

Informational Interviewing

MESA COMMUNITY COLLEGE • CAREER AND RE-ENTRY SERVICES

An informational interview provides you with an opportunity to meet with workers employed in a field of interest to you. Sometimes it is easier to start with people you know - family, friends, or neighbors. Your purpose for meeting with them is to learn about the type of work they do and how they do it. You need to know the details of what they do in order to help you decide if it is the career for you or not, so you are simply asking for help in learning more about their career.

Remember that you are asking for career information, NOT a job!



IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF ETIQUETTE

Be conscious of the other person's time - Ask if they have 10 minutes to answer a few questions for you at a designated time at their place of work.

Provide both a verbal and written thank you.

Look and act like a professional - Dress appropriately. (For example, if you interview for a mortgage analyst at a bank, wear a suit.)

Receptions: Avoid alcohol and go easy on the food – Eat before you go because food is not your main goal for being there.

Collect business cards and **have your own to provide!** It is up to YOU to follow up!

Be assertive and friendly, but not annoying or pushy.

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Be sure you are prepared with a list of questions, along with a pen and paper to record your notes. Explain who you are, what it is you plan to do, and when you would like to meet. Arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled interview. As you prepare your questions prior to the interview, these are some sample questions you may want to ask:

What is your job title?

What are your responsibilities?

How did you prepare yourself to do this kind of work?

Describe an average day.

What is the salary range for entry-level positions in your field?

What skills and abilities do you use? How do you acquire these?

What is the future for this career field?

What occupations are related to this one?

Are you a member of any professional associations? Which ones?

What advice do you have for me? What would you do differently, knowing what you know now?

***The most important questions you should always ask are:
Is there anyone else you recommend I speak with?
May I use your name?***

During the interview, you may also be asked some questions. Even though you are there to ask questions about them, be prepared to talk about yourself, your skills, interests, strengths. You want them to walk away knowing you would be a good employee and thinking about who they could recommend you to.

Most important interviewing tip!

Keep an organized list of people you talked to, when and about what!