

MENTORROLLINS

Informational Interviewing

The best way to gain insights and learn is by speaking with people who are knowledgeable about the realms and topics you are interested in learning about, whether it is a specific career, organization, academic pursuit, or even entrepreneurship, informational interviewing is a very effective way to increase your knowledge and insights.

Additional Specific Benefits of Informational Interviewing

- Learn about desired skills and abilities in different careers.
- Become aware of industry trends and organization before those on the outside.
- Learn about specific topics and areas of interest
- Make additional networking contacts to learn of potential future opportunities.

Steps to conducting informational interviews

- Identify a topic or realm of interest you would like to discuss
- Search for potential contacts through MentorRollins
- Always be polite in introducing yourself using a message explaining why you are consulting with them

Your message should include:

- A brief introduction about yourself;
- Why you are consulting with this individual, for example to learn more about a type of career, organization, or topic.
- A brief statement of your interest or experiences in the person's field or organization.

Sample Message – Please customize each message based on your interest (Hence, Don't Copy Verbatim).

I am a second year graduate student at Rollins and I will be graduating with a Master of Public Health in Behavior Sciences and Health Education in May 2020. I have focused much of my studies on examining behavioral risk factors for cancer. Last summer, I served in an internship in the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control at the CDC, where I engaged in research on the relationships between nutrition, physical activity, and cancer prevention.

I have a strong interest in cancer prevention and control, and would greatly appreciate the opportunity to speak with you for 15-20 minutes to learn more about the work you do.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sample Questions you can ask during your informational interview:

- What do you enjoy most about what you do?
- Could you describe what your career path has been like in this field?
- What skills and abilities do you think are necessary to be highly successful in this field?
- Could you describe what a typical day is like for you?
- What is the most enjoyable aspect of the work you do (or the field in general?)
- What are the most important skills, or abilities a person should have to be successful in this field?
- What other ideas / resources would you recommend that might help me learn more?
- Are there professional organizations that I should consider that you would recommend?
- Are there any other ideas or resources that you think might be valuable sources of information for me to pursue?

Preparation prior to your Information Interview

Research the person you will be speaking with and the organization. The more prepared you are, the better you will be able to formulate thoughtful questions and feel confident about your ability to communicate effectively. You ideally should formulate your own questions prior to the information interview based on the specific knowledge you are trying to gain.

After the information Interview

Always send a thank you message expressing appreciation to the person for the time and energy to assist you!