

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Informational interviews are a great way to learn about careers that might be of interest to you. Talking to someone who actually does the kind of work you want to do is one of the best ways to get insight on what a job is really like.

Listen and Learn

An opportunity to talk to someone with direct, personal knowledge about the career or industry you want to learn more about.

Determine your Fit

A way to collect information that can help you determine whether or not a job or career field is well suited to your values, skills, interests, and preferences.

Start Networking

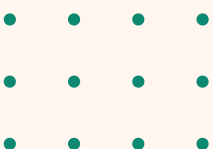
A chance to expand your network of professional contacts and find out about future employment opportunities.

Build Your Skills

A safe way to practice your interviewing skills and build confidence.

KEEP IN MIND:

An informational interview is not a job interview. You are asking the person you are interviewing to share information with you, not to hire you.



HOW TO GET AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Step 01

Select your Career of Interest:



- Decide on the job or career field you want to learn more about.
- Research the career before your interview so you have some knowledge about it.
- You can use any of the career exploration websites listed [here](#).

Step 02

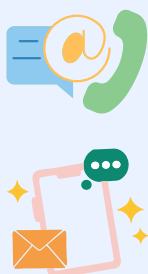
Find Professionals to Interview:

- Do you know anyone working in the job or industry you want to learn about?
- Interviewing someone you are already comfortable with can help you collect specific information in a comfortable environment.
- Ask around to get names and contact information of people you might interview.
- Check with family, friends, colleagues, classmates, teachers, people you know from clubs, professional associations, church, synagogue, etc.
- One of your contacts may know someone, or know someone who knows someone, who'd be willing to talk to you about a career you're interested in.
- Look for people in your job or industry of interest on [LinkedIn](#) and send them a friendly message to request an interview.



Step 03

Request an Interview:



- Contact the person you'd like to interview via phone or email.
- Always be polite and professional.
- Explain who you are and ask if they'd be available to talk with you via phone, video chat, or in-person.
- Be sure to respect people's schedules and not request too much of their time.
- Always make sure you are meeting people in-person at safe public places (ex. On-Campus, Coffee Shop, Library, Shopping Mall).

Example:

"Hello my name is Erik Lin. I am a student at Mesa College and am very interested in learning more about Respiratory Therapy. I received your contact information from Professor Helen Smith and would like to talk with you about what you do and the field in general. This should only take about 15-30 minutes. Please let me know if this is something you have the time to do. Thank you!"

PREPARE FOR THE INTERVIEW



- Have a list of specific questions to ask.
- Plan to use the questions you've prepared as guidelines, but also allow for some spontaneous discussion.
- For in person visits, arrive on time, and dress appropriately.
- Be ready to tell a little bit about yourself. You want to be able to articulate your interests and skills so the person you are meeting with gets a sense of what you have to offer, and the kind of information you need.
- Have a resume ready in case the person you are interviewing asks for it to learn more about your skills.
- Do not give them your resume without being asked as this may give the impression you are looking for a job.
- Always send a thank you note or email within a week of your informational interview.

Sample Questions for You

- How did you get started in this career field?
- What is a typical day on the job like for you?
- What type of education or experience is needed to get a job in your field?
- What do you like most/least about your job/industry?
- What are some of the challenges you have faced?
- What kind of skills are needed to do your job?
- Do you typically work alone or do you work with other people?
- Does someone in your position tend to have a lot of autonomy or close supervision?
- Do you feel you have opportunities to be creative at work?
- How do you see the employment outlook for your field or industry?
- What things tend to be highly valued or considered important in your job/industry?
- Are there any professional associations for people who do what you do?
- Do you have any websites or social media platforms that help you keep up with important trends in your field?
- What are some other fields or industries related to what you do?
- Do you know of anyone else I might talk with to get more information?
- Do you have any advice to share with me?