

New to Networking – Consider an Informational Interview

(For more insights, see [CareerOneStop](#) regarding how to extend your job search efforts)

What is an Informational Interview?

An informational interview is a short meeting (target the discussion to 15-30 minutes) to learn about the real-life experience of someone working in a field or a company on your “Target Company List”.

Where do I get started establishing an Informational Interview?

Leverage friends, alumni, family, and former colleagues who may have contacts in companies or fields that interest you. Leverage your “Target Company List” and any LinkedIn connections you have to the companies.

How do I make contact?

Consider either a call or e-mail to make contact with the person. Consider the following outline in asking for their time:

"Ms. Smith, *<name of person who referred you>* suggested I speak with you. My name is *<your name>* and I am interested in the *<your desired career field>* field. I would value advice from someone who is in this field. Do you have time in the next 2 weeks to meet for about 20 minutes, either in person or on the phone? I would really like to learn more about your company and the *<your desired career field>* field from you. Thank you for considering my request, *<your name, contact information>*."

Preparing for the Meeting

1. Send confirmation eMail regarding the meeting
2. Provide directions for the meeting (ZOOM, MS TEAMS, etc.) or to a location agreed to meet (Starbucks, etc.). **REMEMBER** – for any virtual meeting, test the technology before the meeting!
3. Dress professionally (as you would for any interview)

Showtime! The Meeting

After introductions between you, give a brief summary of your career goal as well as what you want to learn from their experience. Based on the introduction, use the table included to start your discussion.

Potential Informational Interview Questions

Topics:	Questions:	Notes:
Interviewee Background	<i>How did you get started in this field?</i>	
	<i>When entering this field, what field of study or experience would best prepare one for success?</i>	
Job Role Activities	<i>What are the daily duties for your role?</i>	
	<i>What skills/capabilities are used most often in your role?</i>	
Industry Observations	<i>What trends do you see in this industry over the next 3-5 years?</i>	
	<i>Is there a demand for people in this industry?</i>	
Advice	<i>What experience, paid or volunteer, would you recommend?</i>	
	<i>What professional magazines or organizations would you recommend for me to learn more about this field?</i>	
	<i>Can you provide me any feedback on my resume?</i>	
	<i>What internship opportunities would you recommend to enhance my experience for this career?</i>	
	<i>What educational opportunities/certifications to keep my skills current in this field would you recommend?</i>	
Referrals	<i>Based on our conversation today, what other types of people do you believe I should speak to?</i>	
	<i>Is there anyone in your network you recommend I reach out to? If so, may I have your permission to use your name when I contact them?</i>	

REMEMBER: You asked for their time – be respectful of their schedule. Treat this as a business meeting.