One way to receive more detailed information about an occupation or career is to conduct an informational interview, which is the process of talking to professionals who are employed in a career field or industry that is of interest to you.

BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH
Before you arrange an interview, be sure to identify your objectives so you can tailor the interview to meet your needs. Ask the right questions to ensure that you get the information you need.

Typically the primary objectives of informational interviewing are to:

- Investigate a specific career field.
- Narrow career options.
- Obtain advice on where you might fit in an organization.
- Learn the jargon and important issues in the field.
- Broaden your network for future reference.
- Create a strategy for entering your field.

FIND A CONTACT
To locate potential contacts in your field of interest, we recommend that you connect with alumni. Use the Career Advisor Network or LinkedIn to find contacts in the field in which you have an interest.

ARRANGING THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW
Write an outline or script of what you intend to say. Preparation decreases anxiety and ensures that you cover all the necessary information. Additionally, the contact will perceive you as organized and professional.
INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

... ARRANGING THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

By Phone

When calling to schedule an appointment, three points should be covered.

- Offer a personal introduction
- Identify your purpose for seeking an appointment
- Arrange a mutually convenient meeting time

If you are calling as the result of a referral, state the referral's name early in the conversation. Follow this sample language:

“Hello [Name of contact]. My name is [your full name]. [Name of person who referred you] suggested that I call you because of your [expertise/knowledge/background/experience] in the field of [occupation, trade, industry, profession, company]. I’m looking for information and advice about careers in your field.”

If you call without a reference, state how you found their contact information (e.g., "I read about your work in..."); "I heard you speak at..."); "I know of your reputation through..."). Next state your purpose:

“I am interested in this field as a possible career (or your specific reasons). I’ve read and discussed it with others, but would like to gather more information. I would like very much to meet with you, at your convenience, for no more than 20-30 minutes, to ask you some questions. Would it be possible to arrange a time to speak?”

By Email or Letter

Compose all emails and letters in business format and double check to ensure correct grammar and spelling. Similar to a phone call, a written request for an appointment should include:

- Personal introduction
- Purpose for seeking appointment
- Indicate in the concluding paragraph that you will call on a specific date (usually one week after you send the email/letter) to arrange a mutually convenient appointment for both parties.