

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW TIPS

For many students who go through the mentor program, their mentors are also potential employers. Whether this is the case or not, it is important to make a good impression. Here are some tips that will help you to make the most of your interview.

- **Research the organization and occupation:** The questions presented to the mentor should be well informed. A lot of information about organizations and occupations is readily available at the Career Resource Centre, in the Drake Centre Library, or in the Centennial Library. The questions asked should indicate that the student has done some research in this area already.
- **What to wear:** Think about how those in the workplace would dress and dress that way (or a little better). In other words, dress to impress.
- **Your questions:** Prepare your questions ahead of time, arrange them in the order that you hope to ask them, and bring them with you to the interview.
- **Getting to the interview:** Plan to arrive at the interview ten minutes early. If you are at all uncertain about the location, call ahead of time to get travel directions and bring the phone number along with you in case something unexpected happens. If possible, try to scout out the location ahead of time.
- **What to bring:** Aside from the travel directions, mentor's phone number, and your list of questions, you should also bring a pen, paper, clipboard, notes compiled from your research, and the mentor evaluation.
- **Introducing yourself:** It never hurts to shake the mentor's hand when you introduce yourself. Smile, be your friendly self, maintain good eye contact and posture, and **don't be nervous!** Remember that the mentors have volunteered to participate in this program- they want to talk to you. In addition, don't forget to thank the mentor for meeting with you before and after the interview.
- **During the interview:** Stay focused on the mentor's job and career field. You can share something about yourself, but don't talk about yourself too much. Try not to take up time asking questions that can be more easily answered by another source. Keep your remarks positive. **Never ask for a job.** That is not the purpose of an informational interview. However, you may want to ask if you can stay in contact or possibly even job-shadow. You should also be sensitive to the mentor's time constraints- they have consented to spending an hour with you, so try to keep the interview down to an hour or less.
- **Thank you note:** Immediately after the interview, send a thank you note to the mentor and anyone else who helped you out. Be sure to let them know what was most helpful to you.