

Informational Interview

Career Exploration Series

Remember the purpose of the visit is to obtain information, not to ask for a job. The approach you take in a job interview is quite different from that of an information interview. In the job interview, you are trying to sell yourself. In an information interview, you only want to learn about a field and make decisions as to whether it is a viable career for you.

Be prepared to ask specific questions. Your objective is to learn as much as you can. To accomplish this in as short a time as possible, prepare a written list of questions.

Ask good questions, get full information, and you will be able to make a better decision as to whether or not to pursue a particular field as a career possibility. Whatever your decision, be sure to send a thank you to the person that interview you.

Suggested questions to ask during a Career Information Interview:

1. In your current position, what do you do in a typical day?
2. What are the most interesting aspects of your job?
3. What part of your work do you consider dull or repetitious?
4. What percentage of your time do you devote to such duties?
5. In your work, do you have opportunities to interact with people from diverse backgrounds?
6. What were the jobs you had which led to this one?
7. How long does it usually take to move from one step to the next in this career path?
8. What is the step above the position you currently hold?
9. What is the top position you can expect to have in this career field?
10. Are there other areas in this field to which people may be transferred? What are they?
11. What are the prerequisites for your position?
12. Are there any specific courses a student might take that would be beneficial in this field?
13. What entry-level jobs qualify people for this field?
14. What types of training do companies give to a person entering this field?
15. What are the salary ranges for the various levels in the field?
16. What aspects of a career in this field do you consider particularly good? Particularly bad?
17. Is there a demand for people in this field?
18. Do you view this field as a growing one?
19. How do you see the jobs in this field changing over the next two years?
20. What can I do to prepare myself for such changes?
21. What is the best way to obtain a position which will start me in this field?
22. Do you have information on job specifications and descriptions which I may have?
23. What special advice would you give a young person entering this field?

See the back page for a sample informational interview request

Sample Informational Interview Request

Dear Ms. or Mr. LAST NAME:

I am currently a [year in school] at Marquette University and I am considering [field] as a future career path. A family friend/professor, [Name and Company], suggested that you might be willing to briefly meet with me so I can learn more about [field]. **OR** I was wondering if you would be willing to answer some questions I have about the (specific) field or offer any advice to a student looking to start a career in [field].

Thank you so much for considering my request. I will call you the week of [date] to see about scheduling the information interview if it's possible. If you need to reach me before that time, please feel free to contact me via phone [number] or via email [address].

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Name