

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

What are they?

Why should you do it?

Will it be scary? No - it's just a conversation with someone!



WHAT IS AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW?

An informational interview is a meeting to learn about the real-life experience of someone working in a field or company that interests you. It's not a job interview, so it's important to keep focused on getting information, not a job offer.

BENEFITS OF INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

The goal of an informational interview is to gain direct information about a field or company of interest and the careers within that industry. Receive advice on how to enter the field. Gain insightful knowledge to help you prepare a relevant resume & cover letter. Establish a professional relationship with contacts in your chosen field.

INITIATING & SCHEDULING AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

- Do research on the industry, career, company, and person you want to interview.
- Find people to interview: Start with warm connections (friends, family, supervisors, or utilize your connections to find relevant professionals. (Use LinkedIn)
- Be prepared- make the most of their time and yours. Practice beforehand by doing a mock interview and have a learning goal in mind.
- Prepare an introduction and a list of at least 10 open-ended questions to ask them.
- Schedule the interview and make sure to follow up after the meeting with a thank you note. It is a best practice to follow-up within 24 hours of the meeting.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Know what you have to offer before connecting with people. What are your strengths? transferable skills?
- Become an active networker by finding places and ways to meet new people
- Stay in touch with people you meet. You want to be thought of when opportunities arise
- Remember every connection is important, regardless of their title
- Be you to show people why you are a valuable connection
- Tell people interesting stories about yourself or work that you've done

INTRODUCING YOURSELF AND ASKING FOR AN INFORMATION INTERVIEW:

"Hello Mr. Potter,

My name is Tim Cook and I am an MIS major at Rowan University looking to get some insight into the tech industry, specifically software applications and the contributions they makes to an organization like Meta. I've done independent research but would like to speak to an industry professional to get a feel for what my future role in an organization might look like. I would like to know if you have just 15-30 minutes to connect and speak with me about your career, and I can also share my career aspirations with you. Thank you and I look forward to speaking soon Mr. Potter.

Thank you,
Tim Cook"

12 SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK IN AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW:

- 1.** How did you choose this career field? Job?
- 2.** What skills, talents and personal characteristics are needed to be successful in this field?
- 3.** What experiences best prepared you for this role?
- 4.** What advice would you give someone just entering the field, something you wish someone mentioned to you when you started?
- 5.** What do you find most rewarding about your job?
- 6.** What would you consider to be the biggest challenges in your role?
- 7.** What does an entry level job look like in this field?
- 8.** What are the career paths in this industry?
- 9.** What professional associations do you recommend me joining and/ or publications, journals or podcasts would you recommend to read or listen to for this industry?
- 10.** If you could do anything differently on this career path what would it be?
- 11.** What is the most important skill or experience that would be helpful for someone to have breaking into this industry?
- 12.** May I contact you again in the future for advice?

MAKE SURE YOU FOLLOW UP AND SEND A THANK YOU:

Hello **[insert Mr./Ms. Insert Name]**,

It was so nice to meet with you today! Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions and talk about what it's like at **[insert company]**. It seems like an amazing place to work. I especially loved hearing about **[something you enjoyed talking about]**. I look forward to staying in touch as I continue **[my job search/next steps in my career journey]**. I definitely plan on using your advice to **[piece of advice that stuck with you]**. And if **[Company]** has any opportunities in their **[department]** down the road, I hope you'll keep me in mind, so that I might apply.

All the best,
[Your Name]

*Attach PDF of resume