

## Informational Interviewing

Informational interviewing is a process of gathering career advice and information by talking with people knowledgeable about a particular job or industry. By questioning someone currently active in your desired field you will gain real-time information on industries, companies, and job functions. You will also be able to gather information on soft skills required, such as personality fit and work habits. The data gathered from the interviews will help you to have a better understanding of what it is like to actually work in a specific industry or job and to determine if it is a good match for you.

### Informational Interview Worksheet

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are your essential job duties? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What are the typical work hours for this position?

**Day:** 8 a.m.–5 p.m. **Swing:** 3 p.m.–11 p.m. **Graveyard:** 11 p.m.–7 a.m. **Weekends:** Sat/Sun

3. What personal qualities are needed to do this job? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What is the starting wage for this job? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What type of training is needed in this field? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. After receiving training, do I need work experience to apply for this position? \_\_\_\_\_

6a. If yes, do you have recommendations on how I might get this experience? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What licenses or certifications do you need in order to do this job? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. What are the physical demands of the job (e.g., climbing, lifting, carrying, bending)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What do you like most about your job? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. What do you like least about your job? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

11. How hard is it to find this type of job in today's job market? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Informational Interviewing Scripts

### Career Exploration (example)

*Hi Ellen.*

*My name is Michael Roberts. Judy Davis suggested that I call you regarding my interest in learning more about the medical field. She thought you would be a good person to offer some career advice. I am currently attending Fremont High School and I think that I would like to become a medical assistant. I have been doing some research on the Internet and I would like to talk to people working in the field to get a better feel for the job and if this is the right career path for me. Do you have 15-20 minutes to talk with me?*

### Job Leads (example)

*Hi Bill.*

*My name is Joe Right and I got your name from Stephanie Smith, a teacher at Homestead High. I am really interested in user interface design and I am looking to talk to people that work in the game industry. I'd like to learn more about career paths and to find out how I can get a summer job as a game tester. Do you have 15 minutes to talk with me and possibly share some ideas about moving forward?*

### Phrasing

What to say...	What <i>not</i> to say...
I'd like to learn more about job/industry/company.	I don't know what I want, so I'm exploring everything
I'm looking to explore how my skills and interests match current industry needs	I saw a lot of job postings on your company's website
It would be good to explore jobs that could use my strengths in the areas of communication and interpersonal skills	I'm really struggling with my classes in math so I want to know what jobs exist that don't need math skills
(Keep it positive)	(Avoid negatives)

# Conducting an Informational Interview

## Before the Meeting

- Prepare an appropriate list of questions to ask during the interview.
- Check time and location of meeting.

### **During the meeting:**

*You should listen  
80% of the time &  
talk 20% of the time.*

## During the Meeting

- Arrive on time.
- Greet your contact with a smile and a firm handshake.
- Don't forget to take your questions, as well as a notepad to take notes.
- Ask for referrals at the end.

## Clothing

What to wear...	What <i>not</i> to wear...
Slacks	Revealing clothing
Nice jeans	Clingy tops
Collared shirt	Overly baggy clothing
Skirt at or below the knee	Short skirt
Hair out of your face	Large jewelry
	Heavy makeup
	Visible piercings or tattoos

## After the Meeting

- **Always** send a thank-you note *immediately* after the meeting.

## Thank-You Note (example)

*Dear June Maze:*

*Thank you so much for your time today. I enjoyed our conversation, and I appreciate all the information you gave me. The meeting helped me to better understand what working in the medical field will be like. Thank you, also, for your referral to Jim Johnson at El Camino Hospital. I will be contacting him soon for additional information.*

*Sincerely,  
[Your name]*