

Getting Started

An informational interview aims to learn about an industry, location, company, or a specific job. This will allow you to make informed decisions about your career path and how to be a competitive applicant. The steps of informational interviewing are:

- 1) Identify desirable organizations, positions, or geographic locations.
- 2) Choose professionals to connect with to gain knowledge about your future field, build rapport, and ask for advice (Not asking for a job!).
- 3) Reach out to 15 - 20 people through LinkedIn messaging once a semester with the goal of conducting **five** strong informational interviews.

Not sure about your interests? Use our resource 'What Can I Do With This Major?' to explore careers in your major at:
<https://go.citadel.edu/career/resources/>

Outreach (LinkedIn)

Initial Connect Request Note:

Hello Mr./Ms. _____,
I am a _____ (senior/junior/etc.) at The Citadel, studying _____. I found you through the Citadel Alumni network. I'm interested to hear your experience with (company/industry/position). Do you have time to talk?
Thank you,
Name

After They've Accepted the Connect Request:

Hello Mr./Ms. _____,
Thank you for the connection. I am hoping to pursue _____ after graduation, and speaking with professionals in the workforce will help me be a competitive applicant. Could we schedule a time to meet with you to ask for advice? I am available for in-person, zoom, or phone meetings.
(Thanks/Respectfully),
Name

Not available for an interview? Ask if you may contact them at a later date or ask for other contacts.

No response? Send a polite follow-up. If there is no response to follow up, contact someone else.

Preparation to Meet

Week Before:

- Prepare questions in advance (see next page).
- Research the company, industry, and person/their position.
- Once you have scheduled a date, time, and meeting method (zoom, phone, etc.), send a LinkedIn message or email a day ahead to confirm.
- Remember, the conversation is not about you; it's about gathering information to understand how to be COMPETITIVE and the best candidate for future positions.

Day of:

- Be respectful of their time, minimum 15-20 min (if phone or Zoom).
- Schedule a follow-up meeting if you need more information.
- Ask for ACTIONABLE advice, (TAKE the advice), and FOLLOW UP on the advice.

More on back



Questions for Interview

Questions about the position:

What steps did you take to reach your current position (education, prior positions, training)?

What do you enjoy most about the work you do?

What about your job are you most excited about right now?

What are some of the biggest challenges you face? What about the biggest rewards?

What do you wish you'd known when you were starting out in this career/ position?

What skills do you think are most important for someone interested in a job like yours?

What can I do to make me more competitive?

Are there any questions I'm not asking that I should be?

Questions about the Company/Organization:

How would you describe the company culture?

What are the opportunities for growth in this company?

What do you like most about working for the company?

What has been surprising while working for the company?

Questions about the industry/field:

Note: Be specific with your questions about the industry if applicable. For example, with the Ports Authority, ask, "How have the supply chain issues affected your industry?"

What are the current trends/challenges in the industry right now?

What do you value most about your career field?

What has changed in the industry in the past five years; do you foresee other changes?

Would you happen to have recommendations for other people I should talk to or other resources I should explore?

Follow Up After The Informational Interview

1. Thank the interviewer for his/ her advice and time by sending a formal thank you within 24 hours of the meeting by email, handwritten note (or both).
2. Stay in touch! Keep the interviewee informed by following up on the recommendations given to show them you took their advice.

Career Resources

Scan the QR code to view career resources from The Citadel Career Center's website, attend our drop-in hours from 1-4 p.m. Monday- Thursday at 2115A Capers Hall, or make an appointment on Handshake through our website.



Scan with Phone