

100 Informational Interview / Coffee Chat Questions

Career Path

1. How did you get started in your current career?
2. What attracted you to this field?
3. What were the most important milestones in your career journey?
4. How has your career path differed from what you originally expected?
5. What early experiences best prepared you for your current role?
6. What career decisions have had the biggest impact on your success?
7. What skills helped you advance the fastest?
8. What challenges did you face early in your career?
9. What do you wish you knew when you were a student or recent graduate?
10. What advice would you give someone entering this field?

Current Role

11. What does a typical day look like for you?
12. What are your primary responsibilities?
13. What do you enjoy most about your work?
14. What is the most challenging aspect of your role?
15. What metrics define success in your position?
16. How does your role contribute to the organization's goals?
17. What projects are you currently working on?
18. How has your role evolved over time?
19. What surprises people most about your job?
20. What keeps you motivated at work?

Industry Insights

21. What trends are shaping your industry right now?
22. How has the industry changed in recent years?
23. What skills are becoming more valuable in this field?
24. What areas of growth do you foresee?
25. What challenges are organizations facing in this industry?
26. What makes professionals stand out?
27. Which certifications or credentials are respected?
28. What misconceptions do people have about this industry?
29. How competitive is the field today?
30. What publications, websites, or resources do you follow?

Workplace Culture

31. How would you describe your organization's culture?
32. What qualities help employees thrive here?
33. How does collaboration typically happen?
34. What leadership traits are valued?
35. How is professional development supported?
36. How does your organization encourage innovation?
37. What does work-life balance look like?
38. How are new employees onboarded?

39. What distinguishes top performers?
40. What do you enjoy most about working here?

Networking

41. How have networking relationships helped your career?
42. What networking strategies have worked best for you?
43. How do you maintain professional relationships?
44. What is the best way for students to expand their network?
45. What networking mistakes should people avoid?
46. How do you approach reaching out to new contacts?
47. How important is LinkedIn in your field?
48. How do you turn a first meeting into a long-term connection?
49. What professional associations do you recommend?
50. How can someone add value when networking?

Career Development

51. What skills should I focus on developing over the next few years?
52. How do you continue learning professionally?
53. What experiences help accelerate career growth?
54. How do you identify opportunities for advancement?
55. What role has mentorship played in your career?
56. How can someone find a mentor?
57. What accomplishments tend to get noticed?
58. How important are cross-functional experiences?
59. What habits separate strong professionals from average ones?
60. What is the best career advice you have received?

Job Search

61. What qualities do you look for when hiring?
62. What makes a candidate stand out during interviews?
63. What common mistakes do applicants make?
64. What should students include on their resumes?
65. How important are internships or co-ops?
66. How can candidates demonstrate initiative?
67. What interview questions reveal the most about a candidate?
68. How can someone effectively tell their professional story?
69. What should candidates research before applying?
70. What advice do you have for breaking into this field?

AI and Technology

71. How is AI affecting your industry?
72. What AI tools are professionals using most often?
73. Which job tasks are being automated through AI?
74. How can students prepare for an AI-driven workplace?
75. What AI-related skills will be most valuable in the future?
76. How do you evaluate the benefits and risks of AI?
77. Has AI changed the hiring process in your organization?

78. How do you see AI influencing your role over the next five years?
79. What ethical concerns should professionals consider when using AI?
80. How can professionals use AI to become more productive without losing critical thinking?

Leadership

81. What leadership qualities do you admire most?
82. How did you develop your leadership skills?
83. What experiences prepared you to lead others?
84. How do you manage difficult conversations?
85. How do you motivate a team?
86. What lessons have you learned from leadership challenges?
87. How do you build trust within a team?
88. How do you make important decisions?
89. What advice do you have for aspiring leaders?
90. How can young professionals demonstrate leadership without a title?

Closing Questions

91. What do you see as the biggest opportunities for someone entering this field today?
92. If you were starting your career now, what would you do differently?
93. Who else would you recommend I speak with?
94. What skills should I prioritize developing immediately?
95. What trends should I monitor over the next few years?
96. What questions do you wish more people asked you?
97. How can I stay informed about developments in this field?
98. What final advice would you offer someone exploring this career path?
99. May I stay in touch and update you on my progress?
100. How can I best support or add value to my network as I grow professionally?