



Information Interviewing

If done well, meeting face-to-face with someone that is currently in a job that you are interested in will give you high-quality information about that occupation. The job comes alive. And, you are able to ask specific questions, to probe in depth.

8 steps to organize an Information Interview

1. Learn as much as you can about the job in the *Career Information System* www.ilworkinfo.com or *Occupational Outlook Handbook* www.bls.gov
2. Develop a list of people you might contact with the help of family and friends. These are people who have first-hand knowledge of the job, or people who can give you the names of people who do know about it.
3. Send a short, personal letter to the person you choose (a) telling them what you want to learn, (b) requesting an appointment, and (c) indicating that you will call to set up a meeting time.
4. Make the call to set up the appointment.
5. Prepare for your meeting by clarifying in your mind what you want to learn. Write down a list of questions you want to ask.
6. Conduct the interview -- arrive on time, dress appropriately, ask open-ended questions, listen carefully, make brief notes, do not overstay your visit and, at the end, ask for the names of others you might contact for more information.
7. Write a brief thank you note, mentioning something from your visit.
8. Review what you learned. For example, do you need more information? How does this job fit you?

Interview Questions

1. How did you get started in this field?
2. What are your major responsibilities?
3. What do you do during a typical work day? Work week?
4. Have you held previous jobs which were stepping stones to this one? What were they?
5. What preparation (education, training, experience) would you suggest for someone interested in entering this field?
6. What do you like most and least about your work?
7. What skills and abilities are most important in your work?
8. What directions or trends do you see for this kind of work in the future?
9. What are the major divisions of your organization? Where does your division fit in?
10. What advice would you give to a person looking for an internship in this field?