

Informational Interviews

What is an informational interview?

It is a conversation with another individual that is more advanced in their career journey. The purpose of the conversation is to find out more about an industry or organization and to grow your network. You do not conduct an informational interview to find an internship or job, although the connection might help you or someone else in that way at a later date. This is an opportunity to learn more about a career path or role that interests you. Informational interviews normally last about 30 min, be respectful of their time.

Question Examples

1. Would you tell me about your career journey?
2. What influenced you to choose this career path?
3. What experiences (academic, professional, other) have helped you most in this role?
4. What is something that you wish you had known before going into this industry or field?
5. What are some of the biggest challenges you face in your current role?
6. What are some of the greatest rewards you have experienced in your work?
7. What is something that would surprise most people about your daily experience?
8. What skills or attributes would someone need to excel in this type of career?
9. What is the most important thing someone could do to prepare for a role like this one?
10. Do you have any other advice you would like to share?
11. Is there anyone else that you think I should talk to about this?

Follow up

1. Thank them via email within 24 hours.
2. Send a written thank you note in addition.
3. Connect with the individual on LinkedIn.
4. Follow up by reaching out immediately to all contacts they share and tell them when you have done so.