



UNIVERSITY of
DENVER

JOSEF KORBEL SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
Office of Career and Professional Development

Informational Interviews



The Four R's of Informational Interviews

1

Reveal useful
information &
advice

2

Review your
resume

3

Refer you to
others

4

Remember
you for future
opportunities

1. Assess and Find Connections

Assess

- Who you know already
- Who you want to meet
- What you want to know, and who can help reveal this information

Find Connections

- See our resources on networking and using LinkedIn as a search tool

2. Send a Request (sample emails)

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am pursuing a master's degree in Human Rights at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver. Mike Ryan suggested that you might be willing to share your work experiences with me, in order to help improve my understanding of this field. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet at your convenience for about 20-30 minutes to discuss some specific questions I have about the challenges and opportunities in the field of Human Rights. I will contact you next week to see if we can arrange a convenient time to meet.

Sincerely,

Korbel Student

Dear Ms. Martinez,

I attended the Career Conversation where you spoke last week at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies. I am a first year student pursuing a master's degree in International Development with a concentration in Global Health Affairs. I am specifically focusing on maternal and child health in East Africa. I am currently enhancing my academic experiences through meetings with established professionals in this field, and am wondering if you would be available to meet with me for approximately 20-30 minutes to answer questions specific to your career and organization. I will contact you on Monday to see if we can arrange a convenient time to meet.

Sincerely,

Korbel Student

3. Research and Prepare

Research

- Research field, organization, and person you are meeting
- Prepare and prioritize 10-12 open-ended questions about:
 - Individual's career path
 - Organization
 - Career field and trends

Prepare

- This is your interview so you are in charge of the agenda and flow
- Do: Practice your 30 second speech
- Do: Dress professionally and be prompt
- Do: Engage in dialogue, don't just ask questions
- Don't: Ask for a job

Sample Questions

How did you get your job?
What jobs and experiences
have led you to your present
position?

What do you think is important
to know for someone
interested in entering this field?

What is a typical day like for
you?

What type of person succeeds
in your organization? In your
field?

What skills and experiences
make someone competitive for
a position in your organization
or field?

What do you like most about
this organization? How does
this organization differ from its
competitors?

What trends or changes do you
see in your field? Future
challenges?

What is a typical career path
like in this field?

What kind of compensation can
one expect when deciding to
pursue this career? What are
the possibilities for
advancement?

What advice would you offer
someone seeking a position in
this field?

Can you recommend books,
websites, or professional
associations which would be
helpful for my professional
development? Specific courses?

What kinds of experience,
paid or unpaid, would you
encourage for somebody
pursuing a career in this
field?

What is the reason most
people give when they leave
this field?

Would you mind taking a
look at my resume to offer
advice? Which of my
skills/experiences do you
think should be highlighted
the most?

Who else would you
recommend I contact for
more information about this
career/organization? May I
tell them that you referred
me?

4. Send a Thank You

- Send email within 24 hours
 - Let them know you have followed through with any personal referrals
-

Dear Ms. Alum,

Thank you for meeting with me yesterday to discuss your career. It was so helpful to learn firsthand what it takes to work in your field. It was especially interesting to learn about the type of internship you thought I should do this summer to prepare for a job when I graduate. As a result of our conversation I am more certain that a job in this field is right for me!

Regards,

Korbel Student

5. Track

- Record information about the meeting in a spreadsheet
- Connect with the person on LinkedIn
- Research/join/follow suggested resource referrals
- Follow up and connect with any personal referrals
- Keep in touch with your new contact (every 3-6 months)