



MAJOR & CAREER EXPLORATION: INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW WORKSHEET

Purpose: Informational interviewing is a means to explore and gather information on certain majors and careers. Interviewing people in career fields can give you a more specific, personalized experience, and can help you “get a feel” for whether or not you would like a particular work environment.

Name: _____ UID: _____

Advisor Name: _____ Date: _____

Majors of interest: _____

Part I: Follow the steps on page 2 to set up and conduct an informational interview.

Part II: Interview details:

Name of person you spoke with: _____ Title and organization: _____

Date of interview: _____ Interview format (i.e. phone, at company): _____

How did you find and arrange this interview?: _____
(e.g., LinkedIn, alumni network, friends and family, etc.)

Why did you choose this person to interview? _____

Part III: Provide a brief summary of your findings/experience.

What did you learn about the interviewee’s career and educational background? What steps does it take to pursue a career in this field?

Part IV: Describe how this experience was (or was not) helpful in bringing you closer to your goals.

Did this experience help you to confirm or change your career interest(s)? If so, how? If not, what additional information do you think may be helpful? Based on what you learned, has this helped clarify your major path(s)? Why or why not?

(Please attach additional sheets for responses if necessary.)

HOW TO SET UP AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Step 1: Find a person to interview.

The most direct way to begin the process of an informational interview is to start with someone in your immediate network such as a family-friend, neighbor, current/former supervisor or a professor. However there are other ways to locate a potential interviewee such as:

- Company Websites
- Alumni groups (i.e., <https://umd.evisors.com/>)
- Professional Associations
- LinkedIn

Here's a guide on how to request an informational interview: <https://www.themuse.com/advice/introducing-the-email-template-thatll-get-you-a-meeting-with-anyone-you-ask>

Step 2: Prepare for the interview.

In advance of the interview, write down specific questions that you would like to ask your interviewee. Brainstorm what exactly you would like to know about their profession, their background, and the organization/industry they work in. Be mindful not to ask questions that are too personal or probing. You may think of other questions during the interview, but outlining the topics you hope to cover beforehand will ensure you make the most out of the limited time you have.

Some sample questions to ask during an informational interview can be found at:

- http://www.quintcareers.com/informational_interview_questions.html
- <http://hrweb.mit.edu/system/files/Sample+Informational+Interview+Questions.pdf>
- <http://www.career.cornell.edu/students/options/networking/Conduct/questions.cfm>
- <http://careercenter.umich.edu/article/informational-interviewing>

Step 3: Conduct the interview.

Your presence and presentation in the interview that is established is important in both obtaining the information you are seeking, and in helping to establish future networking possibilities. Below are some recommendations for interview etiquette:

- <http://shiftingcareers.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/01/29/mastering-the-informational-interview/>
- <https://www.themuse.com/advice/5-keys-to-acing-your-informational-interview>
- <http://www.northeastern.edu/careers/blog/professional-etiquette-info-interview/>

Step 4: Say thank you and stay connected.

Send a thank you note within 1-2 days after your interview—or at the very least, a thank you email. Thank your interviewer for their time and express your appreciation for the specific knowledge you gained.

Based on what was discussed, make sure to include any appropriate follow-up information in your note, such as your contact info, a resume to be critiqued, or further steps you plan to take in your career exploration process. Here are some examples of thank you notes after an informational interview:

<https://career.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/SampleThankYouLetters.pdf>.

Other resources:

- Georgetown University Career Center guide on informational interviews: <https://careercenter.georgetown.edu/career-exploration/networking/informational-interviews>
- University of Minnesota: <http://cla.umn.edu/student-services-advising/career-internship-services/job-search-resources/networking/informational>
- Monster.com - Informational interviewing: <http://career-advice.monster.com/job-search/professional-networking/informational-interviewing/article.aspx>
- University of California, Berkeley Law School on informational interviews: https://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/info_interviews.pdf
- UMD informational interview guide: <http://www.careercenter.umd.edu/userfiles/File/informationinterview.pdf>