

Get Informed and Inspired!

Why should I go out and interview people on my own? Why should I explore?

Answer: When you explore, you open your eyes to the many career possibilities, and steps for getting there, that exist. That exposure helps you find paths that connect with your individuality. Not to explore limits your choices; and it increases the chance that you'll fall into a path that isn't a good fit for you. One of the best ways to explore the world is to simply ask others how they got to where they are today.

How to get started-

Ask everyone you know if they are aware of anyone with whom you can meet to aid your exploration. Let's say you have an interest in computer animation, for example. Ask family, friends, teachers, college professors, past employers, doctors, your hair dresser, etc. for potential contacts or other sources of information. **No one is out of reach until they tell you so.**

As for finding people with whom you have no contact...**be resourceful.**

Try the following in relation to your interest area(s)...

- Flip through magazines you enjoy
- Surf the Internet
- Research Business and Employer Directories (online and library resources)
- Read newspapers (classified ads or business news)
- Watch TV shows that showcase interesting individuals
- Check credits of movies, CDs/digital downloads, TV shows, books
- Consider public speakers, authors of professional articles, Chambers of Commerce, leaders of professional associations.
- On most of your favorite websites if you click on "About Us," you'll find a handful of people who work for that organization.

Cold Call Phone Script (or a similar message could be sent by e-mail):

"Hi, my name is _____ and I'm a student at NHTI, Concord's Community College, majoring in _____. I'm exploring my options, but I have a lot of unanswered questions and was hoping to speak with _____ about his/her own career path. I know she/he may be terribly busy but I was hoping he/she could spare twenty minutes to see me.

Time to Meet Your Contact

Have five open-ended questions as your guideposts, but be flexible...

There are no right questions or right answers. Be prepared for go off on discussion tangents...the real magic of the interviews can come from the tangents themselves.

Two different types of questions:

Inspirational: Help you find your own passion

Informational: Help you build a life around your passion

NHTI Advising Center, October 28, 2019

(603) 230-4021; nhtiadvising@ccsnh.edu

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Sample Inspirational Questions

- How did you get from being a student to where you are today?
- Did you ever feel lost, as if you had no career or life direction?
- Were there ever pressures from society telling you to be something or to do something else? If so, how did you follow your own inner voice?
- Were there any barriers to achieving your goals and how did you overcome them?
- When growing up did you have any interests that you eventually built into your work?
- When did the light bulb go on? When did you realize that working at _____, was what you wanted to do?
- What obstacles have you overcome to get where you are today?
- What has been the key to achieving the level of excellence that you've reached in your life?
- How do you balance your personal and professional life?
- As you look back on your years of college, what would you do differently?

Sample Informational Questions:

- Describe a typical day in the life of your job.
- What skills must somebody absolutely have to succeed in your field?
- How did you acquire the necessary knowledge and skills?
- What do you see as the pros and cons of this type of work?
- What is an entry level salary range for this field? What is a typical industry salary range for someone on your level?
- If someone wants to do work similar to yours, do you suggest they follow your footsteps?
- What are some of the challenges that you face in this position?
- How could I tap into your field (advice for breaking into this line of work)?
- Do you ever utilize interns in your office? If so, what kinds of responsibilities do they have? If not, would you be open to working with interns in the future?
- If you had one piece of career advice for me about this career field, what would it be?
- Are there other people that you suggest I talk to for learning more about this field?

Closing...

End the meeting on a note that encourages a future relationship
"Do you mind if I contact you if I have any more questions?"

If you haven't taken notes during the meeting... jot them down ... keep a small notebook and as soon as you leave the meeting write down what you discussed, what inspired you, and any thoughts you have. This will help you remember the meeting in the future, especially if you want to call the person again.

Send a Thank you note... don't send an email... send a "real letter". Write and pop it in the mail right away!

Lastly... try to turn the interview into a mentoring relationship. Many individuals credit their success to mentors being the foundation of their success. Mentors teach you the rules of the game, connect you with people vital to your career interests, and act as a crucial sounding board when making important decisions. One interview is great but the potential to turn that one meeting into a lifelong mentoring relationship can change your life forever!

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Sample Thank You Letter following Informational/inspirational meeting:

October 7, 2019

Maureen B. Smith
100 Main Street
Anytown, NH 03060
(603) 765-3082
mbsmith@gmail.com

Ms. Jane Doe
Information Processing Manager
XYZ Corporation
Manchester, NH 03040

Dear Ms. Doe:

I am writing to let you know how much I enjoyed meeting with you on Thursday and learning more about the field of Information Technology along with your personal story about the career path you took to get to where you are today. Through our discussion, I now have a much broader vision and understanding of career possibilities that relate to my interests and my IT degree at NHTI, Concord's Community College.

Many thanks for your time. I realize that your time is valuable, and I appreciate your willingness to share your insights, resources, and time with me. I appreciate your being open to staying in touch and look forward to meeting again in the spring.

Also, I'm sending along an interesting article I just read about traveling in Madrid. You had indicated that you would be going there next year and I thought you might get a helpful tip or two through this article.

Sincerely,

Maureen B. Smith

*Inspirational interviewing concept and some interview tips above were provided by Road Trip Nation.
Check them out at www.roadtripnation.com*