

Informational Interview Guide

12 Great Informational Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me about a typical day on the job?
2. How did you get started doing this type of work?
3. What is your favorite part of your job?
4. What is your least favorite part of your job?
5. What surprised you the most when you started working in this field?
6. What is the typical salary range for someone beginning in this line of work?
People are typically uncomfortable stating their salaries, but if you ask in this more general way you can often get an idea of the range.
7. How do you see this industry developing in the future?
8. What advice would you give to someone what wants to get started in this industry?
9. What are employers typically looking for when hiring people in this line of work?
10. My background and experience is... (briefly note your qualifications). How does that compare with employers' expectations when hiring in this industry?
This question gives you the opportunity to present some of your qualifications to your contact, and if your contact is aware of a job opening, it can prompt them to mention that.
11. May I have your business card?
Ask for a business card so you have all of the information needed to contact this person in the future.
12. Is there anyone else I might talk to about this? May I use your name when I contact that person?
Always ask this informational interview question. If your contact knows about job openings, this question can prompt them to mention that. Alternatively, your contact may give you the name of another person who you can interview, and when you mention your contact's name to the next person, your next interview will be much easier to arrange.

Some Final Notes in Informational Interviews

- Informational interviews are a great way to network with people in the industry you are interested in. Be sure to dress and speak professionally. You want to make a good first impression!
- Type out a list of the informational interview questions you want to ask (or use the questions in this handout) and bring it with you. Once you ask the first couple of questions, you probably won't need the list anymore. Typically, your interview will turn into more of a conversation, so you won't need the list to generate discussion, but you'll still have your list ready to ensure you get all of the information you need.
- It's fine to take notes during an informational interview. Just ask your contact for permission first to ensure they are comfortable with that.
- Always bring your resume to an informational interview. It's not always appropriate to present your resume during this type of interview, but the conversation may naturally turn into that direction. If your contact asks to see your resume, that's a good sign and you'll want to be prepared!
- Be sure to get the contact information for the person you are doing the informational interview with and leave your contact information with that person.
- Always send a thank you email after your informational interview, for example:

Dear Mr./Ms. Name,

Thank you so much for meeting with me today. It was wonderful to talk with you and to learn more about your work at (company). I was particularly fascinated to hear about your project/job/event involving... (include specifics to discussion).

I am grateful for the contacts you suggested to me, and I will keep you posted on my job search progress. I look forward to talking with you again in the future.

*Sincerely,
Your name*