

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

The purpose of an informational interview is to get *information* about a particular profession/role. It is a chance to talk with someone who is deeply familiar with a position that interests you. In order for an informational interview to be successful, you must be prepared with great questions. Also, state that you will only take 15 (or 20 or however many) minutes of the person's time. Respect the time. Do not ask general questions about the company because that information can be found via your own research. Ask probing questions that generate discussion and interest from the person volunteering his/her time to meet with you.

Sample questions:

1. How did you get into this line of work? Into this job in particular?
2. What kinds of things do you like most about the job?
3. Can you describe a recent project or proposal (or whatever they do) that you worked on and tell me about the process you followed to complete it?
4. Can you describe a typical day in the life at this job?
5. What do you like about working at company ABC?
6. What are the most important skills a person should offer to be successful in the position? What hints do you have about things to include in my cover letter/resume when applying for a position similar to yours?
7. Are there any professional designations or certifications that may help launch me into this profession? Do you know of any particularly helpful LinkedIn groups or associations I could join?
8. What is it you wish you knew when you were first starting out in this career? What advice would you give someone like myself (in my particular position...describe it briefly if necessary).
9. Who else, doing the same kind of work, could you recommend I speak with, if anyone?