HOW TO: Conduct an Informational Interview

First:
Identify the people who can be helpful in your job search. These individuals are active and knowledgeable in your chosen field. Approach family members, friends, mentors, professors, student clubs and professional associations. Once you have made initial contacts, ask for future referrals and suggestions.

Insider Tip:
- Utilize the Fordham Alumni Directory (in our office!)
- Conduct an online search to identify Fordham alumni who are working in your field of interest
  - Fordham Circle (my.fordham.edu)
  - LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com)
  - Facebook (http://www.facebook.com/FordhamAlumni)
- Ask former supervisors, professors, family and friends for suggestions of contacts!

Then:
RESEARCH
Research the field, organization and professionals you meet. The Internet is a valuable resource.

PREPARE
List the questions you want to ask with the following themes in mind:

  - How to jumpstart your career: *What type of education do I need? How can I gain experience?*
  - The nature of the work: *What are the challenges and rewards of your occupation?*
  - Advancement: *What are the current trends or developments in this field?*

PRACTICE
Seek information whenever you get the chance--people often like to talk about themselves and their work!

EXPRESS
Demonstrate your interest, enthusiasm and passion for the field. Always listen attentively.

FOLLOW UP
Continue to build your network! Ask your contacts for new referrals that might offer different perspectives. Also, never forget to express your appreciation of your contact’s time by writing a “thank you” note.