

## The Exchange at Marian University | Networking and Informational Interviewing

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**Up to 85% of jobs are not advertised! This means finding a job can be based on who you know.**

Exercise:

- Write down everyone you know
- Connect a web from there of everyone they might know
- List previous employers

Think about your friends, family, classmates, co-workers, clubs, sports, and any other past experiences you have had with others.

### Where to Network

#### Career Fairs

- Hand out resumes
- Briefly tell recruiters who you are, what you are looking for, and how you could benefit their company
- Pick up business cards
- Follow-up with people you meet

#### Networking Events

- Hand out resumes
- Briefly explain who you are and what you are looking for. Be positive, friendly, and engaging
- Pick up business cards
- Follow-up

#### Informational Interviews

- Ask questions
- Tell interviewee your objective
- Keep in contact

#### Spreading the word

- Tell friends and family what you are looking for
- Share resumes with them

### Informational Interviewing

#### How can an informational interview help me?

Informational interviews give you an opportunity to gather first-hand information about career fields you are considering and to expand your network of professional contacts. In an informational interview, you can get valuable advice about entering and advancing in a field, as well as ideas for locating contacts or job leads within the profession.

#### Where can I find someone to interview?

You can locate someone to interview through family and friends, professors and academic advisors, or professional organizations.

#### How do I initiate contact?

Contact the person by phone, introduce yourself as a college student, and explain your interest in his or her career field. Although most informational interviews take the form of a 20 or 30 minute workday meeting, you can also request a telephone interview (if the person does not live nearby) or an observational visit that lasts a few hours or a full day. Before concluding your conversation, be sure you have agreed on the date and place of your meeting. A brief note of confirmation can serve as a helpful reminder to both of you.

#### How do I prepare?

Informational interviewing should not be a starting point for your career research. It should supplement what you have already learned. Research the nature of the career, the required education and training, and other basic facts.

#### What should I do during the interview?

Be sure to dress appropriately; if you have questions about the standard dress for the occupation, feel free to ask when you arrange the interview. Arrive early and don't forget your list of questions. During the interview, listen carefully; the interviewee may answer one of the questions you had planned to ask later on.

#### What happens after the interview?

Always send a thank you letter within two days of the interview. It is essential for maintaining contact with people who have assisted you. Gently remind interviewers who you are and when you met. Thank them for their time and mention aspects of the interview that were particularly helpful. Remember, they can continue to serve as resources throughout your career.

## Sample Questions for Informational Interviewing

In preparation for your meeting, develop a list of topics to discuss. Informational interview questions typically fall into several different categories, which are listed below.

### Occupational Requirements and Experience

- How did you get started in this field? Is that typical of most people?
- Describe a typical week. Would these duties be the same for anyone with your job title?
- What skills and personal qualities are most important for success in this job?

### Occupational Environment

- How would you describe the professional climate in your office? In your industry?
- What portions of your job involve interaction with coworkers, clients, or vendors?
- How much evening, weekend or overtime work is required? What about traveling?

### Benefits and Challenges

- What are the greatest rewards of your work?
- What are the greatest frustrations? How do you deal with them?
- On what basis are professionals in your field evaluated? How is success measured?
- What is the starting salary range for new professionals in this field? (Do not ask for their salary.)

### Occupational Outlook

- What are the opportunities for advancement in this field? Could you describe a typical promotion path?
- What are some growth areas in this field, and what is the impact on job opportunities?
- How is this field likely to be affected by changes in technology?

### Advice

- What areas of education or specialized training would best prepare me to do this kind of work?
- What classes can I take or projects can I complete that will be helpful?
- Are there any professional organizations that would help me to build my network in this field?
- How do people find out about job openings in your line of work?
- Where do people in this field typically look for internship and job opportunities?
- Can you recommend other people for me to talk to?

#### Stay Organized & Keep Records

**Contact Name and Company**- collect business cards in a filing system.

**When You Talk** – note what you talked about and when you will follow up.

**Send updated resumes to contacts** – this is another way to keep in touch.

**Send a thank you note within two days.**