

The Informational Interview - Sample Questions

1. How did you get into this field?
2. What do you do in a typical day?
3. What are your duties and responsibilities?
4. How is your time divided among working with people, data and things?
5. What are your working hours and how much overtime or "homework" do you put in?
6. Who do you supervise and to whom do you report?
7. What are the working conditions like? Are there expectations about behavior and dress at your work place? Is the atmosphere "formal" or "informal," highly structured or loosely structured?
8. What do you like best about the people you work with?
9. What do you feel is the purpose, goal and/or value of your line of work?
10. How does this career fit with your personality? Your economic needs? Your life goals? Fulfill you as a person?
11. What mistakes could you have avoided in your career with better planning and advice?
12. What do you like about your job?
13. What do you dislike about it?
14. What are the toughest problems and decisions you make?
15. What skills and talents are especially useful and necessary to fulfill your job responsibilities?
16. What kind of training/education is required for this position?
17. What are the most important characteristics or personal traits for someone entering this career?
18. Do you apply knowledge gained through coursework?
19. How long did it take you to learn your job?
20. What is your understanding of the "career ladder" within this field?
21. What suggestions would you make to someone interested in the field in terms of training and experience required?
22. What is the average starting salary for someone in your field?
23. What kinds of fringe benefits are provided in your position?

24. What is the current outlook for this kind of career locally? Statewide? Nationally?
25. With what other agencies or organizations do you have contact?
26. Is there a local professional organization related to your career and could you give me the name and phone number of one of the officers?
27. How difficult would it be for you to find another job with your background and education?
28. What other career fields could someone with your background enter?
29. What advice would you give someone in my position about preparing to enter the field?
30. How far can someone with my qualifications advance in this career?
31. Do you have hobbies, training or talents other than your educational background which have been helpful in this career?
32. Describe any pertinent experiences you have had and how these contributed to where you are today.

Always finish with: I'm hoping to talk with others who might provide additional insights on this topic. Would you be willing to give me one or two names of others in this or a related field with whom it might be helpful to talk?