

HOW TO NETWORK

Some tips for conducting an informational interview

What is an informational interview?

They are an opportunity to gather information and get advice from an experienced person in a career, industry, or company of your interest.

If you've ever thought, "I would like their job one day" or "I wonder what they do and if I'd like it", this is a good person to do an informational interview with!

What are the benefits of conducting one?

There are so many benefits!

- Learn about a career path you did not know existed
- Get firsthand knowledge of what that type of industry/job is like
- Get tips and insider knowledge about how to stand out as a candidate in your field
- Develop professional relationships and build your network.

Who Do I Reach Out To?

- Alumni through UVM Connect & The LinkedIn Alumni Tool
- Individuals at Companies
- Advisors
- LinkedIn Connections
- Connections through Friends, Family, Faculty, or Mentors

Buzzfile.Com and LinkedIn are two websites to help you find companies and individuals who work at them.

What should I say?

Hello, my name is _____. I'm a [year in school] at the University of Vermont, and I'm thinking about what I want to do after I graduate. I found you through [insert], and I'm very interested in the work that you do. I'm hoping we could schedule a 20- or 30-minute informational interview so I could gather information about your career field and how you figured it out. Please let me know if you might be available to meet with me or speak with me over the phone. Thank you very much for your time.

What Should I Ask & How do I follow up?

Example questions are on the back!

After your informational interview, make sure to thank the individual for their time in an email, LinkedIn message, or personal note.



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Example Questions to Ask

JOB QUESTIONS

- Why did this type of work interest you and how did you get started?
- What jobs and experiences have led you to your present position?
- What are the responsibilities in your job? What does a typical day or week look like for you? What percentage of your time is spent on which responsibilities?
- What kinds of problems do you deal with? What kinds of decisions do you make?
- What knowledge, skills, abilities, and other qualifications are desirable for this job?
- What do you view as the critical skills for a position in this field?
- What is your favorite and least favorite element of your job?

CAREER FIELD QUESTIONS

- What are typical entry-level jobs in this field?
- What is the typical pattern of career development in this field?
- What are the trends and hot issues in this field? What journals or websites do you read to keep up with trends and developments in your field?

LIFESTYLE QUESTIONS

- What obligations does your workplace upon you, outside of the ordinary work week? What are your working hours like?
- How often do people in this field change jobs?
- How much flexibility do you have in terms of dress, schedule, vacation, etc.?

CAREER PREPARATION ADVICE

- How did UVM prepare you for this work? What kind of background is necessary to enter this field?
- How can I acquire the required skills? Are there courses, or experiences, paid or otherwise, which you would recommend?
- If you were to hire someone to work with you today, what factors would be most important in your hiring decision and why?
- Is a graduate degree recommended? Are there specific programs that are valued in this field?
- What other related types of work should I consider and research?

JOB SEARCH ADVICE

- Given my education and experience, would I be a competitive candidate for entry-level positions in this field?
- How do you suggest that I break into this field?
- How can I identify both advertised and unadvertised vacancies in this field?
- Can you suggest anyone else whom I can contact for additional information? May I use your name when I contact them?

RESUME REVIEW QUESTIONS

- Is this an appropriate resume for the jobs I will be seeking?
- If an employer received this resume, how do you think she or he would react to it?
- How might I best improve the form and content of my resume?