

Informational Interviewing

Trying to choose a career, or learn more about career/job options within your major? Independently researching careers is a great way to gain more information. However, “going straight to the source” and talking to someone who works in a field of interest can help you gain the “inside scoop” on a particular career or industry. Here’s some information to get you started!

Enlist the help of your job search **network** to help you identify potential contacts for informational interviews. Your network could include family, friends, professors, former employers, alumni, and Career Services.

Once you have located people of interest, you will need to set up your informational interview. Here is a sample script:

“Hello, my name is _____. I was referred to you by _____. I am considering entering your field of work and am interested in learning more about what you do in your job. Would you have about 30 minutes to meet with me in the near future?”

After arranging an appointment, be prepared! **Before** your informational interview:

1. Learn as much as you can about the organization.
2. Write down the questions you wish to ask (see below).
3. Learn something about the person with whom you will be interviewing, if possible.
4. Dress professionally.
5. Bring copies of your resume (distribute only upon request).

As previously stated, write down what you would like to cover during your informational interview. **Appropriate questions** to ask include:

1. How did you decide to become a _____?
2. What kind of schooling/training was required?
3. How did you get your first job in the field?
4. What do you like the most about being a _____?
5. What do you like the least about being a _____?
6. What do you do during a typical day?
7. What sort of experiences would help me be prepared to enter this field?
8. Can you refer me to the individuals to discuss a career in this field?

After your informational interview, be sure to send a typed, business-style thank you note. Keep the individual you interviewed updated on your progress. If you receive an interview or job offer through their efforts, demonstrate your appreciation by thanking them with a note or phone call.

Career Services, University of Missouri-St. Louis

278 Millennium Student Center

(314) 516-5111

careerservices@umsl.edu

careers.umsl.edu

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