

Tips for Informational Interviews

- Informational interviews are **NOT** job interviews. They're an opportunity to:
 - Get information about working in a specific career field and the typical career path
 - Receive guidance on how to begin a career in that field and discuss what types of credentials (degrees, licenses, majors) you need to get started
- Most importantly, informational interviews provide the interviewee with a chance to practice and prepare for an actual interview in their desired field

Scheduling Your Informational Interview:

- Begin by asking for help or advice from a professional in your career of interest
- Be clear about why you're interested in speaking with this person specifically
 - Be clear that you're not asking for a job (even if you're looking for one)
 - Don't attach your résumé unless asked
- Be considerate and ask to meet at a time that's convenient for the interviewer
 - Don't assume that the interviewer will be available to meet with you in the immediate future
 - A meeting of 15-30 minutes is often sufficient



**The following sample email is an example of a considerate way to ask for an informational interview:*

Dear Ms. Jacobsen,

I'm pursuing my graduate degree at XYZ University, and I have interest in pursuing a career in the field of international relations and environmental studies. I was excited to see that you are currently employed at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a Monitoring and Evaluation specialist. I would very much like to learn more about your experiences in the industry and any advice you'd be willing to share with regards to succeeding in the field.

Would you be willing to speak with me for 15-20 minutes about your specialization at a time that's convenient for you? Thank you for your consideration, I look forward to hearing from you.

*Sincerely,
Your Name*

Tips for Acing an Informational Interview

- Know your purpose
 - Informational interviews provide you with the opportunity to gain valuable insights about working in a specific field
- Bring a copy of your résumé, and business cards
- Arrive 10-15 minutes before your scheduled interview
 - Begin your interview by thanking the interviewer, and reminding them of your connection. Be enthusiastic!
- Come prepared with a list of questions for your interviewer
- Be sure to follow up with a thank you message within 24 hours of your meeting



Sample Questions to Consider Asking:

1. In general, what credentials (degrees, licenses, majors, etc.) are required in your line of work?
2. How did you get into this field, and why did you choose it?
3. What do you find most (and least) rewarding about this field?
4. What kinds of employers generally hire people in this line of work?
5. What is a typical career path in this field?
6. What is the future outlook in this field?
7. Do companies in this field like to promote from within? What is the turnover rate like?
8. What is a typical day and week like, and how much variety is involved on the job?
9. What skills and abilities are needed to be successful in this field?
10. What other career areas are related to this job?

