What Is an Informational Interview?

An informational interview is an opportunity for you to identify and learn from someone in your field of interest. It’s a chance to ask to hear their story, describe the choices they made that got them where they are, and to provide advice. Informational interviews are a great way to expand your network, share your goals, and to learn about your chosen industry.

Much like a professional interview, there is work to do! You must first learn what you can about the company and person you want to interview by looking on social media, searching the web, etc. Be prepared to discuss current topics and ideas. Know something about the person you are interviewing.

Don’t have a person in mind to interview? Julia Parcell, the internship coordinator for A&S, can help! Networking is a critical aspect of landing the perfect internship/job. Search your own network first, then your parents, family, friends, faculty, and anyone who is willing to listen. Ask Julia (parcellju@missouri.edu), she has a lot of ideas and would love to help connect you to alumni interested in giving back to current students.

Possible informational interview questions:

- Describe a typical day.
- What does your schedule look like?
- What do you like least about your job?
- What do you like most about your job?
- What types of changes are occurring in your field?
- How did you get into this type of work?
- What is your background?
- What majors and/or degrees lead to jobs in the field?
- Are other certifications, licenses, continuing education, or professional development experiences required or encouraged?
- What campus activities or college experiences would be helpful for entering this field?
- What type of advancement opportunities does this company offer?
- How do salaries in this field compare with other fields?
- What suggestions do you have for anyone interested in obtaining this type of position?
- Whom do you suggest I talk to for further information?