

The term "informational interviewing" is taken from the words of Richard Nelson Bolles and means "trying on jobs to see if they fit you." It is not the same as a job interview, but it is a very effective means of networking. The goal is to talk to someone from a career field that interests you.

Why do an Informational Interview?

- Gain first-hand information about a career field and the skills that you need to succeed in that field
- Opportunity to make personal contacts and network
- Understand the job market, the needs of the employer and the realities of employment
- Get first-hand opportunity to ask questions and gain confidence in talking to people who might be of assistance to you
- Provide an opportunity to see if the career field is a good fit for you

How to identify an occupation for Informational Interviews

Before searching for a place of business to do an informational interview, it is important to assess your own interests, abilities, values and skills, and look at labor conditions and trends. *Where do you go to get this information?* Take a Career Decisions class offered at NTC (Northcentral Technical College). Before conducting an informational interview, you should read all about the career first.

Which people should I consider to do an Informational Interview?

Start with people you already know - friends, students, coworkers, supervisors and relatives. Then turn to alumni of colleges, the directory of organizations, companies, associations and outstanding individuals. Stop at the Career Center for more assistance.

How do you get prepared for an Informational Interview?

Research, research and do more research. Research the company, the person you are interviewing (if you can) and research the position. The more you know the better your questions will be.

How do you request an informational interview?

By phone or by letter is an appropriate way to request an informational interview.

Tips to remember when doing an Informational Interview

- Keep it short, 20 to 30 minutes.
- You are gathering information, NOT ASKING FOR A JOB.
- Always ask for an appointment and then keep it.
- Dress appropriately, just like for an interview for that position.
- You are the interviewer – you ask the questions, but keep to the time frame. Take notes. Have good eye contact. Don't interrupt.
- Ask who else would be good to contact in the field.
- Always, always, send a thank-you note.

Questions for an Informational Interview

- What is your job like? (duties, functions, responsibilities)
- How did you choose this line of work and how did you get started?
- What do you like best/least about your job?
- How did you get this particular job?
- If you were a student, how would you suggest obtaining experience in this field?
- Have you done other jobs in this company?
- Did you work your way up to this position?
- Why would customers choose this company?
- What are the skills that are most important for a position in the field?
- What is the corporate culture like here?
- Is the economy affecting this industry?
- What can you tell me about the employment outlook in your occupational field?
- What are the problems you see working in this field?
- What abilities or qualities do you believe contribute most to success in this field/job?
- Do you have any advice for someone interested in this field or words of warning?
- My strongest (skills, areas of knowledge, personality traits, and values) assets are _____

- Do you think that I would fit in this field?
- Is there anything else that would be helpful for me to know?



For more information contact the Placement Office at 715.803.1668