

Informational Interview

Sample Questions and Tips

Prior to the Informational Interview

An informational interview focuses on learning about a person's pathway. You should prepare your interview questions to focus on gathering information that matters most to you. What aspects of this person's story do you want to learn more about? What aspects of the person's career do you have specific questions about?

Sample Interview Questions

It is important to research your professional so that you can tailor the questions to their background and experiences. Consider reviewing their LinkedIn page or searching their company website for more information.

- How did you become interested in your field of work? How did you begin your career?
- What coursework or experiences from your undergraduate experience impacted you the most/informed your career path?
- How relevant to your work is your undergraduate major?
- If you could do it all over again, would you choose the same path for yourself? If not, what would you change?
- What are your main responsibilities as a...[insert career/job title]? What is a typical day (or week) like for you?
- How do you achieve work-life balance?

*Remember, you do not have to just stick to your prepared questions. Go with the flow and have a conversation. You never know what your interviewee will say and you may want to delve more deeply into a remark or ask follow-up questions about a statement.

Tips for Contacting your Interviewee:

Send an email from your Furman email account to schedule your interview time. Your initial communication should do the following:

1. Use the subject line to identify the purpose of the email such as "*Furman Student/Alumni Requesting Informational Interview*"
2. Formally address the contact using the appropriate prefix (i.e., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., Reverend, etc.).
3. Request 30 -40 minutes to meet virtually (phone, FaceTime, Skype, or Zoom) at a date and time that is convenient for that individual.
4. Making a good first impression begins with your correspondence so proofread your email for grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. or have someone review it for you.
5. Be respectful in your tone and acknowledge how busy they are and how much you appreciate their time to take your call.

Sample Initial Email

Subject: Furman Student Seeking Career Path Informational Interview

Dear Ms. Anderson:

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Victor Paladin and I am currently a _____ at Furman University. I was given your name and contact information by _____. I'm writing to you today for information and advice on pursuing a career in _____. I'm hoping to gain your perspective on working in this field and your path to your current position.

Please let me know if there are any days/times that would work best to talk by phone or virtually (Zoom, FaceTime, etc.). Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Victor Paladin