

# H-YOU

## CAREER CONNECTOR

A very important aspect of exploring your ambitions and learning how to navigate the labor market and land a job is talking to people who already have a bit more experience. In this exercise, you will connect with someone based on their current or previous jobs and start a conversation to find out what role specific skills play in their job and what their career journey has looked like so far.

**Duration:** Preparation: 1 hour, execution: 1 hour, reflection: 20 minutes

**Goal:** Learn how professionals use the skills from your profile in their job and broaden your network

**Who:** Individual

### Steps

1. List two to four job types you would like to see yourself in, in five years. You can also find interesting job advertisements for inspiration. Still trying to figure out the job, but are you interested in a specific organization/company? Browsing a company's website or checking their LinkedIn pages to find out what jobs people have there could also work.
2. Imagine your network of people: who do you know, and who might these people know? Find two to three people with one of these jobs (possibly in a specific company). If this is a difficult step, try the following:
  - Use social media to search (such as LinkedIn, Reddit and Twitter).
  - Find names on a company's website.
  - Check out the alumni networks of the educational institutes with which you are affiliated.
  - Ask people you know if they know of any relevant people in their network and request them to connect you.
3. You may find this an intimidating step, but do not stop! Send an invitation text to connect with the person asking them to have a conversation. Some tips:
  - Make sure to keep it short and concrete but polite.
  - Match the level of formality to the person's expectations. This can differ greatly between cultures (including countries and industries).
  - Make the person feel a bit special, and show you have something interesting to bring as well.
  - Proposing a time and location can help as responding to a concrete question is easier, but carefully consider politeness.
  - Try to adapt to the person's logistical needs; perhaps you can have a short online lunch meeting.
  - Have the text reviewed by someone if you are insecure.
  - Send a short reminder if you have not heard from the person, but also know sometimes you just have to move on.
4. Repeat step 3 for the other people on your list.

5. Make an appointment with each of those who responded. For each, prepare the conversation and some questions, such as:
  - What is your role within your company?
  - What does a day look like for you?
  - How do you use <skill A> in your job?
  - What other skills are required for your job?
  - When you applied for this job, what were your expectations? Were they met?
  - What are the less positive aspects of your job?
  - What have you been doing before this job?
  - How did you land your job?
  - What tip would you give yourself if you were still studying?

## Example

Hi ... , I am connecting to you because I am very interested in learning about your work. I am a music student in Berlin. I am still exploring my ambitions and fits for my career, and think your path may be inspiring to me. I found you because of your project/posts/work/department on <topic> at Company, which relates to my interests. Would you be willing to have a coffee with me in real life or virtually? I just would like to hear what you do in your job, what skills you use in it etc., to get some inspiration and learn from you.

## Reflection questions

- What is the most important thing you learned from the person(s)?
- If you feel positive about the person's job, what would you need to achieve to land a similar job? Try to work backwards to a concrete, realistic action you can take in the short term.

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