



Career Goal Exploration Project: Interview Protocol

When you contact your potential interviewee, identify yourself as a Southwest Colorado Community College student (not “SCCC” since not everyone knows that abbreviation) doing a project for a class. Briefly explain our project and that you hope that you might interview the person or someone in the office/field/at the site.

You may also email your interview questions, fax them, or conduct an interview via the telephone if one of these formats works better for the person. In this case, be sure to get the fax number or email address and the contact person so that you can send a fax effectively and have an appropriate subject line tag in an email.

Explain that you also need to visit a worksite and ask if you may come to the site and spend a few minutes to a half an hour there but that you will make yourself inconspicuous. The best scenario is to interview the person and take a tour with him or her to learn about the work site.

FOR THE INTERVIEW:

- Have an extra typed copy of the questions to hand the person.
- Take your Work Site Observation form, a notebook, and several writing implements in case a pen runs out of ink or a pencil tip breaks.
- Dress appropriately and not as casually as you do for school, if you are a casual dresser. Like it or not, people evaluate us based on our appearance, and even though you are not applying for a job, the more seriously you present yourself, the better an impression you will make.
- Be five to ten minutes early to the interview because everyone to whom you are speaking is a professional whose time is worth money. You never know—you might interview someone who can become a mentor or a future boss. On the other hand, if you are late or unprepared, you may have lost yourself a job or an opportunity.
- Thank the person for meeting with you or answering your questions in an email/fax/telephone.
- Most of your questions follow a who, what, where, when, why, and how mode, so they should help the interviewee give extended answers. If the person says something that intrigues you or that confuses you, don't hesitate to ask a follow-up question. Most people who enjoy their work are glad to share about it, and your follow-up question may help them to remember that you want to learn more from them.
- Remember to thank the person for his or her time at the end of the interview/tour. Write down the person's address information if you don't have it already so that you can write him or her a brief thank-you note following the interview.