

Informational Interview Agenda

- 1. Build rapport.** Briefly chat with interviewee to set the tone for a comfortable, productive meeting. Remember, you only have 20 to 30 minutes to attain your goals.
- 2. Deliver your “Infomercial.”** This is a two-minute introductory speech (see CEC document “Two-Minute Infomercial” guidelines) that lets you tell the interviewee about yourself so that he or she is better able to help you. Indicate your academic status, current and past experience (employment, internships, volunteer work), your strengths, one or two examples of your accomplishments and finally, your goals for the future, or what you are currently exploring.
- 3. State the purpose of the meeting.** Remind the interviewee the reason you’ve set the appointment.
 - “When I graduate, I plan to look for a job in _____. “It would be helpful to know what the qualifications are, and what employers are looking for in a candidate.”
 - “You just graduated last year and landed a job with _____. It would be great to learn how you approached the job market, and to get some feedback on my qualifications.”
- 4. Ask interview questions.** Prepare these in advance to solicit information and advice.
 - “Could you describe a typical workday?”
 - “What qualifications do you seek in a new hire?”
 - “What are some of the challenges your company faces?”
 - “With my background, what other career paths would you suggest I explore?”

Note: The person you are seeing is doing you a favor so be respectful of his/her time. Stay on track, but don't be afraid to let the conversation flow or ask follow-up questions. You may keep notes during the interview.
- 5. Request referrals.** Expand your network to further your career research.
 - Don't ask: “Who else do you know that I may contact?” She may want to help but knows 200 people.
 - Rather narrow down the field/criteria, i.e., “You work in a large agency. Do you know someone in your role at a smaller agency that might be willing to meet with me for information and advice?”
- 6. Close the meeting.** Convey appreciation and **leave the door open for future contact.**
 - “May I give you a call if I have a quick question?”
 - “Would you like me to let you know how the referral meetings went?”
 - “Could I give you periodic updates on how my career research is going?”

Remember: Stick with your contract!!

- *End the meeting precisely at the time you agreed to, unless you are invited to stay longer.*
- *Never ask if the interviewee has a job or knows of one. This creates an awkward situation and puts them on the spot. If you have made a positive impression, you don't need to ask - they will tell you if they know of an opportunity!*