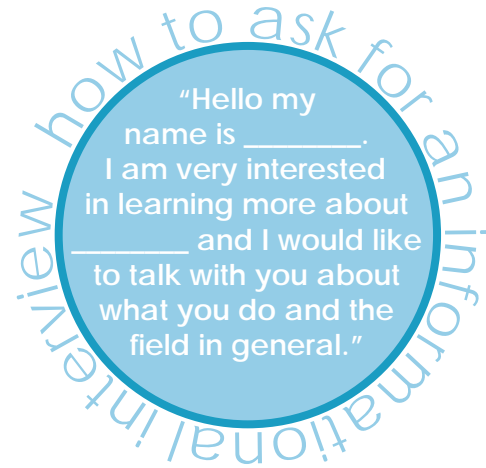


Informational Interviews

One of the best ways to gather career information is by talking with working professionals representing occupational fields in which you have an interest. Conducting an informational interview is about gathering information about a particular industry or occupation - it is not about asking for a job.

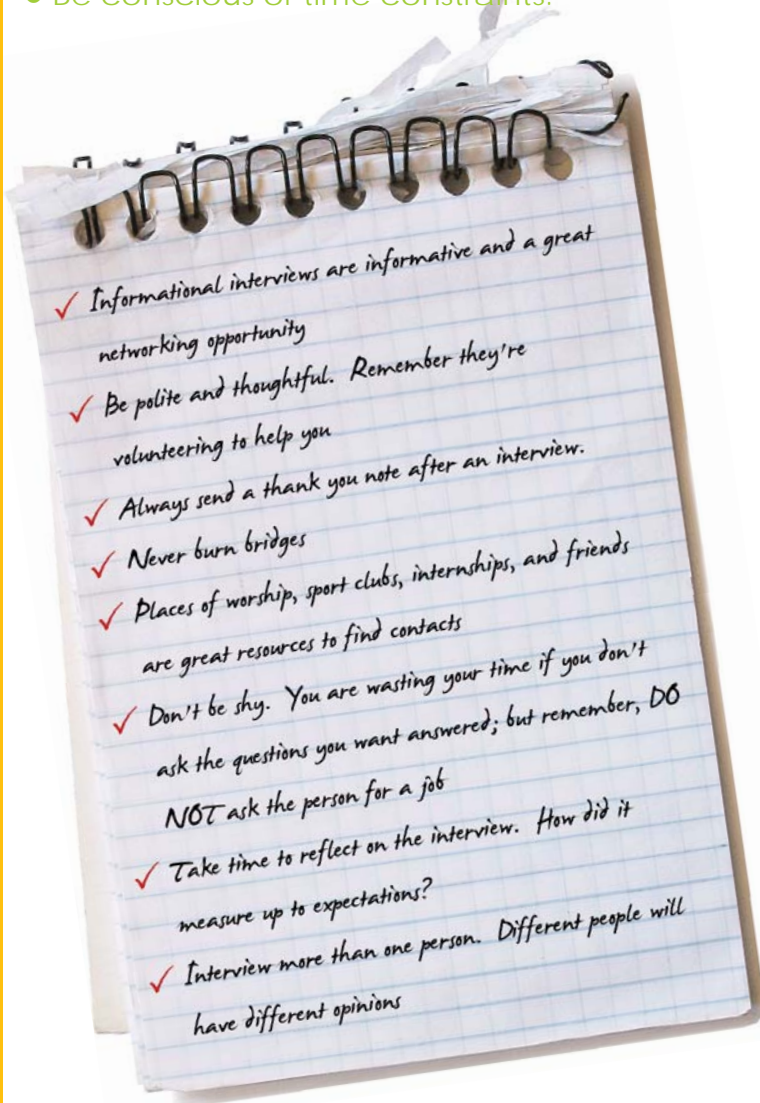
Something to Think About...

- Be organized with your questions and prepared to take notes. You are seeking information and advice, not asking for a job
- A positive, enthusiastic attitude will create a good impression. People are more apt to help others after they get to know them on a more personal basis – this is a great way to get referrals and begin the networking process.
- Research the occupation as much as possible before conducting the interview
- Be conscious of time constraints.



Suggested Questions to Ask

1. How did you get into this field?
2. What do you like most/least about your job?
3. What is a typical day like?
4. What are your job responsibilities?
5. Are these duties the same for everyone with this job title?
6. What kind of individual (in terms of talent and personality) would be best suited for this kind of job?
7. What are the prospects for someone entering your field today?
8. What advice would you give regarding how to best prepare for entering this field?
9. What advice would you give on how to apply for and find a job in this field?
10. Are there any other sources of information you might suggest?
11. Where might I go to find an employer who could use my skills?
12. What function or service does your office provide?
13. What salary range can I expect to make in this field?
14. Are there any other jobs that are similar to yours but with different job titles?
15. Who do you know that I might benefit from talking with?



Evaluate the Interview

Whether the interview was successful or not, assess how well it went. Look for what went well (strengths) versus improvement needed for your next interview. Feel free to discuss the interview with a career counselor. Since your main reason was information gathering, ask yourself a few questions, such as:

1. Does the person I just talked with use the skills I want to use?
2. Would I be qualified for his/her job?
3. Do I understand what the job entails?
4. Would I enjoy working in this capacity?
5. Did I get additional ideas for alternatives?
6. Do I have an idea about what my salary might be?
7. What impression (positive or negative) do I now have about this area of work?
8. Would I enjoy working for this company?
9. What are the goals (needs, concerns, problems, issues, etc) of this area of work/ company?
10. How can I help meet those needs? Accomplish those goals?
11. Which of my personal assets could I offer?

Follow-up

Write a thank-you note, which may be hand-written or typed. You may wish to enclose a resume, matching the information gathered from the interview with your experiences and background. Make sure your contact information includes your name, mailing address, e-mail address, and local phone number. Next, stay in touch with your contacts and update them periodically on your status and to inquire if they have heard of any new opportunities.



The Career Connections on-line database consists of UCI alumni and community members who have agreed to share their experiences with UCI students.

Use the database to find a quick profile about that person's career, including their duties and career path that brought them to this point. Then contact them to conduct an informational interview.

IT'S EASY!

1. Go to www.career.uci.edu
2. Click on Students
3. Click on Career Connections
4. Start your search!