

Step 8 ~ Capstone Experience Professional Interview Guidelines

The purpose of conducting professional interview(s) within the CAL LCP is to give you the opportunity to connect with leader(s) in the profession you wish to enter.

While there are many common factors to successful leaders, it is essential that you see what it means to be both personally and professionally effective within your field.

The interview should be a fun, yet engaging process. It is a time for you to gather information that you feel will help you become successful in your future career. As such, there are no strict rules on how to complete this step in certification. However, a few guidelines are in order:

Prior to engaging a particular leader(s), you should clear this name with the director of the CAL. In most cases you will be free to make contact with any individual you like.¹

Prior to meeting with your leader(s), you should have an organized list of questions that are well thought out. These questions may include such topics as:

- What do you think it takes to be a competent professional/leader within this field?
- What things did you do to develop your skills and to develop yourself in this field? What personal skills, interpersonal skills, organizational skills, were essential to your success?
- What associations or networks are you associated with. How should I be involved?
- What professional resources do you use to stay current and stay ahead of the curve?
- What are the top five qualities of a leader in this field?
- What should I watch out for as I plan my future in this career area?
- Are there any tricks to the trade that you learned by experience that nobody told you about? Will you share them with me?
- As a potential leader in this field, what else should I be asking you?

These are just a sample of questions that can frame your 1-hour interview. Use them as a guideline but make sure that you take the time to reflect on those things you truly want to know about this person.

Make sure to plan an appropriate time, dress accordingly, and be courteous at all times, as they are giving their valuable time to you. After completing the interview, thank him/her for their time and make sure to write a personal thank you for their insights.

After the completion of your interview, you will be expected to write either a three page (Leadership Certification); five page (Leadership Certification with Distinction); or seven page (Leadership Certification with High Distinction) document to summarize your findings and learning experience. This document should then be kept within your portfolio for final review.

Remember, this process is about your learning and future development. Enjoy the process while learning all that you can. The leaders you have chosen are excited to help you and you are doing well by taking advantage of this experience.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the CAL for any assistance you may need to complete this process.

¹ If you need assistance in setting up this interview, please make contact with the CAL staff and we will do everything we can to help you.