drew you to this industry (this organization, this position, etc.)?

Is the industry growing and what do you see developing in the next five to ten years?

What challenges have you faced in your career (in this industry, in this organization, in this position, etc.)?

What are the key skills that you believe are required to be successful in this position (this industry, this organization, etc.)?

What are the technical skills set requirements for this position?

What education and training is required or desired in this position (this industry, this organization, etc.)?

What are the physical requirements of this position?

What stressors accompany this position (this industry, this organization, etc.)?

What advice do you have for me regarding promoting within this industry (this organization, etc.)?

What career development or educational advice do you have?

How do individuals learn about positions and pursue positions in this organization and/or industry?

What are the travel and relocation requirements of this position (this industry, this organization, etc.)?

What are the average salaries in this industry and in this particular region?

What employers and organizations are appropriate and/or great to work for with your background and experience?

If you had the choice, would you make the same career decisions again? Why or why not?

Would you critique my resume?

May I use you as a contact in the future?

Is there anyone else that you believe would be pertinent for me to contact in this position (this organization, this industry, etc.)? May I mention your name?