

WHAT IS AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW?

An informational interview is a way for you to gain information and advice about a field, industry, or company. It is also one of the most effective ways to grow your network. An informational interview consists of a conversation between you and someone in a job or industry you would like to learn more about. The goals of an informational interview include learning more about a company, industry, and/or person; introducing yourself to professionals and industry leaders; and growing your network in an intentional and systematic way.



In short, you will be gathering **Advice, Information, and Referrals (A.I.R.)**. The benefits of such a strategy are many and varied and include:

- o **Gain self-confidence** in talking with professionals, since it is much less stressful than a job interview
- o **Obtain information** about the job market, the industry and the companies you are interested in
- o **Meet people** who are new and interesting
- o **Build a network** of contacts which may be helpful in the future
- o **Explore jobs or career paths** you did not know existed
- o Enhance your **communication skills**
- o Improve your **social skills**
- o Learn how **to manage a focused conversation**
- o **Observe** various work environments
- o **Learn** which skills are necessary for particular occupations
- o **Sharpen** your decision-making skills

How is an informational interview structured?

The ideal **format** for an informational meeting is face-to-face, one-on-one. It is less effective and less desirable to conduct informational interviews over the phone or via video chatting, email, etc., but better than not conducting one at all.

The **timeframe** for an informational interview can vary widely, but range from 15 minutes to more than an hour.

As the job candidate, **you are the driving force** behind informational interviews. Tasks you will be responsible for include:

- o Researching the industry, company, and people to meet with
- o Initiating contact and asking for the meeting
- o Conducting the informational interview
- o Following-up after each meeting