

30-SECOND INTRODUCTION OPTIONS

Thank you so much for meeting with me. I graduated from Alabama in Environmental Engineering, and I've spent the last couple of years in a consulting-style leadership role with AOII, so I'm now trying to connect those two sides of my background, environmental work and client-facing project support. I'm especially interested in environmental consulting, sustainability, water/wastewater, permitting, and early-career roles where I can learn under strong project managers and technical teams.

OR

I'm still figuring out my exact lane, but I know I like work that combines problem-solving, people, communication, and environmental impact. I don't necessarily need the perfect first job. I'm looking for the right first step into the environmental field where I can learn, contribute, and build credibility.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK THEM

About Their Career Path

1. How did you get started in environmental consulting?
2. Was your first environmental job what you expected, or did your career direction change over time?
3. Looking back, what early experience helped you the most?
4. Are there parts of the environmental field you think young professionals overlook?
5. What skills make someone stand out early in their career?

About Environmental Consulting

6. What does a strong entry-level environmental candidate look like to you?
7. How much of early-career environmental work is field-based versus office-based?
8. What kinds of projects are growing right now in this region?
9. Are you seeing more demand in water/wastewater, compliance, natural resources, sustainability, PFAS, or permitting?
10. What certifications or trainings would be worth pursuing early?

About YOUR Fit

11. Based on what you know about my background, where do you think I might fit best in the environmental industry?
12. Do you think my engineering background could be useful even if the job title is Environmental Scientist or Environmental Specialist?
13. How should I explain my AOII consulting experience so environmental firms understand it as relevant?
14. Are there roles where communication, organization, and client interaction matter as much as technical skills?
15. Are there any red flags or gaps you think I should address before applying?

About Job Search Strategy

16. Are there companies in Nashville, Brentwood, Birmingham, Atlanta, or Charleston that you think I should watch?
17. Would you recommend starting at a large firm, small firm, public agency, utility, or industry?
18. Are there job titles I should search besides Environmental Engineer?
19. When I read job descriptions, what should I pay attention to so I know whether it's a good fit?
20. Is there anyone else you think I should talk to as I learn more about this field?

QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED AND HOW TO ANSWER

Tell me about yourself.

I graduated from Alabama with a degree in Environmental Engineering. My technical experience includes energy assessment support, utility bill analysis, stormwater and site design, water/wastewater coursework, and several environmental shadowing experiences with industrial facilities, utilities, environmental testing, and compliance professionals. After college, I worked as a national consultant for Alpha Omicron Pi, where I supported chapters, university partners, training, reporting, recruitment strategy, and a major chartering project at Clemson. I'm now looking to move into the environmental field and find a role where I can combine my technical foundation with my communication, organization, and project support strengths.

What kind of job are you looking for?

I'm looking for an early-career environmental role where I can learn from experienced professionals and support meaningful project work. I'm especially interested in environmental consulting, water/wastewater, sustainability, compliance, permitting, and natural resources. I'm open to some field work, but I think I'd be strongest in a role that also includes documentation, client communication, project coordination, and team collaboration.

Why environmental consulting?

I like that consulting is project-based and requires both technical thinking and communication. I've learned that I enjoy working with different people, solving problems, organizing information, and helping teams move forward. Environmental consulting feels like a good fit because it would let me continue building technical skills while also using the people-facing and project coordination skills I developed through AOII.

Are you comfortable with field work?

"Yes, I'm open to field work and site visits, especially as part of learning the industry. Through shadowing, I've spent time in industrial facilities, manufacturing settings, utilities, wastewater and drinking water operations, and environmental compliance environments. I know I still have a lot to learn, but I'm comfortable being in professional field settings, following safety procedures, asking questions, and documenting what I observe.

What are your technical strengths?

My strongest technical areas right now are water/wastewater coursework, stormwater and drainage planning from capstone, HEC-HMS modeling, Civil 3D exposure, utility bill analysis, baseline modeling, and Excel. I also have exposure to environmental compliance, wastewater treatment, drinking water treatment, air testing, PFAS equipment, and industrial facility operations through shadowing. I'm early-career, so I'm not trying to present myself as an expert, but I do have a solid foundation and I'm very willing to learn.

Why should an environmental firm consider you?

I think I bring a strong mix of technical foundation and professional maturity. I may be early-career technically, but I've already had experience working with stakeholders, writing reports, facilitating meetings, managing sensitive conversations, traveling, handling competing priorities, and representing an organization professionally. I think that would help me contribute quickly in a consulting environment where communication, follow-through, and professionalism matter.

TALKING POINTS YOU SHOULD WORK IN NATURALLY

You do **not** need to say all of these. These are the points you can weave in depending on the conversation.

- I'm not looking for the perfect title. I'm looking for the right learning environment.
- I know I'm early-career, but I'm very coachable and I'm used to taking feedback.
- My AOII role was not environmental, but it gave me real consulting experience — travel, reporting, training, stakeholder meetings, problem-solving, and project execution.
- I'm especially interested in roles where I can build technical credibility while also using my communication strengths.
- I've learned that I enjoy being the person who organizes information, asks good questions, and helps move a project forward.
- I'm open to starting in a support role if it gives me exposure to strong environmental project work.
- I'd love advice on how to position myself honestly but strongly.

TOPICS YOU SHOULD AVOID OR BE CAREFUL WITH

- Avoid saying: I don't want to do field work.
Better: I'm open to field work and site visits, especially as part of learning. Long-term, I think I may be strongest in roles that also include documentation, communication, and project coordination.
- I don't know what I want to do.
Better: I'm still narrowing my lane, but I know I'm interested in environmental consulting, sustainability, water/wastewater, compliance, permitting, and project support.
- I don't have much experience.
Better: I'm early-career, but I've been intentional about building exposure through

coursework, capstone, energy assessment work, shadowing, and professional consulting experience.

SMART CLOSING QUESTIONS

At the end of lunch, you should ask one or two of these:

- Based on our conversation, what type of role do you think I should pursue first?
- Are there specific firms or people you think I should reach out to?
- Would you be comfortable if I sent you my resume for feedback?
- Is there anyone you think would be helpful for me to meet?
- If you hear of a role that could fit someone with my background, would you be comfortable keeping me in mind?

FOLLOW-UP TEXT OR EMAIL AFTER LUNCH

Thank you again for taking the time to meet with me today. I really appreciated the chance to learn more about your path and the environmental field.

Our conversation helped me think more clearly about how to position my Environmental Engineering background, consulting experience, and interest in environmental project work. I especially appreciated your advice about early-career roles, technical skills to keep building, and how to approach the job search thoughtfully.

I would be grateful for any additional advice, contacts, or opportunities you think may be a good fit as I continue exploring environmental consulting, sustainability, water/wastewater, permitting, and compliance-related roles.

Thank you again for your time and guidance.