

Information Interviewing

If you can't find suitable jobs to apply for, you can create your own opportunities and gain valuable information and experience by undertaking 'information interviewing'.

- Investigate potential employers
- Select a number of organisations that interest you.
- Target a particular occupational field within the organisation.
- Phone to find the name of a relevant person in the area (or use the organisations literature)
- Investigate specifics of organisations (do your homework!).
- Develop a canvassing letter that you can use to target selected organisations.
- Write to a selected person requesting an 'information interview' to find out more about the organisation/occupational field or ask to 'shadow' a worker in a particular field (state the day/time you will phone back).
- Phone to arrange a meeting date and time and prepare questions to ask.
- Meet for the information interview.
- Ask for other contacts.
- Follow up the new contacts.

Questions for the Information Interview

- In the position you now hold, what do you do on a typical day?
- What are the most interesting/frustrating aspects of your job?
- What qualification/skills and personal attributes does the organisation look for in its staff?
- What qualifications do the other staff have?
- What were the jobs that led you to this one? How did other staff get to the positions they now occupy in this organisation?
- How long does it usually take to move from one step to the next in this career path?
- Given your present position and experience, what position do you see yourself in five years from now?
- What is the top job you can have in this career?
- Are there other areas of this field to which people in it may be transferred?
- What are the prerequisites for jobs in this field?
- Are there any specific courses I might take that would be particularly beneficial?
- What types of training do companies give people entering this field?
- What is the salary range for various levels in this field?
- What aspects of a career in this field do you consider particularly good/bad?
- What special advice would you give a person entering this field?
- Is there demand for people in this field?
- What are the growth prospects for this field in the future?
- What other fields/jobs would you suggest I investigate before I make a final decision?
- How do you see the jobs in this field changing over the next two years?
- How can I prepare myself for these changes?
- What is the best way to obtain a position that will start me on a career in this field?

Soucre: Stoodley, M. (1997). Information interviewing: How to tap your hidden job market. Chicago, IL: J.G. Ferguson Publishing