

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT TIP SHEET

Informational Interview: Success Factors

A tip sheet for youth or young adults engaged in the Learn & Earn Program

An Informational Interview is a chance for you to interview someone at a company or organization about his or her industry, education, and career path. You can ask why the person decided to take this path and how they got to where they are. Have fun with this one. You'll be surprised what you learn and you might want to follow in that person's footsteps!

TAKE ACTION

Participating in an Informational Interview will help you figure out if a career in the industry or organization you're exploring is right for you. Keep the following tips in mind to help you have a successful Informational Interview.

WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT TO LEARN

- Sometimes the path you begin with is not the one you end up taking.
- Participating employers or staff members want to share their experience with you.
- What it means to be in that person's shoes.
- Why what you are studying in class and learning in workshops is important.

BEFORE THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW STARTS

- Fill out and turn in any required forms.
- Figure out what to wear. If the interview will happen at the place of business, look into company/organizational culture and dress code and mirror it as best you can. Get information on all the logistics, including where to park and enter the building.
- Do some research on the company or organization that the person you'll be interviewing works for or represents. Check out their website and learn as much as you can.
- Prepare some questions about the company or organization, the industry, career opportunities, and what kind of education and training is needed.

- Practice introducing yourself as a professional (name, grade, organization or school, why you chose to take part in the interview, and what you'd like to do with your future).

DURING THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

- Be respectful! Arrive on time and make sure your phone is turned off.
- Be an active participant. Pay attention and ask good questions.
- Make connections between what you're learning in the interview and what you're learning in class or in workshops.
- Shake hands and thank the person for his or her time.

AFTER THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

- Talk to your instructors and classmates about the Informational Interview and your feelings about what you experienced. Would you work there or somewhere similar?
- Participate in evaluating the experience and give ideas to improve future interviews. What worked and what didn't? Be honest!
- Is there more you want to know about this field or job site? Would you be interested in going on another interview in the future?
- Write a thank-you note and send it to the person you interviewed.