

Informational Interviews – Tips

- Mention the name of the person who referred you in the subject line of the email
- Ask for 20 minutes and do NOT settle for a phone call unless it's unavoidable
- Offer to bring a latte – it's an ETHICAL BRIBE!
- Do NOT attach a resume (makes it seem like you're looking for a job), but bring copies with you to the informational interview
- These meetings give you AIR – Advice, Information, Referrals
- Take notes during the informational interview
- See four agenda items/questions on reverse

Sample Request for Informational Interview #1:

Subject of email: Andy Topshen Referral - Request for short informational meeting

Hello Todd,

This June I am graduating with a degree in Computer Engineering from Seattle Pacific University, and I am exploring career paths that combine web development and the food/travel industries. Andy Topshen, my uncle's colleague at Amazon, suggested that you would have some really interesting insights about this area. Would it be possible to meet with you, at your office, for 20 minutes so that I could ask you a few questions about your work? I'll bring you a latte – just let me know what type you like, and I'll bring it with me. I promise to take no more than 20 minutes of your time.

Sincerely yours,

Julian Carnero

206-777-7777

juliancarnero@gmail.com

Sample Request for Informational Interview #2

Subject of email: SPU senior - Request for short informational interview

Hello Jonell,

This June I will graduate from Seattle Pacific University with a Biology degree, and I worked last summer as an intern at Forestry Research Labs in Portland. Now I'm exploring the possibility of working in wetlands and coastal conservation. I've read your LinkedIn and SPU Alumni profiles and I think you would have some interesting insights about this field. Do you have 20 minutes anytime in the next 2-3 weeks when I could come to your office and ask you a few questions? I'd be happy to bring you a latte – just let me know what kind you like. I promise to take no more than 20 minutes of your time.

Sincerely yours,

Jamie Greenspan

206-777-7777

jamiagreenspan@yahoo.com

Informational Interviewing: 4 Agenda Items

You lead the meeting, ask the questions, and take notes. You finish up promptly after 20 minutes by standing up and saying “Thank you so much, [name]! This has been incredibly helpful. I really appreciate your time.”

1. What was your path to [what you are doing now]? *This helps you identify possible next steps for you and routes to this job (e.g., a class/program) you might not be aware of.*
2. What do you like about [your job, this field]? *This helps you identify what specifically to mention and emphasize when you apply for jobs in this area.*
3. What changes are you seeing in this field? Where do you see growth/challenges? *This helps you become more knowledgeable and also helps you position yourself in the growing areas and/or as able to meet the new challenges that are surfacing.*
4. Can you think of anyone else who would be interesting to talk to about [this field]? *This helps you identify your next informational interview targets. Be sure to offer to do the work yourself and save them the time, by emailing those individuals yourself.*