

GUIDE TO INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

WHAT IS AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW?

One of the best ways to learn about an occupation, industry or company is to talk to people working in the field. The process is called Informational Interviewing. Unlike a Job interview, this is an interview that you request. The purpose is for you to gather relevant information by asking questions of experienced professionals. Therefore, it is important that you do not turn the conversation into a job interview.

STEPS TO CONDUCTING AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

1. Identify the Occupation, Industry, or Company You Wish to Learn About

Assess your own interests, abilities, values, and skills. Think about the type of work you enjoy doing and how you want to use your talents to make a difference, regionally, nationally and globally.

2. Prepare for the Interview

Read all you can about the field prior to the interview. Decide what information you want to obtain Prepare a list of questions that you would like to have answered.

3. Identify People to Interview

Identify people you know such as friends, relatives, alumni, present or former co-workers, supervisors. Professional organizations and LinkedIn may also be helpful.

4. Arrange The Interview

By email or by telephone

5. Conduct The Interview

Dress professionally, arrive on time. Refer to your list of prepared questions; stay on track, but allow for spontaneous discussion.

6. Follow Up

Send a thank-you note to your contact within one week of the interview.

PREPARE A QUESTIONS TO ASK. SOME EXAMPLES APPEAR BELOW POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Please tell me about your work.
- On a typical day in this position, what do you do?
- What personal qualities or abilities are important to being successful in this job?
- What part of this job do you find most satisfying? most challenging?

CAREER PREPARATION

- What attracted you to this career?
- What previous professional experiences have best prepared you for your job / career?
- What do you feel is the best training or education for this type of work?
- What qualifications do you look for in a new hire?
- How did you get your first job?
- What is the typical hiring process? Interview process?
- Who do you know that I should talk to next? When I call him/her, may I use your name?

INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE

- Which professional journals and organizations would help me learn more about this field?
- What opportunities for advancement are there in this field?
- How do you see jobs in this field changing in the future?
- What special advice would you give a person entering this field?