

Information Interviews

Version 3

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An important way of networking and learning about an occupation and a company is to conduct an information interview: meeting with an employer to learn more about a particular career and/or specific company. You will pleasantly be surprised to find that most people are willing to talk about the work that they do.

Who can you interview?

Some possible people to interview include:

- The human resources representative at a company you would like to work at
- The manager of a department you would like to work in
- A person doing the job you are interested in
- A friend or relative you know, working in the field

You can request an information interview by phone or by email.

What questions can you ask?

Here are a few sample questions you could use to show your sincere interest:

- What are the skills/qualifications required for a specific job?
- Is there growth in the career field?
- What are the salary range and job responsibilities for that job?
- How could a typical day on the job be described?
- What educational program is recommended as preparation?
- What steps besides meeting educational and experiential requirements are necessary to get into this occupation?
- What is best liked about this type of job?

- What is least liked about this type of a job?

Information Interview Tips

Do not ask for more than 10-15 minutes of the interviewee's time.

Be punctual and do not go over the agreed upon time limit unless directed by the interviewee. (Note, it may be more convenient for the interviewee to be interviewed over the telephone instead of in person)

Treat an information interview seriously

Arrive prepared to ask insightful questions and to answer questions about yourself. This is your opportunity to make a contact in the career field. At a later time, you may want to speak to the person again to inquire about hiring possibilities. So begin on a positive note. Dress appropriately, and bring your résumé or networking card ([link to networking card](#)).

Do not ask your contact for a job

An information interview is conducted for the purpose of gathering information about a job and a company. It is not a job interview. If asked, however, be prepared to provide a résumé. The interviewee may keep it on file for future reference.

Always follow up with a thank you note

Following up with a thank you note demonstrates your appreciation for the time spent with you. It provides a courteous close to your interaction and signals your openness to future contact.

tags : interview-skills