

A Guide to Interviewing for Information

The informational interview is a technique for finding out about jobs and for making contacts. You can learn a great deal by reading, but you can discover great information from talking to people.

So, how do you talk to people to find out about careers in the job market? The answer is simple: don't ask for a

How do Informational Interviews Work?

First, find someone who is working in the career in which you are interested. This person could be someone you know, a referral from a friend or colleague, a recommendation from your Career Center or someone that you simply "cold call."

Second, make an appointment to talk to this person for about 20 minutes. It is essential to clarify that you are not looking for a job — rather, you are working with the career counselor, you are researching potential career options, and their career is one about which you would like to know more — you are seeking information. If possible, try to arrange the meeting at the persons work site, so you can observe the work environment.

Third, make of listed questions you would like to ask. She is the questions according to your interests skills and values for example, if your #1 career value is "independence," you may want to ask questions regarding the amount of supervision in this career, the ability to determine the nature of your own work, etc.

What are the Results of the Informational Interview?

First, you receive valuable, first-hand information regarding a career and related careers.

Are Informational Interviews my only source of information?

Informational interviews are one source of valuable information. This information gained from the informational interview is becomes meaningful and practical when supported by a information from books, directories, career planning tools, Internet, faculty, and career counselors.

Where can I find tips on informational interviewing?

...Turn the page Over for a list of sample questions for your

How to I prepare for my Informational Interview?

- Check out the flyer "*The One Minute Commercial*". This information will help you prepare for your first contact with your potential interviewee.

- Below is a suggested list of questions for your informational interview.
Adapt your questions to address your specific needs.

1. What are the typical duties involved in this occupation? What does a day or week look like in this occupation?
2. What education is needed for this occupation? Distinguish between what is desirable and what is required. Which schools are best for this kind of education?
3. What steps are necessary to break into this field? (Internships, portfolios, etc.)
4. What kinds of work experience to employers look for?
5. What are the opportunities for advancement?
6. What are the most Important characteristics a person needs to be successful in this field?
7. What are the employment prospects in this area? Where are the best prospects?
8. What are some related occupations?
9. What is the salary range for this occupation?
10. Are the hours for this occupation flexible, or are the work hours generally set?
11. What are the most satisfying aspects of your work? Dissatisfying? Are these typical for this field?
12. Do you hope to change jobs or careers in the future?
13. What trade journals, magazines, or other publications to people in this career read in order to

Where can I find more tips on informational interviewing?

...come to the

CSUN Career Center

University Hall, Suite 105