

TO: Posy Henderson, Professor of Prof & Organizational Comm

FROM: Savannah Krause, Student of Prof & Organizational Comm

DATE: February 7, 2025

SUBJECT: Informational Interview with Tim Norlin, Vice President at Roehl Transport

Unfortunately, I have not had the pleasure of conducting an informational interview prior to this assignment. I do plan to initiate informational interviews in the future as they pertain to important connections that will aid in the success of my career. Prior to this class I was unaware of how insightful and inspiring these interviews can be, as well as initiating better connections with those who may seem untouchable due to status.

Informational Interview with Tim Norlin

The informational interview with Tim Norlin, Vice President at Roehl Transport, that I conducted helped me to gain insight about Roehl Transport, which I found to be quite helpful as a newer team member. Tim Norlin has been working at Roehl for eight years now, and he has developed a strong presence in leadership, not only in the eyes of the CEO but also in the eyes of his subordinates. Tim stated that prior to being employed at Roehl, he had been in this profession for many years in a similar role working for a different carrier. When I asked him why he chose to leave there, his answer was admirable, but not surprising. Tim explained that the carrier he had been working for was in the world of public trading; therefore, the business was more focused on making a profit than it was focused on the drivers and the team members that aided in their success. He went to Roehl because they are a private, family-owned business who prides themselves on their wall of values which include the following:

- Safety – *Our cornerstone value*
- Innovation – *Inspiring excellence and seeking better solutions*
- Delivering Success – *Going beyond customer and teammate expectations*
- Doing the Right Thing – *Acting with respect, integrity, and honesty*
- Driver-Driven – *Driving teammates lead the way*
- Unity in Diversity – *Valuing our differences makes us stronger*

Because I wanted to gain more knowledge about how he perceives his role, I asked him what part of what he does in his role do outsiders, or even current staff, do not notice or appreciate. He stated that his loyalty to Roehl may not be fully recognized, as he dedicates many hours of his life to growing the company by going above and beyond to recruit drivers. Not only does he

dedicate such time and energy to recruiting drivers, but Tim also honorably ensures that Roehl only hires drivers that live our values.

Successes and Challenges

Tim disclosed to me that his first professional success was at his first company management training in freight sales. He was deemed the top rookie sales representative, among 200 others, and was rewarded with a cash prize and a sports coat. While this feat may seem impersonal, the work to achieve it was quite the opposite. Tim was quite motivated to work with others for the expansion of the company to achieve better results and benefits for everyone, not just himself. I also inquired about the challenges he has faced while working at Roehl, and his answers were rather interesting. Tim described that he is consistently working toward making the job of a truck driver more appealing, as the company occasionally falls behind in recruitment. He also explained to me the challenge of the cultural change that he experienced when going into internal sales, as selling the benefits of being in an over-the-road position is quite difficult to convince others that it is worth it.

Surprises and Inspirations

I concluded the interview with two questions; one question inquired about the biggest surprise he has had working in this role and the other inquired about what inspires his dedication to his role and the company. Regarding the former, Tim was unsure if I meant working at Roehl in general or in the driver hiring department, so I clarified that I would prefer him to provide an answer for both. As for the surprise about working at Roehl, he had to become acclimated to the organization being a genuine family of team members, all who hold a widely diverse perspective for the industry. That surprise derived from the dynamic he was used to at the previous carrier he worked for. He explained that in terms of working in the driver hiring department, he was surprised about the initial atmosphere he was exposed to when his employment first began. Tim stated that it was a very stuffy environment, caused by the leadership. Seeing as how employee morale determines productivity, he sought to change the environment immediately, and I am happy to report that he was successful in that endeavor. Lastly, Tim stated that what inspires his dedication to his role and the company is the love he has for making a difference in so many lives, whether it be the drivers he hires, the companies who benefit from our services, and community members who support the entire process from start to end.

Overall, the conversation I had with Tim Norlin was not only eye-opening in terms of learning about the company and management I am employed by, but it also helped me to understand the mind of someone in a position such as his. I think it is easy to forget that established professionals all come from somewhere, have goals of their own, and experience successes and challenges in ways like we do. This interview, and many others like it, aids in humanizing those who are either wrongfully resented or improperly idolized.