



Learn Data Science Online
With an Industry Mentor

How to be Awesome At Informational Interviews

3 Goals of the Informational Interview:

- Gather information about a field or a job
- Help you convey your expertise and competence
- Build your network

Example: *A* coffee meeting

Do your Research

- The company: using Crunchbase, LinkedIn, Google, news sites
- The person: using social media, LinkedIn, Google
- Never ask something you can google

The Introduction

- Do not ask about a job!
- Deliver a well practiced pitch/introduction
- Example:

“I’m looking forward to this conversation because I’m wanting to know what kind of data science job is right for me. I know your work at Deloitte focuses on project-based client support, and I’d love to know more about that”.

Ask Great Questions

- Ask questions that help you find the answer to: Would I like this job?
- And then questions that help you know: Can I get this job?
- Build questions in advance that give you these answers

The “Beyond” Technique

- Bad question: “What do you look for in a data scientist?”
- Better question: “Beyond a good portfolio, and great technical skills, what do you look for in a data scientist?”
 - Go beyond the obvious to get at more detail

Beginner, Intermediate, Boss

- Beginner: “What algorithm do you use to predict student engagement?”
- Intermediate: “In order to predict student engagement, do you tend to use X or Y algorithm?”
- Boss: “In general people predict student engagement using X. Do you use Y? Or do you use Y? Or do you use something else altogether?”

Preparing Your Questions

- Use critical thinking
- Resist the urge to ask easy or canned questions
- Be specific, draw on the research you've done
- Think about demonstrating what you know in your questions

Listen

- For Information you can act on
- What is important to the other person?

Follow Up!

Follow Up

- Send a thank you, with specific points and how you will use them
- Do what you say you will do
- Make introductions, recommendations
- Great follow up depends on great listening

Summary:

- Prepare
- Do research
- Practice a strong introduction
- Ask great questions
- Listen
- Follow up

Go informational interviewing!