

MASTERING THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW



Use your network to set up informational interviews. The purpose of this type of interview is to gain insight on how people get started in a certain field; what the pros and cons are for working in that field; what employers in that field look for in a candidate; how you can connect with other people in the field; and what you can do to get your foot in the door.

Here the 10 questions you should ask on an informational interview:

How did you get started and what do you think has made you successful? *This gets people talking about themselves and will provide you with insights about how you can get started and achieve success.*

How have other people you know gotten started in this industry? *You will learn how most people get their start in the industry and enhance your job search plan.*

What are the pros and cons of working in this field? *You will begin to understand if the industry is a good fit for you and if the company is a good fit for you.*

What skills, or experiences do employers in this industry look for in candidates? *This will help you understand how you can position yourself to employers in the field.*

If you were me, what would you do to try to break into this field now? *This will get the other person to tell you what you should be doing to find a job in the field at this time. It is likely that this person will provide you with other contacts in the field.*

How do you suggest I stay on top of industry news? Are there publications, professional associations, or events should I check out? *This will direct you to other valuable resources about breaking into a field.*

Do you know anyone else I can speak to for advice about breaking into this field? *This builds your network even further and may lead to additional insights.*

Can you take a quick glance at my resumé and give me your feedback? *This is a way of reminding the other person that you want to find a job in the field, and this may also give you some ideas on how to improve your resumé.*

If I have additional questions in the future, can I reach out to you again? *This is networking! This keeps the door open for future advice.*

Is there anything I can do to help you? *And this is networking as well. Always look for ways to return the favor when someone has helped you by offering their time and advice.*

You must follow up an informational interview with an email thanking them for their time. Be sure to include your resumé. When you land a job let your network know where you are working.

INTERVIEWS

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