

## Questions to Ask

### Sample Informational Interview Questions

Remember, the average informational interview lasts for 20 to 30 minutes. Select the questions that will provide answers most important to you.

### Questions – Changing Careers

- Currently, my career is (fill in your career). How easy or difficult do you think it will be to make a transition to your career/industry?
- My current career utilizes the following skills most (list skills): Do you feel that any of those skills would be transferrable to your field?
- What would be most helpful in making the transition to your career field?
- What are my biggest obstacles to transition to your career field?
- Is there any additional training I would need to transition to your field?
- What is the best way for me to gain experience in your field, without taking major steps backward from the level I've achieved in my current career?
- What skills do you think I'm lacking and need to develop to transition to your career?
- How would hiring managers in your career view someone in my current field?
- What are the greatest challenges in your career?
- Do you feel the transition from my current career to your career field is realistic? If not, why?

### Questions – Career Field: Preparation

- Does your work relate to any experiences or courses you took in college?
- How well did college prepare you for your career?
- What classes proved to be the most valuable to your career?
- If you were a college student again, how would you prepare better?
- How important was your GPA in obtaining a job in this field?

### **Questions – Career Field of Your Contact**

- What are the various jobs available in this field?
- How is your occupation changing?
- What is the employment outlook for your career field?
- What positions represent the areas of greatest growth?
- Where are the best opportunities in this field? (geographical areas)
- What do you find most unique about your career field?
- What personal sacrifices have you made to succeed in your career?
- What are the typical entry-level jobs in this career field?
- What parts of the country offer the best opportunities in this field?
- What trends in the field would likely affect someone just entering this career?

### **Questions – Your Contact's Job**

- Is there something you wish you'd known or a skill you wish you'd had starting out in [fill in the industry]? Or Is there something you wish you had done differently starting out?
- What are the major components of your job?
- What part of this job do you find the most satisfying?
- What's your biggest challenge in this role?
- How do you see your job changing in the next 10 years?
- If you could go back and do anything different in your career, what would it be?
- What are some of the toughest situations you've faced in your job?
- I noticed that you've worked at [company A] and [company B]. How did your career path take you to your current job?
- How many hours do you work? Are you able to balance your work and family life?
- What have you done that sets you apart from others in your career?

## **Questions – Company Culture**

- What made you accept a job with this company?
- How does this company differ from your competition?
- Does your company contribute to employees' professional development?
- How would you describe the morale of people who work here?
- How do you feel about your company's future growth?
- Do you participate in any social activities with your coworkers?
- Is there flexibility in telecommuting, flexible work hours, etc.?
- What type of training is provided throughout your career?
- Does this company believe in promoting from within?
- How does this company acknowledge the accomplishments of employees?

## **Questions – Opportunities for Advancement**

- How does someone progress in your field?
- What is the highest level a person could attain?
- How rapidly do high achievers move to the next level in this career?
- How long would someone typically stay in your job?
- If I performed well, where could I expect to be in five years?

## **Questions – Seeking Advice and Referrals**

- What is the best way to obtain a position in this career field?
- What do you wish you'd known before you entered this field?
- How can I assess if I have the skills needed for a position like yours?
- Do you have any words of encouragement or warning as a result of your personal experiences?
- What should I do to prepare myself for trends and changes in this field?
- Do you have any advice or words of warning, as a result of your experience?
- Who else would you recommend that I speak with about this career?
- What advice can you give me to escalate my job search?
- Would you be willing to answer more questions by phone in the future?
- How would you react if you received a résumé like mine for a position in your career field?