Informational Interviewing Questions

Pick questions that are most appropriate for your meeting. The questions below are provided as a resource, not a script. Formulate some questions of your own as well. Do not try to squeeze in too many questions. It is better to leave contacts wanting more than wearing out your welcome.

**What Is Work Like**

1. Could you describe a typical work day for me?
2. What skills are required in your position on a day-to-day basis?
3. What parts of your job do you find most challenging? Most rewarding?
4. How does your division fit within the overall organization?
5. Are there any dangers I should be aware of?
6. How often do you work past 6 pm or on weekends?
7. Which seasons are the toughest in your job?
8. I'd like to walk through and see with my own eyes where the work is being done here. Can that be arranged?

**State of the Industry**

9. What do you envision the areas of current growth within the organization?
10. Are too many or too few people entering this profession?
11. What developments on the horizon could affect future opportunities?
12. This industry has changes dramatically in the past five years. What have you seen from inside your company?
13. What are the “hot” crisis issues currently in the field? How do you picture that changing over the next 3 – 5 years?
14. Why do people leave this field or organization?
15. Who are the most important people in the industry today?
16. Which companies have the best track record for promoting women and minorities?
17. Are there opportunities for self-employment in your field? Where?

**Money and Advancement**

18. What are the earnings potential if I enter this field?
19. Are frequent moves among organizations necessary to move up the ladder?
20. What is the typical hiring cycle in this field?
21. If you could start all over, would you change your career path in any way?
22. How long does it take for Managers to rise to the top?
23. What is the background of most senior-level executives?
24. What education would recommend for someone to advance in the field?
25. What qualifications do you seek in a new hire?
26. How do most people enter the profession?
27. Which of my skills are strong compared to job hunters in the field?
28. What do you think of the experience I've had so far? For what positions would I qualify?
29. What do you think of my resume? How would you suggest I change it?
30. Can you recommend any additional courses I should take?
31. What companies might be interested in hiring someone with my background?

Fitting In

32. Considering my background, how well do you think I would fit in with this company and/or profession?
33. How does your company compare with others we've discussed?
34. Would the work involve any lifestyle changes, such as frequent travel?
35. Considering all the people you've met in your line of work, what personal attributes are essential for success?
36. Taking into account my skills, education and experience, what other career paths would you suggest I explore before making a final decision?

More Information

37. Where can I look to get current information on salaries, employers and industry issues?
38. What professional journals and organizations should I be aware of?
39. Is there anything else you think I need to know?
40. Who else would you recommend I speak with? When I call, may I use your name?

(The questions above come from Martha Stoodley's book "Forty Questions to Ask during Networking Meetings").