



4 Tips on Informational Interviewing to Work in Peer Support

An informational interview in peer support is a brief meeting between a potential job seeker and an individual working in peer support. Please note that a “peer” is an individual who has lived experience of mental health issues.

The goal of an informational interview is to learn about a company to see if it is a good fit for you and your career goals. In addition, you want to make sure the company’s values align with your morals and values.

1. **Choose the company**-Have at least three companies that you would like to conduct an informational interview with about a peer support specialist (PSS) position.
2. **Prepare Questions**-Decide ahead of time which questions you will ask during the interview. You should have a minimum of five questions and no more than ten. You want a mix of questions that teach you about the company and are important to you as a PSS.

Some Examples:

- What does a typical workday look like for a PSS in your company?
- Are there any training or license required for the PSS position?
- What part of the PSS position is the most satisfying/challenging?

3. **Make Contact**-Decide if you will hold the interview over the phone or in person. It is good idea to practice the interview beforehand. Have your questions in front of you during the interview.

Note: When contacting an organization you do not have a direct contact for be sure to ask for the individual in charge of hiring peer support for the company.

4. **Follow up**-Be sure to email a thank you note within 48 hours after the informational interview. This means at the end of the interview you should ask for the individual’s contact information, make sure to include full name, job title, direct phone number and email address. The thank you note should include something you learned about the company.

Example: Thank you Mr. Adam Thomas for your time! I really appreciate learning how your company develops peer support by offering outside training hours and opportunities.

Find more information on this topic at www.peerlinktac.org. This document is made possible by grant funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Grant # SM062558. The views, opinions, and content expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).