

Informational Interview Guide

Informational interviewing is a great way to network and learn about what it is like to work in certain career fields or industries. Students may choose to set up informational interviews if they are deciding between majors or career paths to gather more information about what it would be like to have a position similar to the person they're interviewing's position. Others may set up informational interviews as they are approaching a job or internship search to grow their network.

Most professionals are willing to speak to students about their career fields, but do not get discouraged if you are not able to meet with everyone that you contact. Start by asking professors, CUW staff, family members, and friends to see if they can connect you to someone in your field of interest. Once you decide who you would like to reach out to about setting up an informational interview, reach out to that individual via email or phone, indicating that you are not looking for a job but that you would like to learn more about their career field. If you were referred to this professional by someone, let them know who that was.

Before your informational interview, which can be in-person or on the phone depending on the professional's location and availability, prepare questions you would like the professional to answer. These questions generally relate to the professional's career path and advice for you as a student.

Some questions to consider asking include:

- What led you to working in this career field and your current role?
- Why did you choose this career field?
- What do you like most about your position and/or working in this field?
- What do you like least about your position and/or working in this field?
- What is a typical day like for you?
- What else do you think would be important for me to know about working in this field?
- What advice would you give someone who is interested in working in this field?
- Is there anyone else you would recommend that I speak with about this career field?
- Would it be acceptable if I reach out to you again if I have any additional questions about the field?

After your informational interview, as you would for a job interview, send a thank you note to the professional for taking the time to meet with you and share information about their career path and give you advice. You may also want to consider connecting with the professional on LinkedIn.