



Being Interviewed for Job & Career Information Career Planning for Managers

What is an informational interview?

An informational interview is a meeting between you and an individual who is interested in your job or career. Often, the most current information about a career field comes from the people who are working in the field, so you can be a valuable resource to others.

How can you prepare for an informational interview?

As a professional, you may be contacted by someone to participate in an informational interview. In this situation, the person contacting you is primarily responsible for scheduling the interview, researching the job, asking questions, etc. However, there are ways you can prepare yourself for the conversation. Consider the following:

- Get to know your interviewer – this could help set up some specific points and references for you to bring up
- Prepare questions you may have for them (e.g. Why are you interested in this job?)
- Reflect on your answers to questions they are likely to ask (e.g. What path led you to your position?)
- Plan to take notes during the meeting, particularly if you're volunteering your help in any way (e.g. making a connection between the interviewer and a colleague of yours) • Follow up on any actions you agreed to take

What topics should you avoid during an informational interview?

An informational interview is not a job interview. However, informational interviews may lead to job opportunities, so it's a good idea to avoid questions that may be illegal in a job interview context. See HR-114 (<http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr100/hr114>) for information on legal and illegal interview questions.