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**QEP Best Start Career Exploration Project 100 Points**

To research your career, use at least 3 sources of information. You must use **America’s CareerInfonet**- www.acinet.org and **The Occupational Outlook Handbook** [www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm) as well as any other resources your instructor may require. You must also use one source from a professional journal or a book. List these three resources at the end of your paper on a separate sheet. Refer to your “**Do What You Are**” Personality results or a personality inventory assigned by your instructor to answer #2. This paper should be typed, 12 font, 1” margins, and should be at least 3 pages! You must address each section below in a separate paragraph to receive full credit for this assignment.

**70 Points:**

1. Describe the career. What are the typical job duties?
2. What are your personality strengths that match this career?
3. How does this career match your interests listed on your Interest Assessment?
4. What are some advantages and disadvantages of working in this career?
5. What is the pay and job outlook?
6. What are the educational requirements?
7. What interesting facts did you discover?

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* **10 Points:**

On the last sheet of your Career Exploration Project, you must list the three sources that you used to write your paper. One source MUST be an article from a professional journal or from a book.

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* **20 Points:**

You must conduct an “Informational Interview” with someone in the career you are researching. You must type out at least 10 questions you wish to ask this person, along with their answer. (See handout for questions to ask for the Informational Interview). In the first part of the paper include:

* Their name
* Phone number
* Where they currently work in this career field (address)

You may NOT use a relative. Use a local directory to find interviewees. Call and request a 15 minute interview before dropping by and explain that this is for a class assignment.

**Instructions for Conducting an Informational Interview**

One of the best sources for gathering information about what's happening in an occupation or an industry is to talk to people working in the field. This process is called *informational* or *research interviewing*. An informational interview is an interview that **you** initiate - you ask the questions. The purpose is to obtain information, not to get a job.

Following are some good **REASONS TO CONDUCT INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS**:

* to explore careers and clarify your career goal
* to discover employment opportunities that are not advertised
* to expand your professional network
* to build confidence for your job interviews
* to access the most up-to-date career information
* to identify your professional strengths and weaknesses

Listed below are **STEPS TO FOLLOW TO CONDUCT AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW:**

1. **Identify the Occupation or Industry You Wish to Learn About**

Assess your own interests, abilities, values, and skills, and evaluate labor conditions and trends to identify the best fields to research.

1. **Prepare for the Interview**

Read all you can about the field prior to the interview. Decide what information you would like to obtain about the occupation/industry. Prepare a list of questions that you would like to have answered.

1. **Identify People to Interview**

Start with lists of people you already know - friends, relatives, fellow students, present or former co-workers, supervisors, neighbors, etc... Professional organizations, the yellow pages, organizational directories, and public speakers are also good resources. You may also call an organization and ask for the name of the person by job title.

1. **Arrange the Interview**

Contact the person to set up an interview:

* + by telephone,
  + by a letter followed by a telephone call, or
  + by having someone who knows the person make the appointment for you.

1. **Conduct the Interview**

Dress appropriately, arrive on time, be polite and professional. Refer to your list of prepared questions; stay on track, but allow for spontaneous discussion. Before leaving, ask your contact to suggest names of others who might be helpful to you and ask permission to use your contact's name when contacting these new contacts.

1. **Follow Up**

Immediately following the interview, record the information gathered. Be sure to send a thank-you note to your contact within one week of the interview.

**NOTE: Always analyze the information you've gathered. Adjust your job search, resume, and career objective if necessary.**

**20 QUESTIONS!**

Prepare a list of your own questions for your informational interview. Following are some sample questions:

1. On a typical day in this position, what do you do?
2. What training or education is required for this type of work?
3. What personal qualities or abilities are important to being successful in this job?
4. What part of this job do you find most satisfying? most challenging?
5. How did you get your job?
6. What opportunities for advancement are there in this field?
7. What entry level jobs are best for learning as much as possible?
8. What are the salary ranges for various levels in this field?
9. How do you see jobs in this field changing in the future?
10. Is there a demand for people in this occupation?
11. What special advice would you give a person entering this field?
12. What types of training do companies offer persons entering this field?
13. What are the basic prerequisites for jobs in this field?
14. Which professional journals and organizations would help me learn more about this field?
15. What do you think of the experience I've had so far in terms of entering this field?
16. From your perspective, what are the problems you see working in this field?
17. If you could do things all over again, would you choose the same path for yourself? Why? What would you change?
18. With the information you have about my education, skills, and experience, what other fields or jobs would you suggest I research further before I make a final decision?
19. What do you think of my resume? Do you see any problem areas? How would you suggest I change it?
20. Who do you know that I should talk to next? When I call him/her, may I use your name as a referral?

Source unknown- obtained from the internet- danenet.wicip.org/jets/jet-9407-p.html