# EMPLOYABILITY TOOLKIT – INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

*This task is one of an integrated but adaptable set developed by the Careers and Employability team for Flinders University educators to improve student preparedness for the 'world of work'. Use it as the basis for an assessment, non-graded assessment, or activity. Further information and the full framework is* [*located here*](https://staff.flinders.edu.au/learning-teaching/employability-toolkit)*. Topic Coordinators are welcome to adapt these to purpose.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Task** | Informational Interview  |
| **Task type** | Interview and Reflective Essay  |
| **Length** | Conduct interview/ 800-1000 word summary |
| **Learning outcomes\*** |  |
| **Employability skills** | Communication; initiative and enterprise; self-management; planning and organising; reflection; problem solving; critical thinking |
| [**Employability Toolkit Category**](https://staff.flinders.edu.au/learning-teaching/employability-toolkit) | Deepen knowledge of self and sector  |
| **ABCD\*\*** | Learning and work exploration: students will participate in continuous learning supportive of career goals (C4, P3) |

*\*Topic Coordinator to map to learning outcomes; \*\*Mapped to* [*Australian Blueprint for Career Development*](https://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Australian-Blueprint-for-Career-Development.pdf)

## Task Objectives

1. Apply communication and interpersonal skills to conduct an informational interview
2. Reflect on how an informational interview might influence your career goals and interests

## Task Rationale

An informational interview is a key networking and career exploration tool available to help you gain a better understanding of your future occupation and industry. The ‘insider’ information you get from professionals can help give you clear insights into the types of skills you will need, what to expect day-to-day in particular roles or organisations, tips for the recruitment process and ideas about how to obtain volunteer work or other sector-related experience.

Like many other activities you will undertake while you are preparing for your career, this task may seem daunting. However, students who have conducted these types of interviews rate them as one of the most useful things they did to help them understand their industry, their future career options and to understand the links between their university learning and future career.

## Task Description

For this task you need to:

1. Conduct an informational interview (30-60 minutes)
2. Record the details of your interview (questions asked and summary of responses)
3. Write an 800-1000 word reflection (structured essay) on how you will use the experience and information you have gained.

## Resources

Consult the following [‘Information Interviewing Tutorial’](https://www.livecareer.com/resources/interviews/prep/informational-interviewing) and this LinkedIn Learning course on [Informational Interviews](https://www.linkedin.com/learning/informational-interviewing).

Then:

1. Identify some companies or organisations for which you would like to work, or some roles that appeal to you.
2. Identify some people that you would like to interview.
3. Research the companies/organisations. What do they do? Where? With whom? Why? This is vital.
4. Research the person/position.  What do they do?  Use LinkedIn and a Google search.
5. Contact your prospective interviewee by phone or email to request an appointment.\*
6. Formulate the questions you will ask. What do you really want to know about the company or position and how the person got there?
7. Attend and conduct your interview.  We recommend you record the interview, but you MUST seek permission from the interviewee BEFORE the interview starts.
8. Write notes during and immediately after the interview - record these in FLO.
9. Write your reflection.

\* While you only need to conduct ONE interview for this task, you might need to contact a few people to secure an interview.

## Tips for structuring your informational interview reflection

The purpose of your paper is to summarise and reflect on your findings from the interview. You may choose to structure your reflective writing (structured essay) in the following way:

**Introduction**

* The name of your informational interviewee
* His/her job title and the organisation he/she works for
* A brief description of his/her role
* The reason you chose to interview this person

**Body** (use **"**Summary of Interview"or something similar for title of this section)

* Summarise the significant information you gained from your interviewee
* Reflect on what you learned or discovered from the interview
* Reflect on how it pertains to your future and career interests

**Conclusion**

* Note any additional positive outcomes from your interview (e.g., did you get the name of another contact, has this person offered to help with your job search or work experience etc.)
* Summarise the impact this interview has on your career planning (e.g, you may choose to set a new [SMART career goal](https://www.readygrad.com.au/blog/how-set-smart-goals-and-achieve-them) based on this interview); see [here for [SMART goal examples](https://au.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/smart-goals).](https://au.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/smart-goals)

## Information for Topic Coordinators

This task would ideally be coupled with the ‘Sector Research’ task which introduces students to common channels for exploring their sector and enables them to identify the major organisations/employers.