

Information Meetings

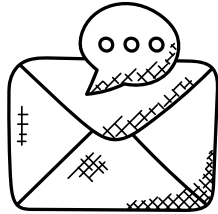
Information meetings (aka informational interviews) are **meetings set up by you** with someone to gather information and advice, (NOT to apply or ask for a job) as well as build your network. The person could be a potential employer or someone who works in an occupation that you're interested in.

Note: Even though this is not a job interview, you need to act as if it is one and make a positive first impression. Dress as if it's an interview and arrive at least 5 minutes early.

We have developed this quick reference guide on how to conduct information meetings including:

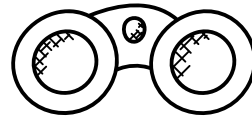
- Requesting a meeting
- How to prepare
- Tips for during a meeting
- Pointers for follow up
- Questions to reflect on after your meeting

We encourage you to use this guide in the Connecting with Community module.



Request

Call, email, or send a LinkedIn invitation to connect and request an information meeting, introduce yourself, state how you know the person (were you referred by someone or found them through LinkedIn), why you are contacting the individual, what your intention is, and ask if they would be willing to meet for about 15-20 minutes.



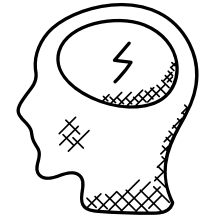
Prepare

Research:
The person; review their LinkedIn profile and their organizational bio, the industry; find related professional associations, conduct a Google keyword search, e.g., BC healthcare, learn about the trends that have transpired in the field, the company; review the website, the vision, mission, and values, strategic plan, news, their social media, organizational culture.



Prepare

Questions:
Following are some sample questions that you can consider. Keep in mind, the purpose of this meeting is to come out more informed about the occupation, company, and industry, as well as make a new connection. Remember, you have about 15 minutes, choose your questions wisely.



Prepare

Potential questions about the industry:
What do you see as some of the major challenges or changes that face this industry?
What do you consider to be the significant trends in the field right now?
What can you tell me about the employment outlook in the field?
Can you recommend any professional journals, associations or organizations or people to contact related to this field that might be helpful?
What qualifications and experience are needed to enter into this field?



Prepare

Potential questions about the position/person:

What personal attributes do you think are essential for success in this position?

What is the most satisfying, OR the most challenging about your occupation?

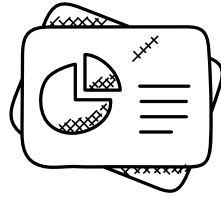
What does your typical day look like in this position?

What training/education has proved to be the most valuable to you in your work?

How did you get this job, and what kinds of experiences helped you most?

Knowing what you know now, what advice do you have for getting into this line of work?

If you had to do it over, what would you do differently?



Prepare

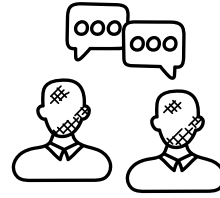
Potential questions about the Working Environment & Company:

How would you describe your work environment?

What can you tell me about the corporate culture?

How does your company differ from its competitors?

What is a typical career path in this organization?



During

Be respectful, professional, enthusiastic, and authentic.

Be mindful of body language and tone.

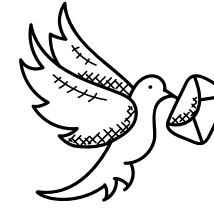
LISTEN and take notes (this is an information gathering session, it isn't a time to talk about you and your needs).

Only offer your resume if asked - then gladly accept feedback!

Take only the amount of time that you agreed upon with the person.

Always ask if there is anyone else you should speak with.

At the end of the meeting, ask if you can stay in touch, if the person agrees, ask how they prefer to be contacted (e.g., email, via LinkedIn) and when (e.g., monthly, every 6 weeks).



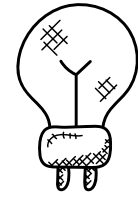
Follow Up

Within 24 to 48 hours, drop off or send a handwritten thank you card, which includes something specific you learned and appreciated.

Offer your service/support: If you think there is a project that you can help the person with, or a beneficial connection that you could make, offer it in your thank you note.

If your interviewee agreed to stay in contact, follow up how and when based on their preference (which you hopefully asked during the meeting).

Follow up with the new connections that you were (hopefully) given by this interviewee.



Reflect

You can ask yourself...

what went well?

what didn't?

what did you learn?

what will you do differently next time?

what are you still hoping to find out?