Student Guidelines
Messiah College Career Network

Overview
The Career Network has been established to assist you with making connections with Messiah College alumni during your journey of career exploration. During this process your opportunity for learning may center on one of the following:

- Better understanding of specific career fields/industries
- Researching specific positions
- Increasing your knowledge of new opportunities or trends in your field
- Understanding the grad school process
- Integrating your liberal arts experience into your career

Expectations
The individuals you contact understand that you are not asking for a job or employment opportunities. Their specific role is to provide you with networking resources, feedback, and information gained from their own professional and personal experience.

The contact information that you receive will include the name of the alum, email address, position title, and name of the organization.

Arranging the Interview
- Research your area of interest before contacting the alum. This can be done in the Career Center or through on-line resources at www.messiah.edu/offices/career.
- Contact each alum through their email address.
- Ask if they would prefer corresponding through email or if you can call them.
- If you want them to review your resume and give you feedback, send it to them ahead of time.
- When you do talk, be sensitive to their time schedule and ask the most important questions first.
- Ask if the individual can recommend the names of 2-3 others in your area of interest. Ask their permission if you can use their name when talking with others.
- MOST IMPORTANT: Follow up with a personalized thank you note (either through their address or through email).

Example of Initial Email Contact
Dear ____,
I am currently a Messiah College student majoring in______. Your name was referred to me through the Messiah College Career Network and I thought you would be an excellent resource. I am looking for information/advice/feedback you may have regarding pursuing a position/career such as yours.
Would you be available for an informational interview for 20-30 minutes? If it would be helpful, I can send you another email with some of my questions ahead of time for you to think about. Please let me know your availability and preference for communicating. I’ve also attached my resume so you can learn more about my background.
I appreciate your time.
Information Interview Questions
(Identify which questions you think would be the most relevant for you to ask during an information interview. Be sensitive to time commitments and watch the clock.)

**Background Information**
- What was your major in college?
- What was your career/vocational journey like once you graduated from Messiah?
- How did you prepare for entry into your profession?
- How did you locate and secure your current job?
- What specific degrees or experience is necessary for this kind of work?
- What skills are most important to be competent in this field?
- If you were to redesign your college experience what would you do differently?
- Are there any specific courses a student might take that would be particularly beneficial in this field? Volunteer Work? Internships? Other?

**Current Role Information**
- What is the typical day like for you? Tasks throughout the day?
- Do you have opportunities for a varied schedule, such as telecommuting; flex time, or job sharing?
- What are the most interesting or challenging aspects of your job?
- What are some of the difficulties and frustrations of your work?
- What are the most significant changes facing your field/organization?
- What is the job outlook in this field?
- What are the salary ranges for various levels in this field?

**Your Interest in the Field**
- How should I best prepare myself for a job in this field?
- What are some related occupations that I might investigate?
- What professional organizations would you recommend? Publications to read?
- What specific advice would you give a person entering the field?
- Can you provide me the names of two or three other people in this field who might talk with me and provide additional information? May I use your name?

Follow Up:
Out of courtesy to those you interview, always follow up with a thank you letter. This is a time to express your appreciation for the contact’s time and the information he/she shared with you. If some of the information caught your attention, you can mention the value of the specific information that was shared with you. These small acts of courtesy (writing a thank you letter) can reinforce a positive impression.