

GETTING TO THE TOP

Using Information Interviews
to Find Opportunities

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Roadmap

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About these Slides

- This is an intro to Information Interviews. You will develop your own approach as you master them.
- Hyperlinks are www.perma.cc links to prevent [link rot](#). Click the “View Live Page” if necessary.
- This is a compilation of resources on the internet, UTSC’s Academic Advising & Career Centre (AA&CC), and my experience.
- View the **Slide Notes** for more information on each slide.



What is an Information Interview?

- An Information Interview is when you talk with a **professional** for **career-related information** about their industry and experiences.
- Essentially a **cheat code** for real life.



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Why should I conduct Information Interviews?

- Do Information Interviews if you want to:
 - find a job
 - learn what a career involves
 - discover opportunities
 - learn the industry “gossip”
 - demonstrate ambition and initiative
- Information Interviews are great when:
 - you’re confused about what you want to do
 - you’re unsure of how to achieve a goal
 - you’re searching for the next step



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Who should I speak with?

- Find professionals in your field of interest. For example, people who are:
 - doing a job you think you would like
 - working in a company you admire
- Preferably the professional has a 'tie' to you, no matter how small.
 - Friends of friends or family
 - Alumnus of UofT
 - Similar programs or cities
 - If you're not from Toronto, see if they are from your province/country.



How do I find someone?

- This can be tricky and may require some work.
- You need:
 - their name
 - either a phone number or email
 - their company
- **See Notes** for more info.



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How do I contact them?

- Send an email introduction. Below is a copy of my request for an information interview this year.

Subject: Harvard 1L – Request for Information Interview

Body: Dear Mr. X,

I am currently a 1L at Harvard Law School with a background in neuroscience, political science, and a passionate interest in technological entrepreneurship. Exponential technologies are fundamentally changing society, and I hope to be involved with this evolution. [Company] is leading the charge, and I would love to hear what a legal career in this area involves.

Would you be available for a brief 20-30 minute information interview? If so, when would be an ideal time to speak?

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,
Filippo Raso



What should I say to set up an Interview?

- Include that you are a University of Toronto student. Include your program if relevant to the field.
- If anyone referred you to the professional, indicate who and why.
- Mention your interests and explain why you think they are interesting.
- Ask for 15-20 minutes of their time.
- If you call, follow a similar script to AA&CC's included in the Notes.

Where should I have the Interview?

- Wherever is most convenient for the professional.
- My favorite place is coffee shops near the professional's workplace.
- If they cannot do coffee, offer to have a phone call. For a phone interview, ensure you:
 - determine who is to call the other
 - are in a quiet location
 - have sufficient battery
 - have signal



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At what time should I set it up?

- If the professional has agreed to an interview but did not provide a time, **you** should suggest 2-3 time slots at minimum a week later.
- Even if your schedule is wide open, select 2-3 times. Indicate that you are flexible and are willing to accommodate their schedule if none of those times work.
- Give yourself enough time to travel, factoring in delays.



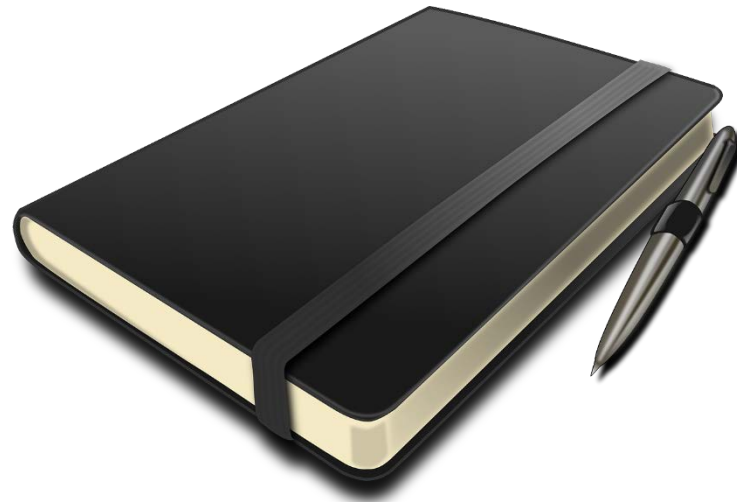
What should I ask during the interview?

- Ask specific questions.
- A good place to start is explaining what you know, where you want to go, and any uncertainties you have. The professional may jump in directly to help flesh out the path.
- Ask if the professional can think of anyone else with whom you should speak. The more specific your ask, the more likely they will refer you.
- Ask if you can take notes if you intend to, but do not get carried away with note-taking.



During the Interview

- Take quick notes.
- Keep track of time. Even if they are late, indicate once the original allotted time is up.
- Offer, and expect, to pay.
 - This is why coffees are great.



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After the Interview

- Send a thank you email or hand-written note.
- Keep in touch and update them on your career progress.
- If they referred you to someone else, update them once you've discussed with that person.



Other Resources

- The AA&CC has a wonderful page dedicated to [Information Interviews](#).
- The AA&CC also provides job shadowing opportunities, employer information sessions, networking events, etc. Visit: <https://cIn.utoronto.ca/home.htm>
- Harvard Business School's "[Making a Career Change](#)" offers a great list of questions for Information Interviews.
- Harvard College's "[Making Connections](#)" is an incredible resource. I **highly** recommend everyone read this.
- "[How to Get the Most Out of an Informational Interview](#)"

Contact me

If I can help at all, please contact me. My information is below. Email is best to get a hold of me.



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www.linkedin.com/in/filipporaso



www.twitter.com/FiliARaso

Additional Contacts

The following are additional UTSC Psychology alumni that would be happy to connect with you for an information interview:

- Racine Senining, Volunteer Resources Coordinator
rsenining@ysm.ca
- Gwen Kakouris, Occupational Therapist
gwenkakouris@gmail.com
- Melissa Holmes, Imaging Analyst
melissa.holmes@sunnybrook.ca
- Stephanie Kersta, Consultant/Psychotherapist
stephanie.kersta@alumni.utoronto.ca