

## Questions to Ask at the Informational Interview

You have arrived and are greeted by the individual at the front desk. When the interviewee comes out to meet you, introduce yourself. Thank your contact for his or her willingness to meet with you, and re-emphasize that you are there to learn and gather information about his or her career field. Use an informal dialogue during the interview.

Below are some typical informational interview questions. Pick the questions that get at what you most want to know.

### Questions about Job Duties:

1. What is your job like? What does a typical day look like? What do you do? What are the duties/functions/responsibilities of your job?
2. What kinds of problems do you deal with? What kinds of decisions do you make? What percentage of your time is spent doing what? How does the time use vary? What part of this job do you find most satisfying? Most challenging?

### Questions about Experience, Education, Training:

3. How did this type of work interest you and how did you get started?
4. How did you get your job? What jobs and experiences have led you to your present position? What was most helpful? Can you suggest some ways a student could obtain this necessary experience?
5. What are the educational requirements for this job? What other types of credentials or licenses are required? What types of training do companies offer persons entering this field?
6. What are the skills that are most important for a position in this field? What particular skills or talents are most essential to be effective in your job? How did you learn these skills? Did you enter this position through a formal training program? How can I evaluate whether or not I have the necessary skills for a position such as yours?

### Questions about the Career Field:

7. What are the various jobs in this career field? What sorts of changes are occurring in this field? How is the economy affecting this industry?
8. What are the typical entry-level job titles and functions? What entry-level jobs are best for learning as much as possible?
9. How does a person progress in your field? What is a typical career path in this field or organization? What are the advancement opportunities?
10. What can you tell me about the employment outlook in your occupational field? How much demand is there for people in this occupation? How rapidly is the field growing? Can you estimate future job openings?
11. If your work were suddenly eliminated, what kinds of work do you feel prepared to do?

### Questions about Job Incentives/Satisfaction:

12. What are the salary ranges for various levels in this field? Is there a salary ceiling? What other benefits are typical for this field?
13. What are the major rewards aside from extrinsic rewards such as money, fringe benefits, travel, etc.?
14. If you could do things all over again, would you choose the same path for yourself? Why? What would you change?

### Questions about Personal Characteristics:

15. What abilities or personal qualities do you believe contribute most to success in this field/job?
16. These are my strongest assets (skills, areas of knowledge, personality traits and values):  
\_\_\_\_\_. Where would they fit in this field? Where might they fit in other fields?

### Words of Advice:

17. Do you have any special words of warning or encouragement as a result of your experience?
18. What advice would you give me as I try to figure out my own career path?