

FAQs: Informational Interviews

1. How long do informational interviews last?

- Try to spend no longer than 30 min during the interview

2. What if I send an email requesting an informational interview and the person doesn't respond?

- It might happen, but it's okay. Sometimes people are really busy. Keep their contact information and move on to the next person on your list

3. How many people should I interview?

- It depends, but in general, I try to interview approximately 5-10 people

4. What is the best way to be prepared for an informational interview?

- I try to learn information about the job, prior to the interview. For example, you should review a few job descriptions to become familiar with key responsibilities and duties. Also, it's best to send questions in advance to ensure the person understands what you'll ask them

5. Do I have to do informational interviews in person?

- No. In fact, it might be better to conduct them over Skype, Zoom, or a similar platform. By doing so, it gives the person you're interviewing flexibility to schedule the interview at the day/time that is best for them. Also, it gives you flexibility to speak with people in other countries

6. Should I talk to people that work for the same company?

- No, I recommend speaking to people with similar position titles at different organizations. It will give you a broader perspective of the field

7. Should I ask my career center to help me find people to interview?

- Yes! The career center at your university is often in touch with alumni. They can give you suggestions of people to meet, especially if you can identify the types of jobs in which you have an interest. You should also ask people within your personal network (e.g., friends and family)

8. What should I say about myself during the interview?

- Your goal during informational interviews is to listen! However, it might be helpful for you to begin the call with a brief introduction and share the objective of the call. For example:
 - > “I am early in my career and I organized this call to gather information about the type of roles that interest me”
 - > “In general, I have an interest in HR. However, the field is broad, and I’d like to learn more about your role in an effort to understand the various disciplines within the broader HR field. Based on the classes I’ve taken and articles I’ve read, I think I enjoy Learning & Development”
 - > “Today, my goal is to learn more about the work you do, as that will help me figure out the day-to-day responsibilities of someone actually working in Learning & Development”
- Once you introduce yourself – you should then transition to your prepared interview questions