
INFORMATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Here is a list of the kind of questions to ask at an Information Interview when you are considering a career change and need information about a particular position or field of interest.

Personal Background -

- Tell me how you got started in this field?
- How long have you held this kind of job?
- How long have you worked for this organization?

Nature of Work -

- How would you describe your job?
- What are the most frequently recurring problems or challenges?
- How is the work changing?
- What are your major responsibilities?
- What are the rewards of your position?
- What do you enjoy most about your work?

Working Conditions –

- Does this job require primarily independent activity or is there a lot of teamwork?
- What is the overall working climate/environment like?
- What hours do individuals in this job usually work
- Is there much flexibility?
- Who evaluates your performance? How is this done?
- How supported do you feel in pursuing your development goals?

Preparation Required –

- Can formal educational credentials be substituted for experience?
- What kind of on-the-job-training is provided?
- What kind of academic background and experience is required for this position?
- Are there specific courses or training programs that are particularly valuable?

Salary & Benefits-

- What potential earnings can someone in this field of work anticipate?
- What is a typical entry-level salary in this field?
- Are there other benefits that increase total compensation?

Entry into the field –

- How does one get his/her first job? How are these jobs advertised and filled?
- What is the current level of opportunity for these types of positions?

- Do you anticipate any change for better or worse during the next few years?
- Would some previous experience as an intern, a volunteer make a job candidate more marketable?
- What kinds of skills and experience should be highlighted in resumes and interviews?
- What kinds of organizations or departments have a need for positions like yours?

Opportunity for Advancement –

- Are there lateral moves that can be made within your organization/department and into other areas?
- What position in your organization could you realistically aspire?
- What is a typical career path for individuals in your position?

To make sure your objective is realistic and achievable -

- I have been thinking about _____. From what you know of my background does that seem like a logical next step?
- With my background and experience, what (other) functional areas, types of positions, departments, or industries do you think I could focus on?
- Since I am considering _____ can you see any gaps in my experience and qualifications for this kind of position?
- What can I do to make improvements or fill in the gaps? On what should I place emphasis on when communicating with other contacts and potential hiring managers?
- What experience and skills of mine would you consider to be an asset in your field, department, area, company, or industry?
- Can you suggest anyone else whom it would be helpful to talk to? May I use your name when contacting her/him?
- What would be the best move for me now in order to _____ later on?
- Do you mind if I stay in touch with you as I continue exploring my options?

To uncover departmental, company or industry, opportunities and needs -

- What are some important medium and long-term trends (changes) affecting your function/department/company?
- How do you see these trends affecting (functional Area of business)?
- Are hiring managers/companies keeping this trend in mind in their hiring policies?
- What types of challenges/problems currently face your department, field, industry, or company?
- Are the services/products your function/department/company provide finding a decrease or increase in demand?
- With these problems/trends in mind, what qualifications, experience and areas of expertise are managers looking for in their new hires?

- Do you see a person with my qualifications, and experience being able to make a contribution with respect to the problems/trends that you've identified?
- What can I do to become better prepared to meet these challenges, presently and in the future?
- What are some additional sources of good information about these trends/challenges/problems?
- Can you make recommendations on what to read or other people I should talk to?

To obtain advice on Your Job Search -

- Would you mind looking at my target list of people, departments/companies?
- Do you have any suggestions on my job search strategy?
- Do you mind if I stay in touch with you regarding my job search?
- In your opinion, how realistic are my goals?
- How do you suggest I go about locating a position in _____?
- If you were in my place right now, what might you do in order to uncover possible positions?
- If you were trying to attract the most qualified candidates for a position how would you go about it?
- Should I be contacting a recruiter/headhunter? Do you have any recommendations?
- What was your reaction to my resume?
- How does it compare to others you have seen?
- Does it say enough or too much?
- Can anything be improved-the style, format, and/or content?
- Is there anyone else that you know of that I should be talking with about job opportunities in _____?

