



Preparing for an Informational Interview

Research

- Spend at least **10 minutes** doing research on the professional and their organization. Research will impress the professional, better inform the questions you choose, and allow you to dive deeper into topics during your interview.
- Check out the **organization's website** to get an idea of what they do, mission, locations, clients, available jobs, current staff, and structure.
- Browse the professional's **LinkedIn** to learn their work history, educational background, and professional involvement.

Sample Informational Interview Questions

- Introductions
 - Can you tell me about your career path?
 - Why did this type of work interest you and how did you get started?
- Trends
 - What trends are most impacting your field right now?
 - I've been reading about a trend _____. How is this impacting your organization?
 - In what area has your industry changed the most since you first started?
 - How do you think the industry will change in the next several years?
 - What do you think the employment outlook in this field will be?
- Insights
 - What is the best lesson you've learned on the job?
 - What do you personally find most satisfying about this work? What is the most challenging?
 - What skills or strengths do you believe have contributed most to your success in this field/job?
 - What have you used the most from your educational background?
 - If you were in charge of hiring in your field/for your company, what criteria would you use to make your selection?
- Advice
 - What would you recommend I do right now to maximize my chances of breaking into this industry?
 - What do you know now that you wish you had known when you were in my position?
 - Are there any majors or college courses you would recommend?
 - How would you advise a student such as me to obtain the necessary experience?
- Resources
 - What resources would you recommend for me?
 - Are there any books, websites, trade magazines, or professional journals you would recommend I read?
 - Are there any professional organizations or associations I should look into joining?
- Assignments
 - Which projects are most common and/or important in your work?
 - What is a typical day like for you? What percentage of time is spent doing what?
 - What kind of meetings do you participate in? How often?
 - What kinds of projects do interns and newly hired graduates work on?
 - I saw a posting for the ____ position. What type of projects would this position work on?
- Next Steps
 - What is the best way to stay connected with you?
 - Do you know of any other professionals in this field who might be good for me to connect with?

Framework and questions adapted from Steve Dalton's book The 2Hour Job Search.