

Questions to Ask in Your Informational Interview

One of the biggest benefits of participating in the ABF Career Alliance is the opportunity to connect to successful professionals in your field of interest.

Here are some questions that will help you get the most out of that interview. Your goal is to 1) gain a realistic understanding of what it's like to work in this field, and 2) gather information that will help launch your career path in this field.

Although some questions may seem redundant, they might help produce different insights and perspectives from your Career Ally. Be sure that you cover all topic areas, but it's not necessary to ask every single question.

Overall Job and Company Information

What is a typical day like?

What do you do? What are the duties/functions/responsibilities of your job?

What kind of decisions do you make?

What percentage of your time is spent doing what?

What was different from what you expected? What was the biggest surprise when you went into this?

Any myths you'd like to shatter for me?

What are the various jobs in this field or your organization?

Why did you decide to work for this particular company?

What do you like most about this company?

How does your company differ from its competitors?

Why do customers choose your company?

Are you optimistic about the company's future and your future with the company?

What does your company do to contribute to its employees' professional development?

How does your company make use of technology for internal communication and outside marketing? (email, internet, intranets, World Wide Web page, video, conferencing, etc.)

Specific or Ideal Skills and Qualifications

What kind of preparation is typical to get into your field? Is this really required, or just the typical approach?

Can you suggest some ways a person could obtain the necessary experience?

What skills and qualities are most valued in your industry?

Career Path or Career Ladder

How did you get into this line of work?

What ensures continued advancement in your field?

Industry Trends

What are significant issues or trends that are currently affecting your industry?

Rewards and Challenges

Why does this type of work interest you?

What kinds of problems do you deal with?

What are some of the most important personal satisfactions and dissatisfactions connected with your occupation?

What part of this job do you find most challenging?

What do you like and not like about working in this industry?

Do you find your job exciting or boring? Why?

Typical Compensation

What is the typical salary range for an entry-level job in your field?

What is the top of the salary range for a position in your field?

Catch-All Question

Is there one question or a series of questions that I have not asked that I should be asking?

The Final Question: Asking for the Referral

Who else do you know that does this line of work? What other companies? Who else should I be talking to? May I use your name?