

Informational Interview Guide

An informational interview is a valuable way to explore careers and build your network. It's a conversation with a professional to learn about their role, industry, and career path – **not to ask for a job, but to gain insights and make connections.**

FINDING SOMEONE TO INTERVIEW

- **Leverage Your Personal Network:** Reach out to your friends, family, professors, advisors, classmates, and peers for potential connections in your desired industry.
- **Utilize Online Platforms:** Use [LinkedIn](#) to connect with professionals in roles or industries of interest. Join the [SLC Alumni group](#) to find mutual ties.

CRAFTING THE REQUEST

- **Introduction:** Introduce yourself briefly and mention any mutual connections or interests.
- **State Your Purpose:** Explain your intent, emphasizing your eagerness to learn from their expertise and experience.
- **Request for an interview:** Politely request a 10 - 20-minute informational interview, offering flexibility in terms of meeting format (in person, phone or video call) and availability.
- **Express Gratitude:** Express your appreciation in advance for their time and insights.
- **Follow Up:** If you don't hear back within 7 - 10 business days, send a polite follow up.

HOW TO PREPARE

- **Identify Your Goals:** Are you seeking advice, industry insights, job search tips or networking opportunities? Having clear goals will help you determine what questions to ask.
- **Research:** Learn as much as you can about your interviewee. Start with LinkedIn, Google, the company's website, or other relevant social media platforms.
- **Prepare Questions:** Craft 5 - 7 thoughtful and relevant questions that align with your goals.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Can you tell me about your career journey and how you got to your current role?
- What does a typical day or week in your job look like?
- What skills and qualities do you believe are the most important for success in this field/role?
- What do you enjoy most about your work?
- What are the biggest challenges you're faced with?
- Are there any industry trends or developments I should be aware of?
- Can you recommend any books, courses, or resources that would be beneficial for someone pursuing this career?
- What do you see as the next step in your career?
- What advice would you give to someone starting out in this industry?
- Do you have any additional contacts or colleagues you'd recommend I speak with for further insights into this career path?

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- **Actively Listen:** Pay close attention to the interviewee's responses, ask follow-up questions.
- **Respect Their Time:** Keep the interview within the agreed timeframe.

FOLLOW UP & MAINTAIN THE CONNECTION

Send a thank you email expressing your gratitude for their time and insights. You can briefly summarize key takeaways from the conversation and express your interest in staying in touch.