



(707) 527-4941



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- ☐ Conduct the interview. Dress appropriately, arrive on time, be polite and professional. Remember, people are generally interested in talking about what they do and how they do it. But don't waste their time or your time. Be prepared! Read about the career area and organization of the person you'll be interviewing. Know exactly what kinds of information you want by having a list of questions in mind. Generally, don't ask something routine that is readily available elsewhere.
- ☐ Remember. Should you bring a list of questions with you, be familiar enough with the questions you want to ask so you will not continually need to refer to it during the interview. This will help you achieve a more natural, relaxed and spontaneous conversation with your interview subjects which is likely to elicit more honest, candid and complete information than a straight questions-and-answer interview format.

WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD YOU ASK DURING THE INTERVIEW?

- ☐ Background: Tell me how you got started in this field. What was your education?
- ☐ Work environment: What are the daily duties? Working conditions?
- ☐ Problems: What are the toughest problems you deal with?
- ☐ Life style: What obligation does your work put on you outside the work week?
- ☐ Rewards: What do you find most rewarding about this work, besides the money?
- ☐ Salary: What salary level would a new person start with? Fringe benefits? Other forms of compensation?
- ☐ Potential: Is there a career ladder or opportunity for advancement? How does it work?
- ☐ The industry: What trends do you see for this industry in the next 3 to 5 years?
- ☐ Advice: How well-suited is my background for this field? When the time comes, how would I go about finding a job in this field? What experience, paid or volunteer, would you recommend?
- ☐ Demand What types of employers hire people in this line of work? How do people find out about these jobs?
- ☐ Hiring decision: What are the most important factors used to hire people in this field? (Education, past experience, personality, special skills)
- ☐ Other sources of information: Can you name a trade journal or professional organization that might have information about this career area?
- ☐ Referral: Can you recommend other people I should talk to? May I have permission to use your name when I contact them?
- ☐ Do you have any other advice for me?

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Immediately following the interview, record the information gathered. Be sure to send a thank-you note to your contact within a few days of the interview.

» Sample Phone Script to Request an Informational Interview

- ☐ *Hello. My name is John Smith. I'm exploring the field of _____ as a possible career. I understand that your firm is involved in this, and I would like to talk to you or another member of your staff/firm about the field. Do you have a time that this would be possible? The interview would take about 20 minutes.*

The person may be reluctant or say, "We have no openings at this time." If so, explain that you are not looking for a job. Stress that you are in the process of career exploration and want to research this particular field by saying:

- ☐ *I'm investigating various career areas so that I can get a realistic view of the local job market or career potential in this field.*

If an appointment is set, thank them and re-establish the date and time of your meeting:

- ☐ *Thank you, Mr. Smith. I look forward to seeing you Friday at 2 o'clock. May I have the address to your office?*