

Informational interview

When changing career, you may find it of considerable use to carry out some informational interviews. This involves getting in touch with one or several people who currently do the job you are interested in doing or would like to learn more about. Book a meeting with them and ask them questions to learn more about the profession or industry, and to get tips and advice from experts in the field.

Conducting informational interviews can be very helpful for a number of reasons:

- **Insight into the profession** – You will gain a deeper understanding of the profession or industry you are interested in. You can learn what working in that specific area actually entails, what the challenges and rewards are, and what kind of knowledge and competencies are important in the sector.
- **Networking** – Informational interviews present an opportunity to network with professionals within the area you are interested in. This can also boost your chances of making contacts within the industry and open doors to potential opportunities in the future. A good way to conclude an informational interview is to ask: “Do you know anyone else who you would recommend that I speak with?”
- **Career advice** – Talking with experts in a specific field is a great way to get valuable advice and guidance for your career. You can find out how to develop your competencies, pursue training or apply for jobs in the industry.
- **Genuine insight** – Instead of simply relying on the internet and other sources for info, informational interviews will give you a true insight into life in the industry and what the work environment and its challenges are really like.
- **Boost your self-confidence** – Interacting with professionals and expressing an interest in their profession may give you the self-confidence to continue on your journey and take on new challenges.
- **Focused career planning** – Informational interviews can help give direction to your career planning and place focus on the areas and roles that best align with your skills, interests and values.

Examples of questions to ask

- ✓ Can you describe your professional background and how you got into this industry?
- ✓ What are the most common tasks and responsibilities in your role?
- ✓ What challenges and rewards could I expect from this profession?
- ✓ What are the most important skills and competencies in order to succeed in this area?
- ✓ What qualifications or experience would you recommend in order to be competitive?
- ✓ Are there any specific certifications or courses that would be good to have?
- ✓ What are the most important personal attributes for success in this profession?
- ✓ What does an average day look like for you?
- ✓ What opportunities for career change and advancement are there within your profession?
- ✓ Can you share some tips on applying for jobs or networking within this industry?
- ✓ Are there any trends or growth areas within the industry that you think are going to be important in the future?
- ✓ What do you think are the most rewarding and meaningful aspects of working in this industry?
- ✓ Are there any common misconceptions about this profession that you would like to set right?
- ✓ Can you recommend any people, organisations or networks in the industry that would be worth contacting in order to learn more about the industry?