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**Sample Questions to Ask in an Informational Interview**

Before the informational interview, decide on what type of industry, employer and career path that you wish to seek. Make a list of people who you may wish to connect with and plan an agenda of items to cover. A typical time frame is 15-30 minutes. When you have set the appointment, make sure you dress professionally as if you were going to an actual interview. During the informational interview, try to ask questions that will give you the most information.

Bring a copy of your resume and a list of references in case they are requested. There are several questions that could be asked to gain the information you seek, but here are some questions to help get you started:

1. How did you get started in this industry?
2. What type of training have you had in this field?
3. What skills and knowledge are most critical in this industry?
4. What is a typical day like for you?
5. To what extent do you interact with customers/clients?
6. What kinds of accomplishments tend to be valued and rewarded in this field?
7. What is your biggest challenge in this role?
8. Please describe your work/life balance.
9. How does the culture at your past employer differ from the culture here?
10. Does the company observe any rituals, traditions or ceremonies?
11. What does the company do to foster innovation and creativity?
12. What, if any obligations did a past employer place on you outside of the ordinary work-week?
13. What type of professional development is helpful in your current role?
14. What kind of decisions do you make?
15. Do people in your department function autonomously or do they require a lot of supervision and direction?
16. How do individuals advance in this field?
17. How do you stay current in your field?
18. What are future trends for this field?
19. Where do you see yourself in five years?
20. Could you suggest anyone else I might contact for additional information?

When you have finished asking your selected questions, all of the information gathered should tell a story. You should be able to clearly ascertain whether this career field is something you would like to pursue further based on the feedback. During the session, you should also learn about other resources to further your knowledge.

*Sources:* Monster.com, Livecareer.com, Forbes.com, levo.com, Berkeley.edu, careeronestop.org, hrweb.mit.edu and mgt.buttalo.edu