



UAA Career Services Informational Interviewing

An informational interview is an informal conversation you can have with someone working in an area of interest to you. It is a great way to learn more about a company or career field, gain valuable feedback, and build your professional network.

Benefits of Informational Interviews

- Initiate a professional relationship and expand your network of contacts in a specific career field.
- Get firsthand, relevant information about the realities of working within a particular field, industry, position, or organization.
- Discover new and interesting career paths.
- Get tips and insider knowledge about how to prepare for and land the position.

Steps for Conducting Informational Interviews

1. Research career fields, job types, and employers using [Handshake](#), social media, and internet searches.
2. Ask people you already know including family, friends, teaching assistants, professors, co-workers, former employers, etc. Even if they don't work in your field of interest, they may be able to connect you.
3. Develop your elevator pitch to include who you are, why you are looking to meet with them, and what you hope to accomplish.
4. Create a list of 5-10 questions you would like to ask your interviewee.
5. Contact the person by phone or email.
6. Mention how you got their name, and why you are contacting them.
7. Emphasize that you are **not** currently looking for a job but would like to learn.
8. Ask for a convenient time to meet for 0-30 minutes.
9. Be prepared to talk with them on the spot.
10. Whether you are meeting in person or virtually you'll want to dress for success, arrive on time, and be prepared to take notes.

Contact: uaa_career@alaska.edu | 907-786-6913

UA is an AA/EO employer and educational institution and prohibits illegal discrimination against any individual:
alaska.edu/nondiscrimination

Sample Questions

1. What are the main responsibilities of your position?
2. Could you describe a typical week, or workday?
3. How would you describe the company culture?
4. What would surprise people about your work?
5. What are some of the biggest challenges you face in your position?
6. What are the most rewarding aspects of your work?
7. What level of decision making is required for this position?
8. How does your role impact the organization?
9. How does your position interact with, and impact the industry as a whole?
10. What kinds of accomplishments tend to be valued and rewarded in this field?
11. How did you become interested in this field, or position?
12. Tell me about your career journey.
13. Would you change your career path if you could? Why?
14. What do you like most about your work?
15. What do you like least about your work?
16. How would you recommend I prepare to enter this field?
17. What kind of education, training, or background does this position require?
18. Do you feel your degree is relevant to your career or current position?
19. What skills, abilities, and personal attributes are essential to succeed in this field?
20. Could you please describe the desirable attributes, knowledge, skills, and abilities of recent hires?
21. What are the most effective strategies for seeking a position in this field?
22. What industry issues or trends should I be aware of?
23. What is currently changing in this industry? How should I prepare for this change?
24. What resources would you recommend I pursue through my professional development?
25. What advice would you give someone who is choosing this type of position or a related position in this career field?
26. Are there any questions I'm not asking that I should be?
27. **Is there anyone else you recommend I connect with as I get ready to launch my career?**

Follow Up

Always follow-up with a handwritten thank you card or email within a week of your interaction. Keep in touch through email, [Handshake](#), or LinkedIn; this person could become an important part of your network.