

# Sample Questions for the Informational Interview

## Sources of Work Satisfaction

These questions are grouped according to different work values. Another list of questions, which focus on getting into an Occupational Field, follows.

### **1. Achievement**

If one of your primary sources of work satisfaction is feeling a sense of accomplishment, then you could ask:

- What gives you a sense of accomplishment in this occupation?
- What kinds of things do you find challenging about your job?

### **2. Association**

- How much of your job involves interaction with coworkers? the public?
- Is there a team approach to your work?
- What kind of people do you help?

### **3. Creativity**

- Do you get to express individuality in your work, or do you have to follow strict guidelines?
- Do you have leeway in your job to be creative and imaginative in what you do?

### **4. Environment**

- What kind of conditions do you work in -- noisy, quiet, crowded, city, rural?
- What is the work atmosphere like -- relaxed, competitive, exciting?
- Do you have the chance to relocate? Where could you go?

### **5. Ethical Considerations**

- Under what circumstances can you refuse to do something not in tune with your ethical beliefs?

### **6. Financial Benefits**

- What is the possible salary range for someone in this occupation?
- Do you receive benefits (company car, dental plan, etc.)?
- What is an average starting salary for this occupation?
- Are there incentives for upgrading or taking extra courses to improve your education? (e.g. salary increase)
- Are you paid for your overtime hours?

### **7. Independence**

- How much time do you spend working alone?
- Do you have complete control over how you do things?

### **8. Intellectual Stimulation**

- What do you find most challenging about your job?
- What kinds of opportunities for advancement are there?
- How much learning and research do you do? Is there a lot of problem solving? What type?
- Does your occupation take full advantage of your capabilities and education?

### **9. Lifestyle**

- Do you have weekends off?
- Do you have set hours or do they vary?
- Do you get time off? How much holiday time do you have?
- Do you move around a lot? Is there the possibility of being transferred?
- Are you on-call very often?
- Approximately how many hours do you work in an average week?
- How much flexibility are you allowed in your job in terms of dress, hours, vacation, or job location?

## **10. Management**

- Do you supervise others?
- Do you evaluate others in terms of performance?

## **11. Security**

- How is the job market in your field?
- How stable is this job?
- What is the future demand in this occupation?
- What sorts of changes are occurring in this field?
- How long do employees stay with this organization? Why do they typically leave?

## **12. Social Recognition**

- Do you feel respected as a result of the work you do?
- How is your achievement recognized?
- Is your job performance reviewed on a regular basis? How?
- What social obligations go along with your job?
- Is there a lot of public exposure?

## **13. Social Service**

- Does your work bring about social change?
- Do you help others in society?
- Does the community benefit from your work?

## **14. Variety**

- Do you do the same thing everyday?
- What is the most exciting thing about your job?

## **More Questions to Ask**

### **Getting Your Foot in the Door**

- What kinds of things did you do before entering this occupation? Which were most helpful?
- What do you look for or find most impressive in potential employees?
- What is the best way to enter this occupation?
- Are there any professional journals / career-related literature / organizations that would help me to learn about this field?
- How much do employers value internships? volunteer work? summer jobs? unrelated work experience?
- How do people find out about job openings? Are they advertised? If so, where?
- What coursework have you found most helpful?
- How can I get experience in this field while I am still in school?
- How is a typical job interview in this industry conducted?
- Are there any professional groups that I can join that would be beneficial to me?
- If you could go back in time, would you do anything differently in your preparations for this occupation?
- What is the typical entry level position(s) for this job?
- How important is it to have the "right" degree or courses to have a chance to develop a career like yours today? What are other qualifications that you as an employer/employee consider important?
- Does your organization offer summer or part-time employment (or volunteer opportunities) for students who are looking for related experience? Can you suggest other work/volunteer experiences that would be advantageous to have?
- How did you get your present job?

- What are some of the "do's and don'ts" in trying to develop a successful career in your field?
- What are the people like who usually excel in this field? What personal qualities do you need to succeed?
- Can you recommend any other individuals within/outside this organization who are involved in similar or related positions that I could talk to for more information?

### **Pros and Cons**

- Would you choose the same occupation if you were just starting out? Why or why not?
- Do you have any special words of warning or encouragement as a result of your experience?
- If you could change any aspects of your career, what would you change?
- Why did you enter this occupation? Was it all that you had expected it to be? Was it better or worse?
- What is your favorite thing about this occupation?
- What are some of the major stresses in your work? Do you consider this to be a low/medium/high stress job?

### **Job Duties**

- Could you outline your primary job responsibilities and indicate the percentage of time that you devote to each?
- Is there such a thing as a typical week in your job and could you briefly describe it?
- Are there any duties that you perform on a regular basis? What are they?