

Informational Interview Guidelines

An Informational Interview is a tool you can use to gather information about a career and or/specific job title to help you in your career decision-making. It also allows you to network with individuals in the career field.

Informational Interviews may be done over the telephone, Internet, or in person. There are advantages to each method. It is quicker and often cheaper to do an informational interview over the telephone or Internet email. When you go to the actual worksite you can also assess the working environment, location, people, and atmosphere. When making a final career choice it is desirable to complete **in person informational interviews with at least two individuals** in the job you are considering.

The Informational Interview is initially done with the person doing the job you are researching, not with the supervisor, owner, or personnel department. For more information on a career field, you may also use informational interviews with supervisors, managers, owners, and the personnel department.

Be sure and dress as if you are going to a job interview as many informational interviews actually turn into job interviews.

Please call ahead and make an appointment for an informational interview. Merely, inform the individual that you are **researching** the career. It is crucial that you do not imply you are looking for work up front or you will often be referred to the personnel department.

An informational interview may be done in 15-20 minutes. Generally people like to talk about their work; so be sure you leave one hour just in case it is needed. If the informational interview goes well, they may offer to give you a tour or you may ask for a tour of the business. After the interview, if you are still interested in this career you may also ask to return at their convenience to job shadow. Job shadowing is when you follow the person around while they are working. Usually you would ask for 2-4 hours of job shadowing.

Remember to be courteous and professional and thank them for their time and information. Also, follow-up the Informational Interview with a thank you note.