

Informational Interview Assignment HIS 390

The Preparation

- Choose an interviewee who works in a position in the museums field that interests you.
- Read about your interviewee's institution online.
- Contact your interviewee with an email introducing yourself, describing the assignment, and asking if you could interview them in person or over the phone.

The Interview

You are free to ask your interviewee whatever questions truly interest you. I encourage you, though, to ask a mix of "big picture" questions—

- "What are the main issues that face the field today?"
- "Are you hopeful or pessimistic about the future?"
- "How well did your training prepare you for the work?"
- "What is the path that took you here and where could it take you next?"—

and more detailed questions about everyday life

- "Do you mostly end up working alone or with others?"
- "Do you work a lot of overtime hours?"
- "Can one pay one's rent while working in this field?"

Don't be shy! Generally you'll find that people welcome the chance to reflect on their careers and share their experiences with others.

Reflection

Write 2-3 pages reflecting on what you learned. Do *not* attempt to give a blow-by-blow account of your entire interview. Instead, focus on the big-picture lessons you gained from the conversation that you will carry forward as you continue to explore the field. What surprised you the most? How did his/her reflections change the way you understand the field and, perhaps, shape how you see yourself fitting into it?