

**The Information Interview**  
**Case Study Essay and Career Timeline**  
**GLC 20**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Due Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**How to conduct an information interview with a person in a career field that interests you**

Information interviews are fact-finding conversations that will help you gain insight into an industry, occupation or a specific employer, learn what types of skills are needed in the job, and establish contacts that may help you find employment in the future.

**Your desired outcome after the interview:**

First-hand information about the career field you are interested in  
Knowledge about the skills and qualifications needed for a job in that field, to be able to assess how to develop your skills, interests and values  
An idea about a typical day and feelings employees encounter on the job  
Knowledge about the industry, recent trends, developments, and business language used  
Contacts and a network for the future

**Step 1: Find someone to interview through your network**

Ask friends, parents, family members, teachers, career counsellors, and acquaintances if they know anyone employed in the career you are researching. You may also get interview ideas by looking through the Yellow Pages in the phone book.

*Important note:* When you ask, tell them that you are seeking advice and information on the field, and not a job!

**Step 2: Prepare your information interview**

It is a process that you initiate. You select the people with whom you wish to talk, schedule the meetings, begin the questions and steer the flow of conversation. Prepare well in advance before your meeting.

- Learn as much as you can about the organization.
- Gain some knowledge about the person you will meet, the employer, the products or services, size,

Tell your prospect interviewee the following: your name, how you found out about him/her (name the mutual acquaintance, if applicable), why you are contacting him/her . Then ask if you could interview him or her.

Prepare questions (10-15). Remember you are the one asking the questions and directing the conversation. Be genuine and ask questions for which you would really like to know the answers.

For the meeting you should dress professionally as if you were having an interview with the employer, and bring a copy of your resume in case they ask.

### **Step 3: What to do during the interview**

Arrive 10-15 minutes before your appointment.

Be prepared to initiate the conversation.

Ask for referrals to other appropriate individuals in the field or in related organizations.

Remember that this interview is for information-gathering and advice-seeking; ask what you want to know!

Take notes.

Do not ask for a job, but you may ask their opinion on how to obtain one in the field.

Do your best to make a good impression; you never know how this person may help you in the future.

### **Sample questions to ask**

How did you decide on this career?

What was your career path?

Your major in college/university/apprenticeship/other?

What skills, education and experience are needed to enter this field?

What are the entry-level jobs?

What skills are needed most for this type of job?

What type of individual usually succeeds in this field of work?

What are some of the problems/decisions you are likely to face in a day?

What are the rewards/challenges/frustrations of your work?

What do you wish you had known prior to entering this field?

What is it like to work in this organization?

How does your job affect your general lifestyle?

What do you like most about your job?

What you dislike about your job?

What would you change about your job if you could?

Where do you see yourself going from here?

What are the new developments in the field - technology - trends?

What steps would you recommend that I take to prepare to enter this field?

Can you suggest anyone else whom I could contact for additional information?

What are the professional journals in this field that I should read?

In which professional associations would you recommend that I participate?

### **Step 4: What to do after the interview**

Check if you have the answers to your most important questions

Always follow up after the interview by writing a thank you note

### **Step 5: The assignment**

#### **Part A - Case Study Essay**

Using the information you have gathered from the interview, prepare a **minimum 500 word case study essay** that summarizes the career of the person you interviewed based upon the questions you asked. Be sure to include an introduction (one paragraph - introducing the person you interviewed), main body (summarizing what you learned from the interview), and conclusion (one paragraph - review highlights of the interview) in your essay.

#### **Part B: Career Time Line**

A career is defined as the sum total of life experiences. Briefly **summarize** the career path of your interviewee through a **chronological time-line** (in the order that it occurred) (please see attached template). Include several career events (life experiences) that impacted the person's career path. Use the time line as a reference to help you create your Case Study Essay.

## PART B: Career Time Line

[illegible]