

## WHAT IS A CAREER INTERVIEW/INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW?

It is a form of career research, where you can learn about your intended career field. It is beneficial to speak to a real person in the field to get a first-hand account of the job responsibilities. This conversation can help you to:

- Clarify assumptions about the career
- Better understand the realities and demands of the occupation
- Expand your network of professional contacts

**TIP:** Consider watching [CandidCareer](#) video interviews to also learn more about your career/field of interest before conducting an informational interview.

## FINDING A PROFESSIONAL TO INTERVIEW

- The challenge of conducting career interviews is finding a professional to interview.
  - For example, if you are studying to be an accountant, ask your Financial Accounting professor
- Reach out through your personal network
  - Chances are that you know somebody who works in your intended profession or someone you know has a friend or family member who can connect you with an industry professional.
- Create an [account](#) and [profile page](#) on LinkedIn.
  - Now you are ready to connect with an industry professional on LinkedIn.
  - Instructions on how to connect:
    - Search by *job title*
    - Go to *Search Bar*
    - Type in *job title of interest*
    - Search in *People*
    - Request to connect with a message
    - You can also filter your search further by *Location* and *Current Company*

## ASKING FOR AN INTERVIEW

Now that you have identified a professional in your intended field, reach out via email, phone, or LinkedIn.

## EMAIL EXAMPLE

Hello \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is **NAME**, and I am a student at Valencia College, studying **MAJOR**. I am researching my intended career in **CAREER**, and I am reaching out to professionals in the field to conduct career interviews.

**OPTION 1:** I was referred to you by **PERSON/PROFESSOR** based on your experience in the field, and I am particularly interested in **SOMETHING THAT INTERESTS YOU ABOUT THEM.**

**OR**

**OPTION 2:** I found you on **LINKEDIN/COMPANY WEBSITE** based on your experience in the field, and I am particularly interested in **SOMETHING THAT INTERESTS YOU ABOUT THEM.**

Do you have about 20-30 minutes to speak with me about your job, professional background, and education? Please let me know if you would be available sometime this week or next to speak on the phone or Zoom.

Thank you so much for your time!

**FULL NAME**

## PHONE EXAMPLE

Hello! My name is **NAME**, and I am a student at Valencia College, studying **MAJOR**. I am researching my intended career in **CAREER TITLE/FIELD**, I was hoping to speak with you for a few minutes about your career background and current job. I found your information on **LINKEDIN/COMPANY WEBSITE/SOURCE.** Do you have about 20-30 minutes to speak with me about your job, professional background, and education? (*If they say yes, then ask*): Will you be available sometime this week or next to speak on the phone or Zoom?

## LINKEDIN EXAMPLE

Hello (first name of professional),  
I am an (insert major) at Valencia College and I am researching careers in (insert career interest). I'd like to hear more about your work as a (job title) with (name of company). Are you available for a 20-30 minute Zoom or phone appointment next week? If so, let me know what date and time and which type of appointment you would prefer. Thank you, (Your full name)

## TIPS

- For the subject line on an email, write Valencia College
- Explain who you are, what you are studying, and what you want to talk about

- Let the person know the time commitment so they can plan accordingly
- Provide a list of questions you might be asking so that they can prepare
- Do not ask about salary!
- Be respectful of their time; if you make an appointment, keep it and be on time.
- Set up your LinkedIn profile before contacting the professional.

## QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK...

Think about what you really want to know about the career. If you have concerns about the career, ask!

- What do you like best about your work?
- Tell me about your education/training background. Where/what did you study to become a \_\_\_\_\_?
- What does your typical day/week look like?
- When considering the new professionals in this field, what skills are necessary to be competitive for jobs?
- Are there any professional organizations, clubs, or honor societies that I should consider joining?
- What are some of the biggest challenges professionals face in this career?
- Where do you see this industry headed in the next 5 years? 10 Years? 20 years?
- What kind of jobs have you had in the past that prepared you for this role?
- What advice would you give your younger self starting out in the industry?
- Tell me about your work environment and company culture.
- How would you describe the culture at (Name of organization)?

These are just some examples! Make sure to do your research so that you can ask even more informed questions about the career.

## THE MEETING

- **Time**

Be on time! If you must cancel, give at least a 48-hour notice and apologize. One day this person could be your boss or colleague, so you want to make the best impression possible.

- **Attire**

If you are meeting virtually or in person, dress in business casual clothing (unless the meeting place warrants a different dress code). When you greet them, shake their hand, look them in the eye, and smile! Thank them for taking the time to meet with you.

- **Questions**

Get into your questions and give the person plenty of time to answer. Don't interrupt, just be ready to listen and take notes. As you approach the previously agreed-upon time, be ready to stop asking questions so that the person can return to their work. \*If you want to record the conversation, always ask permission before you get started!

- **Follow-Up**

After you leave, send a thank you email or card to the person. You can reference your conversation and some of the information you learned. Be sure to keep in contact with the person via LinkedIn if possible—you never know when they may have an internship or job available!