

Informational Interviewing

A Strategy for Career Exploration



Choose a job you love, and you will never have
to work a day in your life.

Confucius

Purpose and Benefits

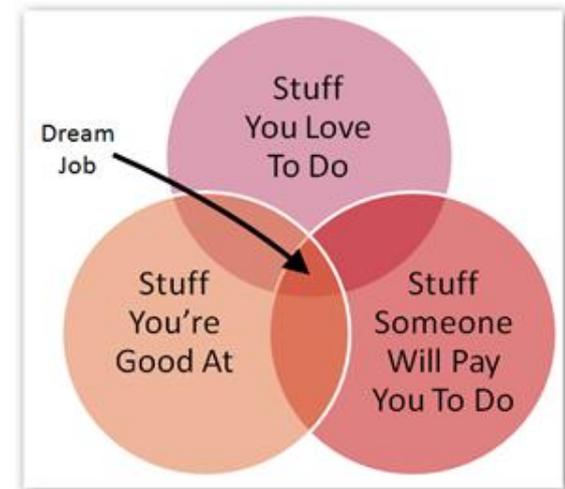
- Explore a job or career that is aligned with what is important to you.
- Learn about an organization/company and employee experiences in positions of interest.
- Make sustainable connections with people in fields of interest.
- Reciprocal sharing of background and work-related experiences.
- Employers establish pool of possible job candidates.

Explore the Types of Work That Interest You

1. Generate list of 10 or more areas of your life and work that are most important to you.
2. Make a list of the types of work that interest you.

Consider these areas:

- Areas of competence
- Activities you love to do
- Areas you can get paid to do



Who to Interview

- Find someone in a career who enjoys what they do and do well in it!
- Check company business directories and websites for names/positions/titles/contact information.
- Look for articles of successful people in the field.
- Talk with people at Career Fairs to see who they recommend.
- Check alumni directories for people in field of interest.
- Reference Triangle Business Journal; WCPL Reference USA; GuideStar, etc.
- Talk with people at job networking events.

Dress Up Your Core Skills

Develop phrases around your core skills that are descriptive and memorable.

Examples:

- “Solutions-focused analysis”
- “Receptive communication”
- “Motivated towards goal achievement”



Requesting the Informational Interview

In an email (most effective means):

- Express interest in the field and how your core skills will contribute.
- Share relevant experiences and how these will "add value" to the field.
- Explain your intentions for the interview - "to explore more about.." and "learn about your role and the career path you followed."
- Inform that interview will last no more than 30 minutes.
- Request to meet at convenient day/time and that you will follow-up

Prepare for the Meeting

- Look up information on the business and position on website.
- Research the profile of the person your interviewing with on LinkedIn.
- Develop interview questions to explore the job or career.
- **Informational Interview Questions**



The Interview

- Introduce yourself and express generosity for doing the interview.
- Generally restate what your initial request email indicated.
- Begin asking your prepared questions and let the interview flow.
- Final questions: Additional resources to connect with AND if you may provide updates on your career progress.
- Thank person for offering their time and experiences.

Follow-Up After the Interview

- Express your pleasure for having met and thank again.
- Include 1- 2 things learned from them in your interview.
- Indicate your plans going forward.





The best way to predict the future is to
create it.

Abraham Lincoln