

## Informational Interview Essay

For my informational interview, I chose Mr. John King of the Jindal School of Management (JSOM) at The University of Texas at Dallas. Mr. John King is JSOM's Director of Budget and Financial Affairs. Although his works focus mainly on finance, all of the things I interviewed him on strengthened my resolve to become an accountant and act professionally.

Mr. John King went to Newark Senior High in Newark, Delaware. He went for his undergraduate degree in finance at Drexel University in Pennsylvania. He immediately went for his Master's degree at The University of Rochester in New York after finishing his undergraduate degree. "What motivated me to get a college degree was the Vietnam War and expectations as a son. It was an opportunity for a better life for my family," said Mr. John King.

Mr. John King did not always know what he wanted to become after leaving high school. He changed his major multiple times while in college. It was during his co-op with PepsiCo that he saw how interesting and challenging the work of the people working in finance are, which contributed to him going for his Master's right after getting his Bachelor's (King).

After getting his Master degree in Finance, Mr. John King got a job as a financial analyst at Doubleday. He got the job without the help of networking or an internship, but said that they are extremely important to securing one (King). "I am an introvert, but the job forces me to become sociable," replied Mr. John King when asked about whether or not he considers himself to be sociable.

Mr. John King moved to Texas in 1995, that's when he started his ascension into his current job. His current job as the Director of Budget and Financial Affairs is to approve budgets and hiring. When asked about what he considers to be the most important factor in a job, Mr. John King replied "Personal integrity. The union card opens the door and then what you do for yourself and for others will say a lot about you."

During and after the interview, I noticed that Mr. John King and I were very similar in almost all aspects. I am not a sociable person and I was undecided on my major up until the end of the interview. My talk with Mr. John King reinforced my decision to choose accounting as my career. His remarks on why he is getting a college degree reminded me of why I am going to college. Family, it was always for my family. I thought of my parents and doing what's best for them. They are both about to retire, and because I am the remaining child living in the U.S with them, it is up to me to provide for them. After I entered junior college, I underwent some

career field changes and ultimately came to a decision of finance or accounting. I was leaning towards accounting because I had taken some courses on it, but the cousin whom I look up to, chose finance, so I was unsure. With my parents in the picture, it all became crystal clear. Job security and immediate employment was an important factor. I knew that the chance of getting hired right after college in the field of finance was lower than that of accounting. Also, with the slowly recovering economy, it was obvious that accounting would fulfill all my goals for the future.

Being able to communicate effectively and get along with colleagues is crucial to any job, and when I heard that Mr. John King was an introvert like me, I was ecstatic and bewildered. We are both introverts and grim looking on the outside, so how was he able to get along with so many people? It may have to do with the fact that many people need his approval in JSOM, but seeing how sociable he has become shows that there is still a chance for me. If I can become more entertaining as a person, then getting an internship and eventually a job would be much easier. The first step towards that road would be involving myself in an organization to change my demeanor.

It would be a lie if I were to say that I do not want a job similar to Mr. John King; however, I see his job as the final job—one that I need to build up years of experience to obtain and keep. I would like to be a mentor of many entry-level accountants when I am 50 years old. After all, I will soon experience the struggles of a workplace soon after I leave UTD with a Bachelor's degree in accounting. It would probably be nothing but a dream if I hadn't done the interview with Mr. John King. His response to my question of the most important factor in a job was invaluable. I thought his answer would be satisfaction or pay, but when he said personal integrity, I was surprisingly shocked. Up until now definition of a job has always been: do what you are demanded of, and do it quick and well. I have never given any thought to helping others on my own free will unless requested to do so. After hearing him, I felt ashamed for considering the most important factor in a job to be salary. Although people have different things that motivate them, mine was a selfish one and it made me realized that I would end up in a stagnant job unless I change my thinking.

My informational interview with Mr. John King proved more beneficial than I had imagined it to be. I learned that success is taken and not given, and accounting is the right career field for me. To get to a position similar to that of Mr. John King's, I need to change my attitude and find internships in the field of accounting. I also have to show initiatives in my job if I am to be recognized. Instead of fearing him like Professor Barden, who is naturally charismatic, I feel inspired by Mr. John King's achievements as an introvert.