

## INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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Review the following sample questions from Job Search by R. D. Lock and develop your own list that fits the occupation or organization.

### **1. Job search techniques used.**

How did you get into this occupation/organization? What steps did you take to get where you are now?

### **2. Occupational/organizational interests.**

How did you become interested in this occupation/organization? What attracted you to this particular occupation/organization?

### **3. Getting started in this occupation.**

What entry-level jobs might qualify a person for this occupational field? What is the progression of jobs from the beginning to the top?

### **4. Responsibilities in the work.**

What does the company expect you to do on the job? What duties and responsibilities do you have? What characteristics should a person look for in a job such as yours?

### **5. Products, services, competition.**

What products are manufactured (or services provided) by the organization? Who are your customers? Who are your competitors? What is your standing with your competitors in the industry?

### **6. Abilities and qualifications required.**

What skills, aptitudes, or personal qualifications does a person need for this occupation (or to work in this company)? What essential abilities are needed to do your job well in this field of work? Are particular degrees or licenses required to enter this occupation?

### **7. Preparation and background needed.**

What preparation, education, training, or background is required for an entry level position in your field?

### **8. Values and personal satisfaction.**

What about this occupation/organization gives you personal satisfaction? What values are expressed by this occupation/organization?

### **9. Organizational culture.**

What basic assumptions and beliefs are shared and supported by most people in your organization? What practices and ceremonies mean a lot to people working here and to the organization? Who are the heroes or exemplary figures in this organization, and what do they stand for? What is the guiding philosophy or mission of the organization?

### **10. Personality characteristics.**

What personality traits, values, and interests are necessary or helpful to succeed and advance in this occupation/organization? What personal qualities do supervisors look for in their employees?

### **11. Unique qualities or strengths.**

What strengths set this occupation/organization apart from others? What are the best features about this occupation/organization?

### **12. Working conditions.**

How much time do you spend at work? Is the amount of time spent on the job due more to the nature of the work or to the nature of this particular organization? Does your working time affect the amount of time you can spend with your family? How do people dress for work here? What is the noise level? Does the physical layout of the building(s) make the organization's work

environment pleasant? Describe the morale of the people in this organization.

**13. Salary ranges.**

What are the beginning, average, and top wages or salaries in this occupation? What fringe benefits are typically offered by employers in this industry? (DO NOT ASK: What is your salary?)

**14. Decision-making patterns.**

How would you describe the decision-making style of this organization? Who makes the decisions on how the work is distributed and performed in your department?

**15. Advancement opportunities.**

What opportunities exist for advancement, promotion, or lateral movement within the organization? Where could I expect to be in this organization after five years with a good work record?

**16. Typical day at work.**

Describe a typical day in your occupation. Can you leave your job behind after work, or is it the kind of occupation you take home with you? Please explain.

**17. Related occupations.**

What other jobs are closely related to this one? Would you need the same skills and aptitudes for them? Are any related occupations represented in this organization?

**18. Temporary work, courses, and internships and co-ops.**

Could you suggest any temporary, part-time, or summer work experiences that would help a person get ready for your occupation? What types of internships and cooperative education experiences would be helpful? Which courses in college were especially helpful to you in preparing for this occupation?

**19. Future projections.**

What do you see in the future for this occupation/organization? Will there be a continued demand for it? Is the occupation/organization growing or declining in numbers of workers?

**20. Changes.**

What changes do you think are coming for this occupation/organization over the next few years? How can a person prepare for those changes?

**21. Other information or advice.**

What other advice or information can you give to a person considering, preparing for, or entering this occupation or organization? Because you know this occupation/ organization well, what other questions should I be asking about it?

**22. The return visit.**

Is it all right to contact you for another interview if I need additional information or advice in the future?

**23. The referral question.**

(Never conclude an informational interview without trying to obtain the names of other people in the same or similar occupations/ organizations with whom you could conduct another informational interview). Could you suggest the names of other people in this field or organization with whom I could talk? May I mention your name as the person who referred me? Would you be willing to make an introduction for me over the telephone