



The Career Center

East Carolina University
701 East Fifth Street
Greenville, NC 27858-4353
Office: 252-328-6050

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

The best source for up-to-date information is from people now in the career you want to pursue. Informational Interviewing is the process of meeting with individuals now doing what you think you would like to do and talking with them about their work.

WHOM TO INTERVIEW

The easiest people to interview are people you already know or the friends of your friends. Ask the people close to you to help you. If you want to be a _____, you might go to your aunt who you know has lots of contacts and say, "Aunt Patty, I'm researching the field of _____ here in Greenville. Who do you know that is in this field and might be willing to help me?" You should approach everyone you know until you are given a referral to someone locally in the field you are exploring.

Try people you know:

relatives	neighbors	teachers	church members
club members	previous employers	college professors	business contacts
barbers	bartenders	maids	security guards

People you don't know:

Chamber of Commerce	Lion's Club	Toastmasters	Rotary Club
public relations contacts for companies that interest you			

Everybody knows someone!

HOW TO INTERVIEW

First identify the individual you would like to speak with, send that individual a letter requesting an Informational Interview. Follow your letter with a phone call to schedule a meeting. Make sure in your correspondence to mention that you are a student at ECU and that you are trying to determine if this career is a good one for you.

An Information Interview can happen anywhere, anytime, in person, by letter, or over the phone. First impressions count heavily, so be on time, look professional, give the contact a smile, a firm handshake, direct eye contact, know and use their name at appropriate points in the conversation.

Information Interviewing Questions

Choose 5 questions to ask, with a few more held in reserve in case you are given more time.

Questions To Get You Started

1. What is your job title?
2. What do you do?
3. How did you get into this line of work?
4. What training prepared you for this job?
5. What is the most rewarding/frustrating about your work?

Questions About The Job Or Company

6. What skills do you use?
7. What new things have you learned since starting this job?
8. What kinds of things do you have to do outside of normal office hours? Do you enjoy these obligations?
9. How much flexibility do you have in terms of dress, scheduling, work hours, scheduling vacations, where you live, etc.?
10. What does an entry level position in this line of work pay?
11. What do you think I should know about this work?

Questions About The Job Qualifications

12. Suppose you were asked to hire someone to work with you. Please rate the following factors on a scale from 1-6, with one being MOST important and six being LEAST important in your hiring decision.

- _____ A. Education
- _____ B. Past Work Experiences
- _____ C. Specific skills, talents
- _____ D. Applicant's knowledge of your organization, your department, the job
- _____ E. Personality, personal attributes, fit with others
- _____ F. What other factors should be considered and at what rate

Questions About Where This Job Might Lead You

13. What types of positions does someone with your job typically move into?

14. What position can you expect to hold five years from now?

15. What is the top job one can have in this career?

16. If the work you do was suddenly eliminated, what different kinds of jobs would you feel qualified to do?

Closing Questions

17. Based on our conversation today, are there any other people you could refer me to for further assistance?

18. May I have permission to use your name when contacting them?