

WBL Lesson Plan



Informational Interview

Overview



Informational interviews are a way to help students better understand career pathways and develop skills needed to interact with professionals. In this multi-day activity, students will prepare to interview professionals in a chosen field, engage with professionals through the informational interview format, and reflect on industry insights informing their future careers.

Students will:

- Develop communication, social awareness, and collaboration skills as they work with peers, educators, and professional partners.
- Engage with professionals, making connections within their designed career pathway.
- Understand their career path, connecting informational interview learnings with their personal college and career goals.

Connections



Students connect with professionals, expanding their network during the interview process.

Skills

Communication
Social Awareness
Collaboration



Preparation

Partner Outreach: Determine the number of professionals needed for the activity. Consider a 1:1 or small group (3 students per partner) approach of the informational interview. Reach out to current Advisory Board members and community partners with unique and diverse perspectives on the selected topic. Determine if this activity will best fit your classroom in a virtual or in person format and make arrangements for professionals to join students in the determined way. Use the [communications toolkit](#) to reach out to potential participants.

Consider outreach to local partners including the Small Business Association (SBA) and Chamber of Commerce who are involved in your local community.

Ensure partners know the [format of the informational interview](#), best practices of working with students, and the topic of discussion. Inform partners of the selected format and student predesigned questions.

WBL Participation Tracker: Enter the informational interview into the [WBL Tracker](#).

- Includes only the day/time spent with the professionals; Activity 2 below
- Primary Activity type: Informational Interview
- Assign students to the activity

Commented [TB1]: No edit needed. There is value in multiple perspectives on the topic.

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Implementation

Use this activity when planning informational interviews as a work-based learning activity. Students will explore career aspirations and have an opportunity to make professional connections during the informational interview engagement.

Activity	Instructions
Activity 1: Prepare Total Time: 50 minutes	<p>Student Preparation – Informational Interview</p> <p>Informational Interview Introduction: Begin preparing students for the informational interview by reviewing characteristics of the informational interview process.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Instruct students to brainstorm what they know about traditional interviews.2. Share an informational interview from Roadtrip Nation with students. To select video:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Open Roadtrip Nationb. Select “What We Offer” tab from top menuc. Navigate to “Videos and Stories”d. Select a title that fits academy theme or looks interestinge. Choose ‘The Route/Interviews’f. Select an interview to watch3. Instruct students to make a list of characteristics they notice about the informational interview. Note who is asking questions, information shared, and overall objective of the exercise.4. Present the following graphic, allowing students to place their observations of traditional and informational interviews in their respective categories. This can be completed virtually in a shared workspace or as a whole class.5. Help students reflect on their observations and prepare for informational interviews that fit their personal career pathway aspirations. <div data-bbox="500 1423 831 1663" style="text-align: center;"><p>The diagram consists of two overlapping rectangles. The left rectangle is green and labeled 'Informational Interviews'. The right rectangle is yellow and labeled 'Traditional Interviews'. The overlapping area in the center is a blue rectangle labeled 'Shared Characteristics'.</p></div>

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Informational Interview



<p>Research Activity: Provide the names and companies of the participating partners that students will engage with during the activity. Students research these professionals by exploring LinkedIn, partner provide profiles, and/or videos focused on the career pathway of the speaker. Students should build out a profile for each partner, noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name, company, position• Career pathway/field• Educational background• Interesting biographical information• Connection to the academy, if applicable (i.e. Advisory Board member) <p>Student Questions: After completing research, have students develop questions to ask professionals during the informational interview. Review these questions and prepare final questions for the activity.</p> <p>Prepare: Select roles for students for participation in the informational interview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome Team: Students welcome the guests to the engagement and are the first face of the academy encountered by the professionals when arriving at the school.• Planning Team: Students to participate in the event planning aspect of the activity, including outreach to professionals, securing space in school building, giving notice to academy students, helping set up event, and thanking partners after engagement (3-5 total)• Introduction Team: Students to introduce speakers (2 total)• Interviewer Team: Students to ask interview questions (1 question per student) <p>Note: <i>If offering this event virtually, adapt student roles to fit virtual setting.</i></p>
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WBL Lesson Plan



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<p>Activity 2: Participate</p> <p>Total Time: 45 minutes</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">***Work-Based Learning***</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Add this as an activity in the WBL Participation Tracker</p> <p>Informational Interview Logistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive early to check classroom, technology, and materials • Confirm the team escorting the interviewees is present and ready • Ensure all students have questions prepared and understand order • Remind students to take notes during the interview as these will be used for reflection after the engagement • Follow up with speakers after the event, sharing student feedback, and thanking participants for their expertise <p>Reminders for Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress professionally: Even if conducting a telephone or video interview, still dress professionally since appearance will affect tone and attitude. • Prepare: Have the complete list of questions available, as well as a notebook or computer for notes, water, and anything else to be comfortable during the interview. • Be Early: For in-person or video calls, delays and technical problems are sometimes unavoidable and being early allows time to troubleshoot any problems. Keep the participant's number on hand in case it's needed to alert them to any changes in the schedule. • Be on Time: For over-the-phone interviews, be in a quiet location and be on time. It is considered impolite to call early or late. • Follow the Script: It has been prepared and practiced, however be ready to diverge if the professional leads the conversation off script. <p>After the Informational Interview: Have assigned students send a thank you note to the participant(s), thanking them for their time and sharing what they learned from the conversation.</p> <p>Industry Partner Feedback Allow the industry partner(s) who are conducting informational interviews give students feedback via the WBL Skills Feedback Survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add this activity to the WBL Participation Tracker - Add students to the activity

WBL Lesson Plan



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	- Generate a QR code or link to share with industry partners; found under <i>Employer Skills Feedback</i> in the activity you added to the Tracker
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Activity	Instructions
Activity 3 – Reflect Total Time: 15 minutes	<p>Student Reflection – Informational Interview</p> <p>Have students complete a WBL Reflection Form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students log into their NAFTrack Student account • Students select WBL Reflection Form under 'Activities' • Students complete and submit the reflection form <p>Lead a class discussion to reflect on the Informational Interview. Consider the following when asking students to reflect on their experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What surprised you about the answers you heard? • What skills do you feel you improved upon by interacting with the participants? • Are there any additional topics or career pathways you are inspired to learn about because of this engagement? <p>Closing Application and Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students reflect on skills gained through this activity • Students evaluate new connections and add them to the Connections section of NAFTrack Students • Students document the experience in a portfolio, to record any new understanding of their career aspirations <p>Educator Note: After students reflect on the Information Interview, use their responses and reactions to improve work-based learning and provide additional opportunities in the future.</p>