

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

What are Informational Interviews (I.I.s)? How can they help you build your network, gain new career insights, refine your resume, or prepare for other kinds of professional communications?

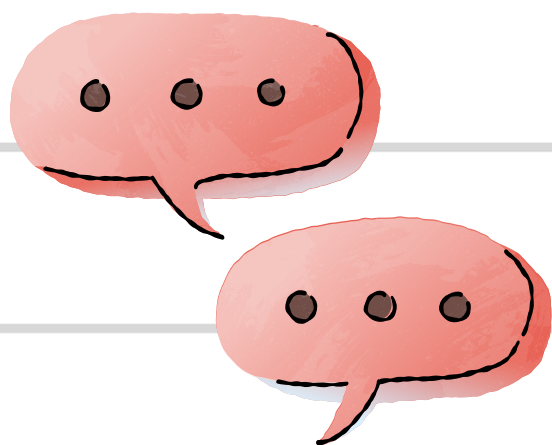
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What are I.I.s?

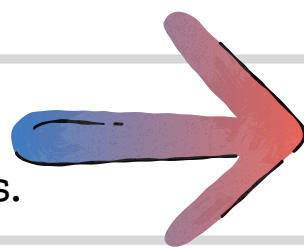
I.I.s help you find info about a given career path, school, industry, or organization.

I.I.s are a type of networking that can be either peer to peer or with a senior colleague.

I.I.s are not a formal interview! They are primarily for career research.



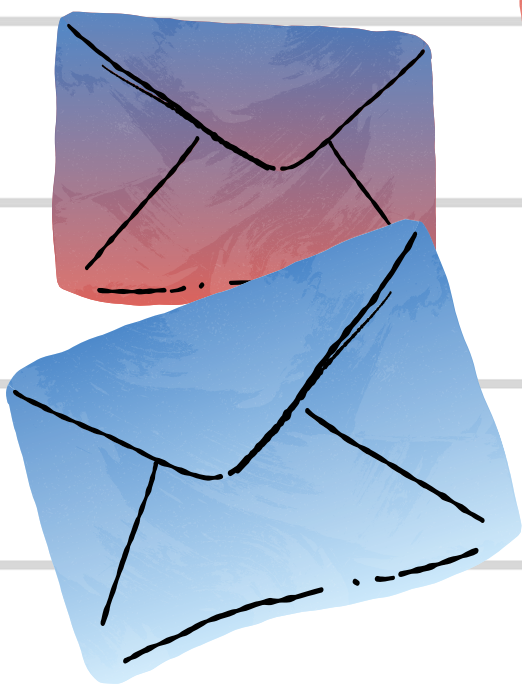
Over time, your interviewees may also give you referrals to specific job opportunities or internships.



2

Who do I ask for an I.I.?

First, consider your goal. Do you want to learn more about a given industry or grad program? Do you want to learn more about a leadership or volunteer opportunity? Begin by establishing a primary goal given where you are in your career.



Look at your LinkedIn - consider faculty or workers at a company you're interested in, or members in your school's alumni network.

Don't forget to ask mutual connections for introductions!



Reach out to 1 to 2 people on LinkedIn or email with a request for an I.I.

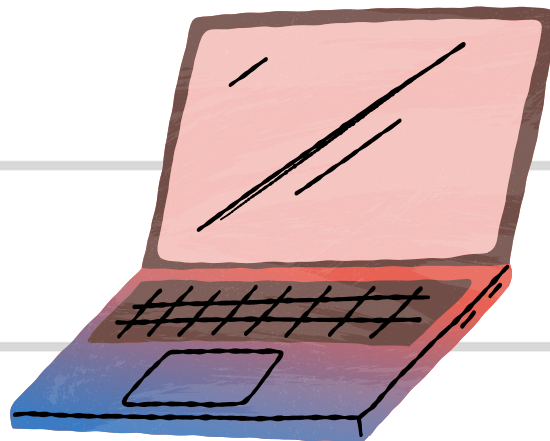
- Share how you found them, your school and area of study, and your goal (searching for jobs, exploring a new career, etc.)
- Be specific about what you'd like to discuss (job search techniques, information about a given organization or role, the status of a given industry)
- Ask for a quick meeting and respect their availability (30 minutes is usually about right)
- Keep the message succinct so they read it (if it's too long they might not!)

3

How do I prepare for an I.I.?

Research your interviewee's professional background and learn about their industry broadly (What's happening this month? What changes are impacting the field overall?).

Don't forget to dress appropriately!
Wear clothes that match the industry.



Begin by thanking the interviewee for making time for you. Then, introduce yourself, including your professional goals. To get comfortable talking about yourself, practice introducing yourself to a friend or family member. Remember that you're looking for information, not a job!

4

What do I bring to an I.I.?

Come prepared - an I.I. is only as good as the questions you ask and the time you invest in preparation. Draft 8-10 well-researched questions for a 30 minute conversation.

You may not get to all questions and that's ok! Follow the flow of the conversation for the best results.



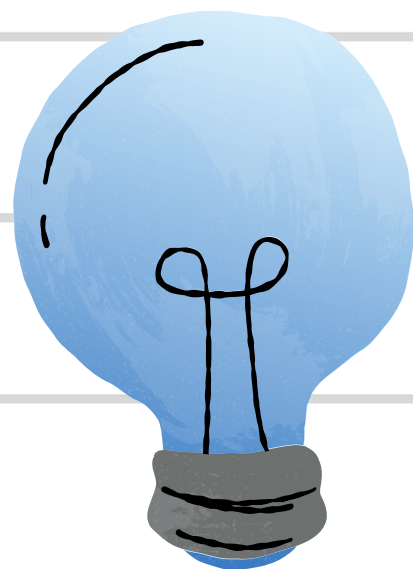
- Ask follow-up questions when needed.
- Try not to ask Yes/No questions so you can get deeper insights.
- Take notes so you remember details later.
- Have your resume / LinkedIn on hand, just in case!
- If the conversation goes well, ask the interviewee if they know any colleagues they might want to introduce you to.

5

What happens after the I.I.?

An important step is to write a follow-up email to the interviewee. Build your relationship by sending a personalized thank you note.

Ask if it's ok to keep in touch and reach out again in 5-6 months to share your progress or ask more questions.



Good luck! Thanks for exploring Informational Interviews with the PNB Group and let us know how it goes!
<https://nebigdatahub.org/pnb-group/>

STUDENT

PORTFOLIO
& NETWORK
BUILDING

GROUP