



Sample questions for your mentor:

EDUCATION AND PREPARATION

How much formal education is needed in your field? What sort of special training or advanced degree is required?

What are the important characteristics (personal traits/qualities) for someone entering this field?

What kinds of experience do employers want?

What kinds of extracurricular activities and/or volunteer experiences would be beneficial?

Are there minors/electives/special knowledge and skills that would be helpful in this field?

What are the most important skills someone should have to find success in this occupation?

What types of part-time, full-time or summer jobs should I be doing right now that may prepare me for this career path?

What personal attributes/qualities do you think are important for career success?

What specific skills or personal qualities are important?

WORKING CONDITIONS

What is your job title?

Would you please describe your organization (its goal, size, structure, etc.).

What type of training did you receive when you started your first job?

What is the typical career path in this field? What are the entry-level positions?

How many hours per week are you expected to work? Do you put in additional hours?

Information obtained from: <http://www.sjcnj.edu/Alumni/Mentee-Questions/271/>

What other things are expected of you outside of working hours?

What is a typical day on the job like for you?

What are the most satisfying and the most frustrating parts of your work?

In what ways can this job be stressful?

How much variety does this job involve? What is the pace of work?

What times of year are busiest/slowest?

In what ways is travel a factor in this job?

What are the daily pressures that you contend with?

What is the starting salary for an entry-level position?

INDUSTRY AND ADVANCEMENT

How has the field changed since you first started your career?

What are the trends/challenges that you see in the future of this field?

What is a major challenge you face today?

How is the job market for your field in this area of the country? Is it difficult to find an opening? Is there an area that's best for starting such a career?

How long should I expect to stay in an entry-level position?

What are the opportunities for advancement?

What would be the next step in a career path for a job like this?

NETWORKING

How did you find your first job after graduation? What avenues did you explore to find job openings in your field?

What role does networking play, if any, to help break into this field?

How important is it to know someone in the industry?

What professional associations or organizations are useful to belong to in this field?

What magazines, journals, websites are important to read in this field?

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ABOUT YOUR MENTOR

What is your background?

Describe your career path. How have you progressed to your present position?

Why did you get into this field? Did someone/something significant impact choosing this career?

Do you belong to any professional affiliations?

Do you read any field-specific journals or magazines?

What are the things you find personally rewarding in your career?

What are the things you find frustrating or disappointing?

If you were starting out again, would you plan your career the same way? What would you do differently?

If your job were suddenly eliminated what other kinds of work could you do?

ADVICE AND OTHER QUESTIONS

What was the most surprising part of your transition from university to work?

Do you have any additional information that might be helpful?

What advice do you have for someone planning to start a career in this field?

What do you see as the biggest challenges new graduates face when they enter your industry?

What are some other jobs in your field that are similar to your own?

Would you be willing to critique my résumé/cover letter? Can you offer any suggestions?

Do you have any suggestions on how I should prepare for a job interview?