



OFFICE OF CAREER & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Informational Interview Tips

What is an Informational Interview?

- Talking to people about their work and career path and obtaining their advice on getting started in the field of social work.
- A great way to learn about the profession and begin to build your network.
- Learning about someone's experience.

Why Should I Conduct an Informational Interview?

- To explore professional areas and clarify career goals.
- To expand your professional network.
- To build confidence for job interview
- To identify professional strengths and weaknesses.
- To learn about employment opportunities that are not advertised.

How do I Prepare for an Informational Interview?

- Think about what information you hope to learn.
- Prepare questions you can ask to gain as much information from the meeting as possible.
- Research details about the organization in which the individual works by "Googling" the organization's website.
- Find out professional information about the person you'll be meeting by looking them up on **Linked In**.
- Dress appropriately in business casual if meeting in person [NO jeans, sneakers, sweatpants, etc.] and observe professional etiquette.
- Since you are requesting the interview, you should take the lead. However, allow the person being interviewed to do most of the talking.
- Be courteous and keep a time limit of 20-25 minutes unless the person agrees to more time.

Great Questions to Ask:

- What advice would you give about starting a career in your area of work?
- What are the trends in this area of the profession?
- What was your career path?
- What are the major responsibilities of your position?
- What do you like best and least about your job/career?
- What do you think of my background in terms of entering this field/specific area?
- What would you suggest I add to my qualifications?
- Is there anyone else you would suggest I reach out?

What do I do after the Informational Interview?

- Send a thank you note within 24 - 48 hours of the informational interview.
- Keep notes and follow up on any contacts you may have been given and inform contact of any new developments.
- Acknowledge how appreciative you are of his/her help.
- Maintain the relationship through periodic contacts (Once every 3 - 4 months.)

Making the Most of Winter Break

- ◆ Enjoy some downtime !
- ◆ Assess your VIPS: Values, Interests, Personality & Skills
- ◆ Perfect your resume.
- ◆ Draft a cover letter.
- ◆ Practice your 2 minute networking introduction.
- ◆ Conduct informational interviews.
- ◆ Research organizations and keep track on them.
- ◆ Check deadlines for internships and fellowships