

Conduct an Informational Interview

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In this article, we'll explain the benefits of informational interviews and the steps you need to take to do them.

What is an informational interview?

An informational interview is a brief and informal meeting to learn more about an area of interest from someone who has first hand experience. It is an opportunity for you to learn about the pros and cons of an industry and what requirements or responsibilities might not be listed on a job description. You can do an informational interview with someone in your personal or professional network or someone you've never met before. The purpose is to build relationships and network.

Why are informational interviews helpful?

It can be difficult to get a sense of what a job will actually entail from looking at a job description or article. Informational interviews give you a chance to hear directly from people who work in the role/industry you're interested in. They also give you an opportunity to make new connections that could lead to potential references in the future.

When should I do an informational interview?

The best time to do an informational interview is when you're considering a career change and want to learn more about a specific job/industry. Before you start reaching out to people, assess your skillset and potential career interests by taking a [career assessment](#). If you aren't considering a career change but still want to expand your professional network, you should check out [Lunchclub](#).

Who should I do an informational interview with?

Begin by making a list of everything you can think of related to the job/industry you're interested in:

- Companies and organizations
- Professional and academic associations
- Government and private programs
- Related job titles and positions

Use your list to search for an individual who might be connected and their contact information:

- Company website
- Organization's LinkedIn page
- Your existing personal and professional network

How do I request an informational interview?

Once you decide who you want to reach out to, send them an email or a message on LinkedIn. Your message should include the following:

- Introduce yourself briefly ("I am a recent graduate from SNHU and [your role] at [your company] specializing in [your area of work]").
- Explain your experience or interest in the job/industry.

- Tell them why you're reaching out to them (rather than someone else) and how they can help you.
- Ask to meet with them in the near future. Provide a wide range of dates/times that they can choose from.
- Thank them for their time and consideration.

Check out our [Networking Email Templates](#) article for ideas.

How do I prepare for an informational interview?

Once you schedule an informational interview, research the individual and where they work in depth. Check the individual's LinkedIn profile for information about their professional experience, accomplishments, etc. Check the company's website for information about their history, mission, products, recent news, etc. Come up with a list of questions that you want to ask them. Make sure your questions are specific to them and their experience.

How do I follow up after an informational interview?

Afterwards, thank the individual by sending them an email within 24 hours letting them know that you appreciate their time and insight. This will help leave a lasting impression. If you could see yourself connecting with them again in the future, connect with them on LinkedIn.