**SET UP INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS**

**What are informational interviews?** An informal conversation lasting 20-30 minutes with a person working in a job field that interests you.

**Purpose:** To gather information, explore career paths, and make connections.

An informational interview is not a job interview, and the objective is not to find a job—but it’s a great way to better understand different career paths and opportunities.

You may initially feel uncomfortable reaching out to people you don’t know but understand that informational interviews are very common. And most people enjoy taking some time to talk about their professional journey and give advice to someone interested in their career. Get more comfortable by practicing with people you already know.

Spaces are provided below but feel free to attach additional pieces of paper to answer questions and take notes.

**PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW**

**01/**

**Identify professionals with jobs that interest you.** Think about any family friends, professors, and/or mentors who could answer career questions and provide advice. Use resources like LinkedIn to find potential interviewees.

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**Research the person’s job title, career field, and company information.**

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**Identify the goals of conducting the interview.** For example:Do you want to raise your confidence when you go into a real interview with an employer?

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**REQUEST THE INTERVIEW**

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**Craft a professional email or phone call requesting the informational interview.** Briefly introduce yourself and express your interest in their career plus anything you have in common. Request the interview 1-4 weeks out. Set a location for the interview.

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**PREPARE THE QUESTIONS**

**05/**

**Do not waste their time – ask questions based on your prior research that you could not find the answers to online**. Ask questions about their career journey, challenges, advice for newcomers, and industry trends. Prepare 6 to 8 open-ended questions that cannot be answered with a simple yes or no. Follow up in 2 weeks if you have not received a reply.

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**CONDUCT THE INTERVIEW**

**06/**

**Treat the interview like any other – be professional, courteous, and on time.** Actively listen and take notes. Send a thank you email or note within 24 hours of the completion of the interview.

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**MOVING FORWARD**

* + **Regularly conduct informational interviews to gain information and make connections in your career**
  + **Periodically follow up with your contacts to keep the connection alive by updating them on your progress**
  + **Reflect on key takeaways and the skills and experiences you will need to build upon your strengths**