



## Informational Interview Fact Sheet

### Informational Interviews

Using informational interviews to support learning is a structured Career Exploration activity in which learners formally interview an employer partner about his or her industry, educational and career path, and chosen profession. Learners<sup>2</sup> may also explore the range of career opportunities within the company or industry, opportunities for growth and the salary ranges for different occupations.

Designed to meet specific learning objectives, informational interviews are educationally rich, are tied to the curriculum, and help learners connect what they're learning in school with the workplace. Unlike a guest speaker activity, where speakers usually address a group in the classroom, informational interviews are one-to-one interactions and generally take place at the company's workplace. They may also be conducted via telephone or online – ideally utilizing Facetime or ZOOM. In some cases, hybrid informational interviews may be conducted via Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet or some other technology; are conducted on-line; and learners participate via a remote classroom. There are also virtual simulations available where a recording of a live informational interview, conducted by a teacher or small group of learners, can be viewed on-line and serve as a foundation for an activity and/or discussion in the classroom.

Informational interviews are one activity in the continuum of authentic work-based experiences provided to all learners engaged in career-related programs or course of study in the Earn & Learn community.

### Informational Interviews are designed to:

- Provide exposure to potential careers and jobs.
- Provide a realistic picture of the business, its role in the community and the career paths and occupations of its workforce.
- Help learners make the connection between school and the workplace.
- Inform career planning.

### Informational Interviews are structured to:

- Offer learners the chance to practice and demonstrate key professional skills, including communication, critical thinking, workplace appearance and timeliness.
- Enable learners to begin identifying areas of career interest.
- Build knowledge about the education and training needed for a particular job, career path and entry into the industry.

### Informational Interviews are supported by:

- Classroom preparation, including research on the industry and participating businesses.
- Employer orientation and support.
- Opportunities to reflect upon the experience verbally and in writing.

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<sup>2</sup> Learners include: K-12, community college and college students; youth and young adults engaged in workforce development programs; and adults participating in career development activities.

Informational Interviews are connected to:

- Individual career development/training plans.
- Future work-based learning activities.
- The learner's next steps.

## Informational Interview Support Materials

Checklists, Tip Sheets and Fact Sheets:

- Connector Informational Interview Checklist
- Learner Informational Interview Checklist
- Teacher/Faculty Informational Interview Tip Sheet
- Employer Informational Interview Tip Sheet
- Employer Informational Interview Fact Sheet
- Remote and Virtual Informational Interview Options Sheet

Required Forms and Documents

- WBL Travel and Media Consent Form
- Career Development Plan

Implementation Tools

- Informational Interview Research Activity
- Informational Interview Learner Reflection
- Remote and Virtual Fact Sheets

### **Tips for Success** **Work-Based Learning Essential Elements**

An effective Informational Interview includes structured activity before, during and after the experience. Pay attention to these tips to ensure meaningful experiences that result in enriched learning.

- ✓ Conduct Effective Planning
- ✓ Prepare for Success.
- ✓ Identify Learning Objectives.
- ✓ Create Authentic and Engaging Experiences
- ✓ Connect to Careers
- ✓ Support Learner Growth
- ✓ Ensure Activities are Safe and Legal
- ✓ Provide Ongoing Support
- ✓ Provide for Reflection, Presentation and Feedback.
- ✓ Connect to the Learner Next Step
- ✓ Assess and Document the Experience

Sustaining and growing Informational Interviews and all other work-based learning activities depend on maintaining positive relationships with the participating employers. These employers should be treated as valued customers and partners with frequent check-ins to address their needs and support their participation.