

An informational interview can help you to:

- Investigate a specific career field
- Uncover career options you never knew existed
- Assist in narrowing (or expanding) options
- Obtain advice on where your skills might be applied
- Learn about important issues in a career field
- Broaden your own network of contacts for future reference

Informational interviews differ from job interviews because the job seeker is asking for advice (not employment), the job seeker is the one who formulates the questions (not the employer), and there may or may not be a job available. Informational interviews are similar to job interviews because both require professional clothing and behavior.

#### Informational Interview Etiquette

- Be prepared!
  - Learn as much as you can about the industry, the organization, and the individual
  - Have your questions written down
- Arrange a time and place convenient to the professional
- Set a short time for the discussion
  - Arrive promptly
  - Offer to end the meeting at the end of the agreed time
- Offer to pay any bill associated with the meeting
- Send a thank you note within 2 days of your informational interview

Most people (especially business people) prefer appointments. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to telephone a person to schedule an appointment or request an informational interview by letter or email.

#### Letters Requesting an Informational Interview Should...

- ...name the person to whom you are writing.
- ... tell the reader why you are writing.
- ... state you are not asking for a job interview.
- ... keep the initiative with you.

#### Sample Questions for an Informational Interview

- What are the most interesting aspects of your job?
- What do you do in a typical day?
- How did you enter this job/career?
- What part of your work do you consider dull or repetitious?
- How would you recommend someone break into this field?
- What educational background is required?
- What kind of experience would help in this career?
- What recommendations would you have for an entry level person considering this career?

## Resources on Campus

- ISSA <http://issa.nd.edu/>
- University Writing Center <http://writingcenter.nd.edu>
- Career Center <http://careercenter.nd.edu>
- English for Academic Purposes <http://cslc.nd.edu/eap/>

## More help with interviewing

- Mastering the Informational Interview  
[http://shiftingcareers.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/01/29/mastering-the-informational-interview/?\\_r=0](http://shiftingcareers.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/01/29/mastering-the-informational-interview/?_r=0)
- Preparing for an interview <http://careercenter.nd.edu/for-undergrads/resumes-cover-letters-interviews/preparing-for-an-interview/>
- Dressing for the Interview <http://careercenter.nd.edu/for-undergrads/resumes-cover-letters-interviews/dressing-for-the-interview/>
- Interview Follow-Up <http://careercenter.nd.edu/for-undergrads/resumes-cover-letters-interviews/interview-follow-up/>