



Ask a Professional

Independent. Engaged. Connected.

Talking with professionals (people who work with seniors) is a great way for your FLL team to:

- Learn more about the Challenge topic
- Find current data
- Discover potential problems
- Learn what is being done about those problems
- Get feedback on your innovative solution



WHO DO YOU KNOW?

One of the best research tools for your project is your own team. Think about it. Who do you know? Chances are you know a professional who works with seniors. Chances are that professional can answer your questions about aging, changing technology, and connecting with your senior partner.

Think about the technology that affects your everyday life. Think about the people who work at jobs creating and maintaining that technology. Do you know a scientist, mathematician, or engineer? Think about people who work with seniors. Do you know someone who manages or provides senior services for a hospital, clinic, senior center, assisted living or long-term care facility? Do you know a physician, nurse, physical therapist, recreational therapist, nutritionist, dietician, or social worker? All of those jobs have workers who play a part in keeping seniors independent, engaged, and connected. Make a list.

HOW SHOULD YOU PREPARE?



Talk with your team and set a goal for your interview. Think about where you are in the Project process. Are you deciding on a problem to research? Have you chosen a problem? Have you proposed an innovative solution?

Think about what you need from the professional. Do you need information? About what? Do you need more research resources? Do you need advice about a troublesome detail? Do you need feedback on your team's innovative solution?

Before you contact a professional, be sure your goal is clear to your team. Write it down. Knowing what you want to learn will help you decide who to interview. Select a professional to interview—and remember, you can interview more than one professional as you work on your Project.



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HOW SHOULD YOU ASK?

Next, ask your coach to help you contact the professional your team selected for interview. You can make contact by telephone, email message, or letter. Explain a little about FLL. Briefly explain what you are researching this season. Finally, tell the professional about your goal for this interview and ask for an interview. Many professionals are busy, so asking for a short amount of time is a good idea. Ask the professional to talk with your team for about 30 minutes. Maybe he or she will offer to meet with you for longer, but start by asking for a short amount of time.



On the interview day, you can talk to the professional in-person; over the telephone; or over the internet using a text, video, or voice chat. Ask the professional how they would like to connect and where. A face-to-face meeting often gets the most information in the shortest amount of time. If you can visit a professional where he or she works, you can get a clearer picture of his or her day-to-day work life! Set a date and time for the interview. Make sure you choose a day when your coach, mentor, or another adult is available to attend, too.

Before the day of the interview, make a list of questions. Keep your Project and interview goals in mind. Keep your questions short and to-the-point. Think about how long it will take for all the questions and answers. You want to be respectful and end the interview on time.

Write down your questions and use the list when you are interviewing. Consider sending a list of questions to your professional before the interview. Let him or her prepare some answers. Decide ahead of time which team member(s) will ask each question.

It is easy to lose track of time when you're learning about something really interesting. Decide who will be responsible for politely telling the rest of the team when the interview time is coming to an end. Exhibit Gracious Professionalism® during your interview. Treat the professional like a member of your team. Thank them for their contribution!

WHAT SHOULD YOU ASK?

Your team should do some research before you interview any professional. Advance research will help everyone on your team decide what you want to ask. Advance research will help you learn more from the interview.

Some interview questions might include:

- How did you get interested in your career?
- What are some qualities and skills that make someone good at your job?
- What do you like most about your job?
- What do you like least?
- How does your work affect people?
- How does your work help seniors stay independent, engaged, or connected?
- What do you think is the biggest problem facing seniors today?
- We are learning about <the problem your team chose or is considering> this season. Are you investigating any solutions in your work?
- Where can we learn more about this topic?
- Do you know any other professionals we should speak to?



Do NOT ask your professional to solve the problem your team chose. Your team's solution must be the work of team members. The professional can help your team learn about the topic or provide feedback after your team has chosen a solution.

At the end of the interview, remember to ask the professional if your team may contact them again. You might think of more questions later. Find out if your professional would be willing to answer more questions by telephone or email. Maybe they will be willing to meet with your team again or give you a tour of their workplace. Do not be afraid to ask.



WHO CAN YOU ASK?

Seniors need a wide range of services to maintain health, wellness, and independent living. They need to remain fit and engaged in physical, mental, and social activities. Your team might consider contacting people who work in the following professions as you search for professionals to help you with your project. Many corporate, professional association, government, and university websites include contact information for professionals.

| Profession | What they do | Where they work |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Administrator | Support and promote quality of care for individuals receiving care and services, and concern for those delivering care | Hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities, clinics, government agencies, senior centers, adult daycare centers |
| Chemist | Verify food and drug quality and processes, research Hazards and safety solutions | Universities and research facilities, government agencies, food processing companies, drug manufacturers, medical equipment and device manufacturers, scientific instrument manufacturers |
| Dietician | Plan and manage food and nutrition programs that meet the needs of seniors, including special dietary requirements, educate and train in meal preparation, and collaborate with health care or social service professionals | Hospitals, clinics, assisted and long-term care facilities, senior centers, adult daycare centers, government agencies, food processing companies, private practice |
| Electrical engineer | Design and maintain test instruments, automated drug delivery systems and other medical equipment, sensor systems, computers, and other devices | Private companies, government agencies, scientific instrument manufacturers, computer manufacturers, medical device manufacturers, communication device manufacturers, universities and research facilities |
| Home health aide | Provide assistance with daily care, hygiene, nutrition and medication management; perform health care duties such as monitoring and recording the senior vitals and assisting with medical equipment or procedures. They also may accompany the senior on errands and perform household tasks | Senior's homes, independent and assisted living facilities, adult daycare centers, senior centers |
| Lawyer | Draft safety and care standard regulations, review government requirements, prosecute violators, advise individual seniors and the corporations and agencies that serve them | Government agencies, universities and research facilities, nonprofit organizations, assisted living and long-term care facilities, hospitals, scientific instrument manufacturers, computer manufacturers, private practice |
| Mathematician | Design and maintain computer, scientific instrument, factory-automation, materials tracking, and other software used to perform tests and analyze results. | Universities and research facilities, government agencies, care equipment and medical device manufacturers, scientific instrument manufacturers, computer hardware and software manufacturers |



| Profession | What they do | Where they work |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Mechanical engineer | Design and maintain test instruments, care equipment, medical devices, heating and cooling facilities | Private companies, government agencies, scientific instrument manufacturers, universities and research facilities |
| Nurse | Provide and coordinate patient care, educate patients and the public about various health conditions, and provide advice and emotional support to patients and their family members | Hospitals, physicians' offices, home healthcare services, clinics, long-term care, assisted living, and nursing care facilities |
| Pharmacist | Dispense prescription medications to patients and offer advice on their safe use | Pharmacies, including those in grocery and drug stores, hospitals, clinics, assisted and long-term care facilities |
| Physical therapist | Help individuals who have been injured or physically affected by illness to recover or improve function, evaluate a patient's condition, devise a customized plan to enhance strength, flexibility, range of motion, motor control, and reduce any pain, discomfort, and swelling the patient is experiencing | Orthopedic treatment center, hospital, and rehabilitation clinic settings |
| Physician | Detects, treats, and tracks illnesses and infirmities related to aging | Physician's offices, hospitals, clinics, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, long-term care facilities, universities and research facilities, government agencies |
| Physicist | Design and maintain test instruments | Universities and research facilities, government agencies, scientific instrument manufacturers |
| Programmer Software engineer | Design and maintain computer, scientific instrument, factory-automation, materials tracking, and other software used to monitor wellness, provide communications | Universities and research facilities, government agencies, private companies, factory automation manufacturers, scientific instrument manufacturers, medical device manufacturers, computer hardware and software manufacturers |
| Recreational therapist | Provide therapeutic treatment services to seniors with age-related loss of motion or abilities, illness, or disability | Health care and nursing facilities, rehabilitation centers, adult day care and senior centers |
| Robotics engineer | Design and maintain test instruments, automated medication delivery systems, artificial limbs, and other medical and assistive devices | Government agencies, scientific instrument manufacturers, medical device manufacturers, computer manufacturers, universities and research facilities |
| Social worker | Assist and advise seniors and their families in meeting the needs of seniors, coordinate services, make referrals, assist with locating services for seniors with serious illnesses, or arrange services to help seniors stay in their homes | Hospitals, nursing care facilities, senior apartment buildings and assisted living facilities, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and senior's homes |

