How to Arrange, Conduct and Follow-up on an Informational Interview

Who should I request an informational interview from?
That depends on what you’re interested in finding out. If you want to know more about a specific job role or type, you should request an interview from someone with that role or type. If you want to find out more about a department, you should ask someone who works in that department.

How do I reach out to the person I want to interview?
• Introduce yourself and refer to the Slack workspace to explain how you got their name.
• Ask if they would be willing to meet with you face to face (either in person or via Zoom) or over the phone.
• Tell them that you are researching a specific field or career and are in search of information and advice.
• Be clear that you are not looking for a job.
• Set up a mutually satisfying time to meet, and determine ahead of time how long you will spend together.

How do I prepare for the interview?
• Prepare for an informational interview as you would for an actual job interview.
• Polish your presentation and listening skills and conduct preliminary research on the organization.
• Practice introducing yourself and explaining what you’d like to learn.
• Do your homework to learn about the department and individual’s role through the department’s website.
• Review sample informational interviewing questions included in our group files.
• Prepare the questions that you want to ask.

How do I conduct the interview?
• Thank the person for meeting with you, and reiterate your reasons for wanting to talk with this person.
• Relax – you don’t have to be nervous. This is just a conversation.
• Ask open-ended questions based on what you know about this person’s role, department or organization.
• Don’t ask for a job – this interview is about information and exploration.
• Ask if the person can recommend anyone else for you to interview.
• Honor the time that the interviewee has scheduled.
• Take good notes.

How should I follow up?

• Send a thank you note; email is fine, but make sure to tailor it to the conversation you had with your interviewee.
• Evaluate the information you received and follow up as needed.
• Maintain the connections with those you have met and let them know if you follow up on something they suggest.