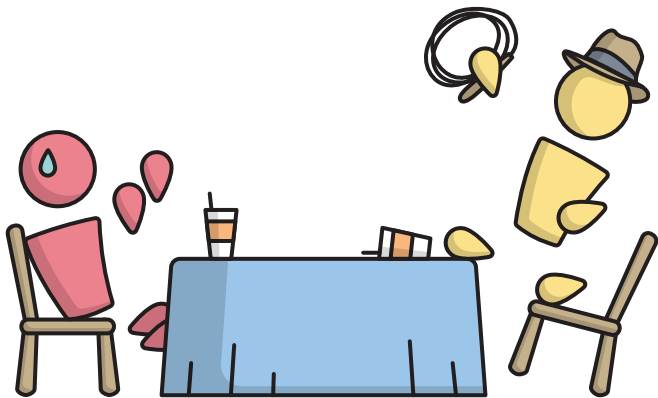


Career Exploration Interview



AT A GLANCE...

- Get direction and expand your network by asking professionals about your career field.
- Learn how to set up and conduct the interview.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

A career exploration interview is a relaxed conversation where you ask someone working in a career field that interests you for **information** and **advice**. These interviews can be powerful tools to help you **build your personal network** and **give you direction** in your future career options.

Step One: Research

Identify career paths - you can research a wide variety of careers using our career exploration tools at careers.byu.edu. You can learn more about how to use these tools with a Career mentor at the Career Studio, who can also help you research and consider possible career paths.

As you are researching different careers, questions are likely to arise. They can be about anything: future job growth, salary, schooling, a day in the life, etc. As these questions develop during your research, be sure to **write them down** for future reference. (See back for examples.)

Step Two: Find a Professional

There are multiple ways to find someone to interview, and people are generally willing to answer your questions. **Here are a few different ways to find people to talk to:**

- BYU Connect, Career Shift, LinkedIn Alumni Tool ([linkedin.com/alumni](https://www.linkedin.com/alumni))
- Ask professors, friends and family if they have any connections in the industry
- Think of any other current connections you have within the industry
- Request introductions through posting on LinkedIn, connecting on [Handshake.byu.edu](https://www.handshake.byu.edu), or other social media where possible.

Step Three: Reach Out

When reaching out, **make a good impression** and be specific and concise in your requests and questions. Here's an example of how to ask for an interview:

Dear Mr./Ms. (name),

I am a student at Brigham Young University studying (major). I have been looking into career paths in (field) and came across your name on LinkedIn. Would it be possible to schedule 20-30 minutes with you at your convenience to ask you a few questions?

Thank you,

(Your full name)

An interview should typically last **30 minutes or less**. Have the list of your questions on hand in order of importance. Don't worry if you can't get to them all. You can always ask them later.

At the end of the interview, ask if you can **connect with them on LinkedIn**, then **send them a thank-you email**. (For suggestions, look at the *Thank-You Letters* handout). This will help you make a good impression, and this connection could be valuable to you in the future.

If you have more questions, consider emailing the professional. They may let you shadow them so you can experience their workplace. If they seem genuinely interested in you, email them and follow up about the path you have taken and ask for additional advice. This is a good way to gain a mentor. Consider sending another thank-you letter to again express gratitude.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Tasks and Responsibilities:

- What aspect of your job do you find most challenging or rewarding?
- Will you describe a typical work day?
- Do you usually work individually or as part of a team?

Preparation for Career Path

- What do you think is the best academic preparation for this profession?
- What first interested you in this field?
- What are the qualifications you look for in a new hire?
- Is there anything you wished you knew before entering this field?
- Do you have any recommendations of other people I should speak with in the field to learn more?

Industry Knowledge

- Are there any professional associations that you suggest I join?
- Where do you see this industry going in the next 5-10 years?
- What industry publications would you recommend I read to help keep me informed of developments in this field?

Work-Life Balance

- What sacrifices have you had to make to succeed in this field, and do you feel the sacrifices were worth it?
- How has this job affected your lifestyle?
- To what extent does this job present a challenge in terms of juggling work and family life?