

An informational interview is a meeting with a networking contact, preferably face-to-face. Prepare as if it were an actual job interview: background research, careful question formulation, and business etiquette are critical. This contact could lead to a potential job offer.

- Learn about the day-to-day responsibilities of those employed in your field of interest.
- Determine potential career paths with a specific employer or within an industry.
- Gain knowledge about recruiting practices of a specific employer or industry.
- Identify other contacts who may be helpful in the job search.

Steps to Follow:

1. **Identify an appropriate contact** (i.e., classmate, former co-worker or supervisor, family contact, faculty member, fellow alumni, or friend). Try using online resources like Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn (especially its BU Mentor Group).
2. Telephone or email to **request and interview**. Explain why you'd like to meet and request a 30-minute appointment, unless the contact offers something longer.
3. **Research** the contact's organization (try WetFeet.com, RileyGuide.com, and Vault.com).
4. **Develop a list of interview questions** (see sample questions below). Be creative. Do not copy this list. Avoid asking basic questions that could be answered by visiting the web site.
5. Brush up on your **interviewing skills**.
6. **Dress professionally** and arrive 10-15 minutes before the scheduled interview. It is appropriate to take notes but be careful not to let it interfere with your conversation.
7. **Send a thank-you note** or email immediately following the interview.
8. Update your contact occasionally, by sending a card/email informing about you search and career.

Sample Questions to Ask:

- How did you become interested in and/or started in your field?
- What career path did you take to reach your current position? Is this typical?
- Could you describe your workday? What do you like and dislike about your job/field?
- What kind of skills do you use as part of your day-to-day job? What skills would you suggest a current student work on while at Bradley?
- What college course have helped you most during your career? Why? What courses would you suggest to someone interested in your field? What do you think is the best educational preparation for a career in _____?
- Which part of your job is most challenging?
- What personal attributes do you think are essential to success in your field?
- What are the qualifications that you look for in a (position title)?
- What experiences have you had that have been invaluable to your learning the business?
- What do you think I need to know to make an intelligent decision about ___ as my career?
- If you could do it over again, would you choose the same path? Why?
- Are there other (job titles/career paths) that are comparable to ___?