

Informational Interview

Tips for During the Interview and Follow-Up

Confirm the Interview Time

Once you have heard back from your professional to schedule a time, it is important to send a confirmation email to acknowledge the time and location of the meeting. A short email is sufficient (e.g. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. I look forward to our conversation via Zoom on Tuesday, the 12th at 10 a.m. EST).

Tips for a Successful Interview

- Prepare your interview questions in advance. It is helpful to research your professional so that you can tailor the questions to your professional's specific career experiences.
- Be prepared to direct the interview, but also let the conversation flow naturally. Try to avoid simply asking all of your questions without pausing to reflect on the responses you received.
- Approach the interview with a sense of curiosity about your professional's experiences. Be prepared to ask follow-up questions as you learn more from your professional.
- Make sure to minimize distractions and interruptions when you perform the interview.
- Dress neatly and appropriately, as you would for a job interview.
- Have note-taking material readily available.
- Respect the person's time. Limit the meeting to the agreed upon timeframe. If you have additional questions, ask the person if you may contact them again in the future.

Important notes about Virtual Interviews

- If you are using Zoom, log in a few minutes prior to the interview time and be ready when your professional logs in.
- Check that your audio and video are working and turned on before your interviewee arrives.
- Sit up straight and make eye contact.
- Have a backup plan if someone's computer does not work. Make sure that you have a cell phone number so that you may talk via FaceTime or on the phone.
- Be adaptable and flexible. Expect that there will probably be technical issues. This is a new normal that we are all navigating.

Follow up: Thank you Email

Send a thank-you note via your Furman email account within 1-2 days of your interview to express your appreciation for the time and information given.

- It is up to you whether or not you choose to keep in touch with the person. If you would like to continue the relationship, you should ask whether you may follow up with further questions or advice.
- You may also ask about connecting with the professional on LinkedIn if you have a professional profile.
- Most interviewees will appreciate continued contact, especially if you had a particularly nice interaction. For example, you should consider following up to let the professional know that you acted on their advice and how things are going as a result. With ongoing interaction, this relationship could become an important part of your professional network over time.