

INFORMATION INTERVIEWS

- What is it?** An information interview is a meeting with an individual in a career field you would like to explore. It provides an opportunity to gather information and guidance about the people, environment and skills involved in that field.
- Identifying Contacts** First, identify contacts in career fields that interest you. The most effective method of finding and talking to such individuals is through **personal referrals**. Ask your parents, friends, relatives, professors, and career counselors for names of people they know.
- Approach** Before contacting a referral, do some basic research about the career field. Clarify why you seek to meet a specific person and what you hope to gain through an information interview.
- When you contact a referral, state who you are, that you are **seeking career information and advice**, and when you would like to meet. Be confident and courteous in your communication.
- Request an **in-person** interview. This arrangement will allow you to see the working environment, and compare various work settings if you conduct several interviews.
- Interview** Dress and act professionally. Establish rapport and demonstrate your interest in the interviewee's comments. If you have not finished the interview within the time period you had requested, thank the person for helping you by saying, "I said I would only take thirty minutes of your time. I know how busy you are." Extend the time only if the person you are interviewing strongly encourages you to do so. You may take a copy of this form with you to serve as a guide and to use for note taking.
- Request a business card** before leaving.
- Follow-up** Write a short **thank-you note** within a day or two after your interview. Keep the interview information on file for the future—this person may be an important job contact for you later.

INFORMATION INTERVIEW

Name of Contact _____ Date _____

Title/Employer _____ E-mail _____

Address _____ Phone _____

How do you spend a typical day or week in this job/organization?

What do you find the most/least satisfying about your job?

How did you obtain this position?

What kind of college degree/credentials/skills are needed?

What kinds of part-time jobs or internships do you think are helpful for entering this field?

What types of people do well in your field? What types do not succeed?

What are the opportunities for advancement?

What are the drawbacks of your job/this organization?

What is the entry-level salary range in this field?

What is the employment outlook (locally, regionally, nationally)?

Are you active in any professional organizations? Are students invited to attend?

What advice can you give me on how to break into this field?

Can you suggest anyone else I might contact?