# Informational Interview

## PURPOSE

An "Informational Interview" is a meeting to learn about the first-hand experience of someone working in a field or organization that interests you. Keep in mind that it is not an interview for a job. Rather, it is an opportunity to gather information once you have narrowed your career interests. Some students who conduct informational interviews have their career goals affirmed and gain insight about which classes to take, what to major in, or how to gain professional experience while still in school. Others discover that their dream job is not so dreamy after all. No matter what you discover, the knowledge and understanding is an important component of a successful career exploration process. This is a great way to build relationships in preparation for your future internship or job search.

## ACTION

### Things to Consider

* Look over these detailed [informational interview instructions](http://www.clark.edu/enroll/careers/documents/InformationalInterviewing.pdf).
* Determine where you can gather information and who to interview. What is the target occupation, industry, or specific company where you would conduct an informational interview?

### Resources to Use

* Ask your contacts (e.g. family, friends, faculty, professional network, LinkedIn)
* Conduct research on the internet
* *The Book of Lists*, *Penguin Jobs*, and other resources in the Career Center (in Career Services PUB 002)

### Planning the Interview

What is my target job title/company/industry of interest?

Use your contacts to find someone who works for the job title/company/industry about which you wish to learn.

Who can I ask for an informational interview that would help me with my career research? Or, who can I ask to introduce me to a person I can interview?

### Informational Interview Questions

Complete this chart to determine questions to ask an expert in the field, and what you will learn (see sample questions on the [informational interview instructions](http://www.clark.edu/enroll/careers/documents/InformationalInterviewing.pdf))**.**

| *Interview question to ask* | *What you hope to learn from this* |
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### Final Informational Interview Tips

* Research the target profession or company
* Be prepared with questions to ask

### Listen more than you talk

* Ask for referrals – who else should I talk with about this career?
* Stay confident and remember people like to help students!

### After the Interview: Reflection

1. With whom did you speak?
2. Did this affirm your career ideas? How so?
3. What would you like to learn more about?

## NEXT STEPS

It’s important to continue professional networking while in college. Informational interviews are useful throughout your career, and college is the time to hone this information and networking strategy. Making connections while you are still a student is one key to career success.

Additional ways to connect with professionals during your career exploration process:

* Speak with faculty who are teaching in subjects in your area of interest
* LinkedIn *(see the related Myplan activity)* - find and engage with groups and professionals through social media
* Participate in part-time [student employment](http://www.clark.edu/enroll/careers/job-search/student-employment.php) in your area of interest
* [Volunteer](http://www.clark.edu/enroll/careers/resources/international.php) with an organization related to your field of interest
* Join professional organizations for your field; [join clubs,](http://www.clark.edu/campus-life/student-life/clubs/index.php) meetings and [activities](http://www.clark.edu/campus-life/arts-events/index.php)

on campus

You are now one step further in MyPlan. At this point we encourage you to discuss your progress with a faculty or staff member at Clark College; such as an Academic or Faculty Advisor, Career Services staff, or an Instructor.

It may be useful to print out and refer to this completed activity before your meeting, or email it to the staff/faculty ahead of time.