Informational Interview Guidelines

Networking is one of the most successful methods for a job search, and informational interviewing is perhaps the most effective way to network. True networking is about building lasting professional relationships which are mutually beneficial, rather than about asking people for jobs. Through informational interviews, you can seek advice and information about how to best position yourself in your search and how to be most competitive. More importantly, you can learn from an insider and become knowledgeable about a particular function, industry and/or even a company’s culture.

If done well, informational interviews become a platform for expanding your network. Networking allows you to tap into the hidden job market and to locate vacancies before they go public. Most people in industry are flattered to be asked for their advice and if pursued appropriately will make time to share it.

There are many ways to go about finding people to interview

- Use alumni databases
- Check out Professional associations’ membership lists (the contact names are often listed on their websites)
- Search Your LinkedIn contacts
- Approach family and friends of your own network
- Use Google and other search engines.

Before conducting your informational interview, much like a job interview, you will want to do your research

- Research the Company’s Objective or Mission
- The Organizational Structure
- Their Key products, Services and Industries
- The Size (revenue, profit, headcount)
- Locations
- Competitors
- Leadership (C-level (ceo, board of directors, etc)
- Recent News
- Visit company website for MBA level jobs that may be posted...

Preparation is a key component for conducting Info Interviews.

- Craft 5-10 pertinent questions, proving and applying research (see list that is housed in your Career Development Handbook)
- Practice your Elevator Pitch (from networking webinar)
- Use the Preparation Checklist (that is housed in your Career Development Handbook) ... Read through the Dos & Don'ts (that is housed in your Career Development Handbook)

The Informational Interview Process will include

- Exchanging pleasantries
- Establishing credibility with your Elevator Pitch
- Let them know why you are there
- Ask the questions you prepared ahead of time
- Once it’s done, Thank them sincerely for their time
- ALWAYS Follow up with a thank you note!

Next steps:
- Read through all of the resources that accompany this webinar and are housed in your Career Development Handbook (Informational Interviewing Guidelines, Preparation Checklist, Dos & Don’ts, List the of Questions) Informational Interview.
- Use a variation of Informational Interview Sample Request for obtaining an
- After your Informational Interview, use the Informational Interview Write Up Form