

Assignment 4: Informational Interview

An informational interview is a meeting in which a potential job seeker solicits career advice from a professional. The informational interview is an important networking tool to utilize. During an informational interview, the job seeker can learn more about the responsibilities of different positions, how to apply for jobs, and personal information about the professional being interviewed. It is important to keep in mind that the informational interview is not a job interview, and it should be focused solely on information rather than a job offer.

Step One: Contact the Professional. Do your research on who you would like to contact and how you can reach them (call or email). Once you find the contact information of the professional, start by introducing yourself. See the example below

Good Morning Mrs. Smith,

My name is ___ and I am interested in pursuing a career in the ___ field. I am emailing/calling you today to ask if you had some time for an informational interview. I would love to hear about your career path and any advice you have for a young professional. Thank you so much for your time.

Sincerely,"

Step Two: Decide on your questions. Do your research on the company/organization they work for and find any information that they have (website bio, LinkedIn, etc). Write a list of questions exploring their career path, their company/organization, and career field itself that would be useful to you and your research. There are many online resources full of questions you can ask someone during an interview. See a list of sample questions below:

Can you tell me a little about your career path and what led you to your role today?

What are some of your day to day responsibilities?

What are some of your larger projects you are working on?

What are the most important steps someone should take to prepare for a role like yours?

Can you describe your company culture?

Step Three: Send a thank you! A very important step to all interviews and networking is to send a thank you email the following day. This will show the professional you are grateful for their time and help. It also leaves a good impression. See example below:

"Mrs. Smith,

It was so nice meeting you yesterday. Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me and answer my questions. I especially loved hearing about [something you enjoyed hearing].

I look forward to staying in touch as I [continue my job search/complete my next step].

Sincerely,"

Assignment:

Reach out to a close friend or family member with a career you may be interested in and ask if they have time for an informational interview. Since this assignment is practice for informational interviews in the future, start with someone you are comfortable with; they do not have to have a career in the environmental field. If you would like to practice with a professional, feel free to reach out to someone.

Once you have successfully connected with someone, set a date and time. Next, start to plan out what questions to ask. Research more about their company/organization and their position. Write down at least 10 questions to ask during the interview.

Record all their answers and anything else you find noteworthy. Once you are done, **summarize the experience, as well as things you learned during the interview in a paragraph or two** and email it to dmaher@schuylkillriver.org.

Do not forget to send them a thank you!