

Job, Career Field, and Industry Research

Following are basic questions that you need to be able to answer before deciding on a specific career goal and beginning your internship, job, or transfer/graduate school search. It is important your answers be based on research from multiple, informed sources, including on-line and print resources, faculty, and alumni. Use the career exploration resources on the [“Getting Started”](#) page of Career Services website in addition to those provided by your academic program to get started, then speak directly with people working in the job, career field, or industry, known as informational interviewing, to validate your research and get a more complete picture.

The first set of questions addresses a specific job function (e.g., nursing assistant, assistant herdsman, accounting assistant, auto service technician), while the second set focus on a career field (e.g., nursing, accounting, dairy management, auto service and repair) or industry (e.g., healthcare, accounting services, agriculture, automotive). ***(Please note that the industries listed are not the only ones where the job functions and career fields mentioned are found, as your research will reveal.)***

Information you need to know about a job:

- What does a typical day look like? When does it start and end?
- What are the primary tasks and responsibilities?
- What are the key skills required for success?
- What are the key personal qualities required for success?
- What are the typical values of people in the job?
- What level of education is required for an entry-level position?
- What type of people would you work with?
- What type of clients (internal or external) would you interact with?
- What type of problems would you deal with?
- What type of decisions would you make?
- What is the typical entry-level salary? The compensation structure (e.g. is there commission paid, housing, company vehicle, etc.)?
- What does it take to advance to the next level?
- What are the challenges and opportunities of working in the job?
- What industries is this job found in?

Information you need to know about a career field and industry:

- What services or products does the career field provide? The industry?
- What are the 20 largest organizations in the industry? The fastest growing? The most admired?
- What does the typical organizational chart look like for the career field? For the industry?
- Who are the most common entry-level jobs in the field? In the industry?
- What are the key skills required for the field? For the industry?
- What are the key personal characteristics required for the field? For the industry?
- What are the most typical values of people working in the field? For the industry?
- How do people advance in the field? In the industry?
- What does the compensation structure look like in the field? In the industry?
- What are the benefits and the potential concerns of working in the field? In the industry?
- What are the major publications for the field? For the industry?
- What are the leading professional associations for the field? For the industry?
- What are recent developments in the field in terms of both opportunities and threats? In the industry?