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My Career module

Informational Interview



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**Version created February 2020.**

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Overview

Module synopsis

There is more to a job search than applying for every open position you find online. Get strategic and start using informational interviews to find the job that suits you best. This is not a job interview. In a lot of ways, it's better. It's less stressful and provides you with insider insight. An informational interview is a meeting between two people. One person is working in a certain industry or field, and the other person is looking to learn more about the industry, field, career path, or employer. In this module you will complete an online course on informational interviews, conduct an informational interview with a professional working in the field you wish to enter, and complete related ePortfolio workbook activities.

Skills and attributes

On successful completion of this module students will be able to explain the process and benefits of informational interviews and be able to conduct an informational interview.

Module assessment

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Task | Marks | Due date | Submission |
| Informational interview workbook | 10 |  | ePortfolio workbook completed by the deadline (submissions are automatic) |

Access to your ePortfolio

There is a link to your workbook on LMS, as well as instructions for accessing your workbook.

Access to LinkedIn Learning

From the LMS, click on the “LinkedIn Learning activation” link and login using your university login details.

Weekly schedule

This is a suggested weekly schedule for working through the My Career module this semester; you may wish to work through this module more quickly.

Week 1

1. Read this guide, review the LMS and learn how to access your ePortfolio workbook

Weeks 2-3

1. Activate your LinkedIn Learning account if you haven’t already
2. Work through the *Informational Interviewing* online course

Weeks 4-6

1. Conduct research and planning for your interview as suggested in the online course
2. Contact potential interviewees as suggested in the online course

Weeks 7-9

1. Conduct your interview
2. Complete the analysis and evaluation of the interview

Weeks 10-12

1. Complete the ePortfolio workbook activities

Study Week

1. Your completed ePortfolio workbook will be automatically submitted for marking. You don’t need to physically submit your work.

Informational Interviewing

Your task

You will complete an Informational Interviewing online course, and using what you learn in the course, you will conduct an informational interview with a professional working in an occupation you wish to learn more about or enter. After you have completed the interview, you will analyse and evaluate the process complete ePortfolio workbook activities. It is suggested that you don’t choose a family member or close friend to interview. Students who put the most effort into these activities are likely to gain the most benefit in terms of setting themselves up for their future careers. In other words, the potential benefits of this module reach far beyond the associated marks.

1. Informational Interviewing online course

The Informational Interviewing online course will teach you about the purpose of informational interviews, and how to conduct them. The course is comprised of the following videos which you should watch. It’s a good idea to pause and take notes when information is presented regarding how you should conduct your informational interview. You can access the course via the link on LMS.

Introduction

* Welcome (1m 23s)

What is an informational interview?

* Informational vs. job interview (3m 4s)
* How informational interviews fit into the job search process (3m 4s)
* Benefits and results (3m 20s)

Get started

* Select a specific occupation (2m 46s)
* Identify appropriate companies and contacts (3m 49s)
* Schedule the informational interview (3m 54s)

Get ready

* Do your homework (3m 13s)
* Update your CV or resume (2m 25s)
* Prepare to ask questions and take notes (3m 9s)

What to Expect

* Dos and don’t’s (3m 20s)
* How your questions impact results (3m 16s)
* Listen to understand (3m 3s)

Following up

* Remember to follow up (2m 16s)
* Record, analyze, evaluate, and improve results (3m 1s)
* Contact referrals and build your network (3m 1s)

Conclusion

* Next steps (1m 14s)

1. Conduct an informational interview

Conduct an informational interview with a professional in a field you want to know more about or wish to enter. Be sure to follow the suggestions that are presented in the online course for making contact and following up. Consistent with the information presented in the online course, it is recommended that you ask about the following during the interview:

* Career path including challenges
* Skills and credentials
* A typical day and averaged hours worked
* Current and future state of the industry including challenges

1. Analyse & evaluate the informational interview

Immediately following your informational interview, find a quiet place to record all the information you’ve gathered. Review the notes you took and elaborate on them as much as possible to help you remember details when you later analyse your results and attach the business cards of anyone you interacted with. After this you should:

* Write down your intitial impression of the meeting including the good, bad and ugly
* Rate your experience on a scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest
* Make some quick notes on what you should have asked to get better results

ePortfolio workbook pages

Introduction

Who I am:

1. Name
2. Photo (not compulsory)
3. Course
4. Desired profession

Interview

What I learnt:

1. Provide an indepth account of the interviewees career path, their skills and credentials, and career barriers and decisions
2. Illustrate in detail the nature of the occupation on a daily basis, and describe industry trends and challenges

Analysis & evaluation

My experience and plans for next time:

1. What was your initial impression of the interview including the good, bad and ugly?
2. Rate your experience on a scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest
3. What should you have asked to get better results?

Reflection on module activities and career development

For questions 1-13, you will receive full marks if you answer all questions honestly; you will not be marked down if you disagree with statements. This exercise is designed to help us understand more about you and your career development.

Rate your level of agreement with the following statements, or check the box that most accurately answers the question:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Completion of the Informational Interviewing online course helped me to understand the purpose of informational interviews | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1. Completion of the Informational Interviewing online course helped me to learn how to conduct an informational interview | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1. Completion of the Informational Interviewing online course helped me to learn how to analyse and evaluate an informational interview that I conducted | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1. Completion of this module has improved my understanding of what a professional does in the field I wish to enter. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1. How do you rate your knowledge of what a professional does in the field you wish to enter? | Very poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 1. How many professionals in the field that you wish to enter do you know and interact with? | 0 | 1-2 | 3-5 | 6-10 | >10 |
| 1. Completion of this module has improved my understanding of the state of the industry I wish to enter | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1. What is your level of interest in pursuing this career path post interview (now) when compared to before you started this module? | Much less interested | Less interested | No more or less interested | More interested | Much more interested |
| 1. How do you rate your ability to conduct an informational interview? | Very poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 1. How do you rate your ability to analyse and evaluate an informational interview that you conducted? | Very poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 1. I have gained knowledge and developed skills in this module that will be useful to me in the future | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1. I will conduct more informational interviews outside of my official studies | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |

1. Which of the following statements best describes how you currently think about your career path?

* I have not decided on a career and am not concerned about this at present
* I have not decided on a career and am worried about making a decision
* I have a good idea on my future career, but am open to other options
* I know what I want to do and have a plan on how to achieve my career goals

For the following questions it is up to you whether or not you provide responses (no marks are allocated to this section), although it will be very helpful for us to learn which aspects were most helpful and what additional support could be provided to support your career development.

1. What aspects of the My Career module have been most helpful for your career planning?
2. Please suggest any practical changes that you believe could help support your career planning.

Informational Interview marking scheme

*A mark of zero will be given for work that does not meet Poor (cell one) level performance.*

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| **Criteria** | **5 (100%)**  Excellent | **4 (80%)**  Very good | **3 (70%)**  Good | **2 (50%)**  Needs improvement | **1 (25%)**  Poor |
| **Career pathway (35%)** | | | | | |
| Understanding of individual’s career path, skills and credentials, barriers, career decisions. | Provides in-depth account of individual’s career path, skills and credentials, career barriers and decisions. | Provides in-depth account of individual’s career path, skills and credentials, career barriers and decisions.  Minor errors. | Describes individual’s career path but may be missing detail around credentials and/or career barriers and decisions. | Describes general history of individual’s various jobs. | Provides no or little information on individual’s career path. |
| **Insights into an occupation (40%)** | | | | | |
| Provides deep understanding of nature of individual’s occupation and industry. | Able to illustrate in detail nature of occupation on a daily basis. Excellent insight into nature of industry and possible trends & challenges. | Able to illustrate in detail nature of occupation on a daily basis. Excellent insight into nature of industry and possible trends & challenges.  Minor errors. | Provides a richer description of the occupation than available in published occupational descriptions, such as highlighting examples of work performed. | Provides a general or surface description of the occupation. | Does not provide more than a basic description of the occupation. |
| **Analysis & evaluation of interview (20%)** | | | | | |
| Provides comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the interview. | Able to clearly illustrate initial impressions of the meeting, and rate personal experience. Thoughtful insight into future improvements. | Able to clearly illustrate initial impressions of the meeting and rate personal experience. Thoughtful insight into future improvements.  Minor errors. | Provides a good description of the analysis and evaluation but may be missing detail regarding personal experience and insight for future improvements. | Provides a general or surface description of the analysis and evaluation. | Does not provide more than a basic description of the analysis and evaluation. |
| **Reflection (5%)** | | | | | |
| Reflection on module activities and personal career development | All multi-choice reflection questions are answered. | Most multi-choice reflection questions are answered. | Approximately ¾ of multi-choice reflection questions are answered. | Approximately half of the multi-choice reflection questions are answered. | Approximately ¼ of mullti-choice reflection questions are answered. |