

## Informational Interviewing



If you've done your online research and still want more information, it's time to talk to people in the careers that interest you. If the field is new to you, the people in the hands on positions are the ones who can tell you what it's really like to work in those jobs on a daily basis. It may not be as glamorous as you think it is! But then, it might just be even more exciting and rewarding than you can ever imagine.

Here are some ways to make the most out of your informational interviewing experience.

### Prepare Your Script

A script will help you to be prepared, just as you would be in a job interview. After all, you're asking to take up someone's valuable time. Don't leave them wondering why you bothered. Go ahead and note down what you want to say and ask. You don't want to read off a script, so memorize the key points before the meeting.

### Prepare Yourself

- Ask for twenty to thirty minutes of a person's time.
- Prepare your questions and your script ahead of time.
- Dress appropriately and arrive on time.
- Stick to the allotted time.

### Ask the Right Questions

Depending on the career, what you already know about it, your level of familiarity with the person you're interviewing, and a host of other factors, your questions will very likely vary from these.

Here are a few to get you thinking:

- *Could you give me a brief overview of your role and responsibilities?*
- *What do you do on a typical day?*
- *Did you receive any formal or informal company training?*
- *What are the major rewards and frustrations of your job?*
- *What skills do you use the most?*
- *What have been some of your most interesting or difficult challenges?*
- *What personal qualities are important for this position or industry?*
- *What is the best piece of career advice you have ever been given?*
- *What kind of opportunities does this field hold for someone with my skills and experience?*
- *What is the salary range for someone with my expertise?*
- *If I were interested in a position or career such as yours, what steps would you recommend I take?*
- *Where do you think the opportunities will be within X months/ years in the future?*
- *Can you recommend other people with whom I should talk?*
- *When I get more focused, may I call you again?*

### Follow up

- Write a prompt thank you.
- Send any agreed-upon follow-up material.
- Let each person who has helped you know what you decide in the future.