

Sample Questions to Ask During an Informational Interview

You will not have time to ask all of the questions that you will want to ask the interviewee. Remember to focus on the ones you feel will be most useful to you personally. Pick 10-15 to use as a guideline but leave room for the possibility that other questions will develop from your conversation.

- What is your job like?
 - A typical day?
 - What do you do? What are the duties/functions/responsibilities of your job?
 - What kind of problems do you deal with?
 - What kinds of decisions do you make?
 - What percentage of your time is spent doing what?
 - How does the time use vary? Are there busy and slow times or is the work activity fairly constant?
- Why did this type of work interest you and how did you get started?
- How did you get your job? What jobs and experiences have led you to your present position?
- Can you suggest some ways a student could obtain this necessary experience?
- What are the most important personal satisfactions and dissatisfactions connected with your occupation? What part of this job do you personally find most satisfying? Most challenging? What do you like and not like about working in this industry?
- What things did you do before you entered this occupation?
 - Which have been most helpful?
 - What other jobs can you get with the same background?
- What are the various jobs in this field or organization?
- Why did you decide to work for this company?
- What do you like most about this company?
- How does your company differ from its competitors?
- Are you optimistic about the company's future and your future with the company?
- What does the company do to contribute to its employees' professional development?
- How does the company make use of technology for internal communication and outside marketing?
- What sorts of changes are occurring in your occupation?
- How does a person progress in your field? What is a typical career path in this field or organization?
 - What is the best way to enter this occupation?
 - What are the advancement opportunities?
 - What are the major qualifications for success in this occupation?
- What are the skills that are most important for a position in this field?
- What particular skills or talents are most essential to be effective in your job? How did you learn these skills? Did you enter this position through a formal training program? How can I evaluate whether or not I have the necessary skills for a position such as yours?
- How would you describe the working atmosphere and the people with whom you work?
- What can you tell me about the corporate culture?
- Is there flexibility related to dress, work hours, vacation schedule, place of residence, etc.?
- What work-related values are strongest in this type of work (security, high income, variety, independence)?
- If your job progresses as you like, what would be the next step in your career?

- With the information you have about my education, skills, and experience, what other fields or jobs would you suggest I research further before I make a final decision?
- How is this industry affected by the economy?
- What can you tell me about the employment outlook in your occupational field? How much demand is there for people in this occupation? How rapidly is the field growing? Can you estimate future job openings?
- What obligations does your employer place on you outside of the ordinary workweek? What social obligations go along with a job in your occupation?
 - Are there organizations you are expected to join? Are there organizations you suggest I join?
 - Are there other things you are expected to do outside of work hours?
- What is the salary range for various levels in this field? Is there a salary ceiling?
- From your perspective, what are the problems you see working in this field?
- What are the major frustrations of this jobs?
- What interests you least about the job or creates the most stress?
- What are the educational requirements for this job? What other types of credentials or licenses are required? What types of training do companies offer persons entering this field?
- Does your work relate to any experiences or studies you had in college?
- How well did your college experience prepare you for this job?
- What courses have proved to be the most valuable to you in your work? What would you recommend for me?
- What weight does grades/GPA hold for obtaining a job in this field?
- What abilities or personal qualities do you believe contribute most to success in this field/job?
- What are the typical entry-level job titles and functions? What entry-level jobs are best for learning as much as possible?
- Who else do you know who is doing similar kinds of work or using similar skills? What other kinds of organizations hire people to perform the functions you do here? Do you know of other people whom I might talk to who have similar jobs?
- Do you have any advice for someone interested in this field/job? Are there any written materials you suggest I read? Which professional journals and organizations would help me learn more about this field?
- What kinds of experience, paid or unpaid, would you encourage for someone pursuing a career in this field?
- What special advice do you have for a student seeking to qualify for a position in this field?
- Do you have any special words of encouragement or warning as a result of your experience?
- How would you assess the experience I've had so far in terms of entering this field?
- If you feel comfortable and it seems appropriate, Would you mind taking a look at my resume?