

Questions to Ask in an Informational Interview

During an informational interview, you are the one responsible for asking the questions. Plan carefully before the interview so you'll know what questions to ask. Consider your values, talents, and interests. You need to know if these align with the career field you are researching. Practice asking the questions before you arrive or make the phone call. Bring the list of questions with you. Bring paper and pencil so you can take notes if you want. Remember to write a thank you letter to the person who took time for your visit and interview.

Look over the following list of questions. Mark the *five* questions you think you would like to ask. You may even want to add a question or two of your own. Before you go in for your interview, type up the questions you want to ask. Remember, you only have a certain amount of time during the interview, so use it wisely. Make sure you get answers to the most important questions.

1. I'm intrigued by the _____ field and would like knowing how most people get into this field.
2. What is a typical day like for you?
3. Any unusual hours, working conditions, or safety hazards?
4. Are there any special licenses, certificates, or testing required for employment in this field?
5. What kind of projects do you work on?
6. Does your staff work in teams?
7. What would you think is the best educational preparation for a career in this field?
8. What skills are required?
9. What personal attributes are necessary or desirable?
10. Would you recommend any special training?
11. What would make someone successful here?
12. What kind of beginning salary is reasonable in this field?
13. What is your favorite part of the job? What is the most challenging? The most frustrating?
14. Are jobs growing or decreasing in this field?
15. What are the growth opportunities in your company?
16. What are the current challenges in this industry?
17. What are some of the benefits of working in this career?
18. Which professional organizations or journals related to this field would you suggest I know about?
19. What experiences have you had that you feel were invaluable to your learning about this business?
20. Where did you start in this industry?
21. If you could live your life over, would you choose the same path? Why? What would you do differently?
22. How does the company fill positions?
23. How do people find out about the openings?
24. Considering what you know about my skills and experience, what other fields or jobs would you recommend I know about?
25. Could you recommend other people who would be willing to talk with me about this career field? Could I use your name when I call them?