

Informational Interviews



What is an Informational Interview?

Informational interviews give you a chance to learn more about a specific field and network. During the interview, you can ask questions about entering the field, meet professionals in an organization, and learn about the organization's culture.

3 Easy Steps to Set Up An Informational Interview

Step 1: RESEARCH



Utilize your network:

- Ask professors, friends, family, and co-workers if they know someone in the field you are interested in
- Schedule an appointment with a Career Coach in Career Services for connections they have with local employers
- Use LinkedIn to research specific companies and find employees in the field

Step 2: CONTACT



- Call, email, or send a LinkedIn private message to an industry professional introducing yourself. Ask for a brief session to meet either in person or over the phone.

Example:

Dear Mr. Jones,

My name is Adriana Smith. I am currently going to school at Montgomery County Community College for an Associate's Degree in Computer Science. I recently took a class in computer programming and was very interested in pursuing a career in that field. If you have time, I would like to meet with you for 30 minutes to discuss the industry in more depth. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Adriana Smith

Step 3: PREPARE



- Research the company and take notes. You can bring your notes to reference during your interview. Make sure that you have goals for what you want to get out of the interview and ask questions that will help you achieve those goals.

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3 Ways to Ensure a Beneficial Interview



Don't Be Late

- Arrive on time, the professional is making time to accommodate you. Be conscious and considerate of their time.



Take Notes

- The interview will fly by. Make sure you take notes while engaging with the professional.



Say Thank You and Stay Connected

- After you finish the interview be sure to follow up and thank them for their time. Connect with them on LinkedIn to keep the professional relationship going.

Sample Questions to Ask

Personal Career Path

- How did you become interested in this field?
- What advice do you wish someone told you when you were starting off?
- What steps did you take to get to the position you are in today?
- Who was a mentor in your life? What did you learn from them?
- What kind of education/certification/training would best prepare me for this field?

Position Specific

- What skills or personal attributes do you think are needed for someone in this position?
- What are some challenges you face being in this field?
- What does a normal work day/week look like for you?

Company Information

- Can you describe the work culture at this company?
- What do you like most about working for this company?