

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Informational interviews are one of the best sources to gather information on a specific career. The purpose of an informational interview is to obtain information, *not* to get a job. These interviews are conducted in person, by telephone or e-mail.

Why do an informational interview?

1. Learn firsthand what it is like to perform a particular type of work in a particular organization.
2. Gather information about what types of job opportunities/career paths exist in a given field of interest.
3. Develop contacts (networking) with key people who either do the hiring or who act as resources for those who do hire.
4. Gain self-confidence and learn about “problem areas” where you can provide solutions with your skills and abilities.

PROCEDURE

- **First** - Identify the occupation or industry you wish to learn about.
 - Assess interests, abilities, values and skills. The Advising and Career Exploration Services (ACES), 133 Warner hall, 342-1033 or University Counseling Office, 220 Royce Hall, 342-1865 can aid in personal assessments.
- **Second** - Prepare for the interview by researching the career and then prepare a list of questions that you would like to have answered.
 - Visit: http://www.stetson.edu/~khansen/bn301/200_info_int_Qs.html for a list of “200 Informational Interview Questions.”
 - Choose ten questions applicable to the person you are interviewing.
 - Know exactly what kind of information you want, do not ask questions that are routine and readily available.
 - Aim for a 20-30 minute interview.
- **Third** - Identify whom to talk to, start with a list of people you already know, such as; friends, relatives, fellow students, present or former co-workers, supervisors, faculty, college advisors, neighbors or anyone who might know someone in the career you are interested in.
 - Ask the mutual acquaintance if you can use their name when contacting the interviewee.
- **Fourth** - Contact the person to set up the interview:
 - by telephone
 - by a letter followed by a telephone call
 - by e-mail.

- Try for an in-person interview, a professional image, warm smile and firm handshake placing your face to your name. Have your questions ready when calling, as your only option may be the telephone informational interview right then and there.