Informational Interviewing
(adapted from quintcareers.com)

Purpose: Informational interviews with a professional in your field of interest will help you gain better understanding and insight into a particular field or company. You may bring your resume, but do not assume that the professional will want a copy of it. Also, NEVER ask for a job or assume that he/she will help you to find one.

Required guidelines for informational interviewing:
1. Be sure to research the field and company the professional works for so that you can tailor your questions.
2. Dress and act professionally. Arrive 10-15 minutes early to your interview. Stick to the agreed upon amount of time you’ve allotted for the interview (you do not want to overstay your welcome).
3. Ask to stay in touch with the professional in case you have more questions. Do not assume that he/she will be able to hire you or help you find a job.
4. Get the person’s work address and send a hand-written thank you card directly after you finish the interview.

Informational interviewing emailing script example:
“Good afternoon, Ms. Smith. I am a senior English major at University of La Verne and thinking about exploring a career in book publishing. I see that you work for Tate Publishing Company, which I’ve heard has a great reputation among new professionals. I am very interested in hearing about how you got into publishing and any advice you might have for me as I finish my final year at La Verne. Would you have about 30 minutes to sit down with me so I can ask you a few questions?”

Sample Interview Questions (choose up to ten and tailor to your needs)
1. “How did you become interested in this field?”
2. “What is the best part of your job? What is the most challenging?”
3. “What do you think is the best educational preparation for a career in this field?”
4. “Of all the individuals you have met in this field, what personal attributes do you think are essential to success?”
5. “What professional journals and organizations should I know about in this field?”
6. “What do you wish you had known before you got into this field?”
7. “What did it take for you to get into this position?”
8. “What skills are required of a CEO on a day to day basis?”
9. “What is a typical work day like for you?”
10. “How many hours a week do you work? How often do you work overtime?”
11. “What more do you think I need to know to make an informed decision on graduate school or a career in this field?”
12. “How long do people stay in this field? Do you know why they leave?”
13. “Who are the most important people in this field and what are the current changes and developments?”
14. “What type of work/volunteer/internship experience do you think I need to get?”
15. “What do entry level/mid-level/senior level positions require in terms of education/experience?”
16. “What are other job titles comparable to this position?”
17. “What do you believe the current hiring trends are in your field? Do you believe there will be a need for entry/mid-level/senior level positions if I decide to enter this field?”
18. “What industry experience do most of the members of the board of directors have in common?”
19. “Regarding promotions, how quickly have most managers gotten to the top of this field?”
20. “Can you suggest anyone else whom it would be helpful to talk to? May I use your name when contacting him/her?”