

Career Services: LinkedIn Outreach & Email

Intro:

Networking is a *critical* component of your job search. Sending outreach messages directly to people's inbox is a good way to ensure they'll see it. There are various ways to find an email address. Ask your CSM to show you how to find emails via Github. You can also try [MailScoop](#) or [Hunter.io](#). LinkedIn users often share their contact info in their profiles.

When you make a connection request, you have the option of writing an intro note (which is limited to 300 characters). Take advantage of this option to add a personal touch to your networking efforts. Look for people in roles, companies, and industries you'd like to learn about, and seek to set up informational interviews so you can learn directly from professionals on the ground. Looking for more messages? Check out [these from The Muse!](#)

When Sending a Message:

Introduce yourself and identify a connection or interest you have in their background: i.e. alumni of the same school, similar interests, company of interest, interest in a past or current role, article/blog they've written, etc.) Let them know you'd love to pick their brain about something specific. Be direct and have a clear ask.

Hi Austin,

My name is [...] and I found your info while looking for people who made the jump into tech from a non-traditional background. Your experience transitioning from healthcare to Microsoft really stood out to me.

I'm sure that transition wasn't easy! I'd love to hear more about your journey, some of the obstacles you faced and how you overcame them.

I know you're super busy so no in-depth response is necessary. Do you have 15 minutes for a call? I'd be truly grateful. If not, no worries! Have a fantastic week either way!

Best,

Your Name

Sample LinkedIn Messages to secure 1st connection:

The above message works well if you have an email address. *However on LinkedIn, until you're a 1st connection, you will only be able to send a 300 character message.*

Below are examples of short messages to initiate and secure the 1st connection. Once you've connected you'll be able to communicate without character limits.

"Hi __, I'm a huge music nerd, so I'm excited to see that you're a developer at ABC music company! I'm an aspiring software developer currently exploring this industry to see if it's the right path for me. It would be awesome to join your network and learn from your experience and expertise."

"Hi __, I found your profile while researching the finTech space. I'm currently a student learning software development and trying to understand the industry more to see where my interests/skills align best. I'd love to connect with you and learn from your extensive experience!"

"Hi __, I came across your profile on Github and I'm really impressed by your work. I think you have a really interesting career background and wanted to connect on LinkedIn and be a part of your network."

"Hi __, I'm a software developer and will relocate to LA in a few months. I'm growing my professional network and working to build community in the area. After reading about your interesting career journey I'd love to connect and be a part of your network."

Cast a wide net and send many connection requests. Remember that not everyone will reply, but the ones that do are showing you they like to help! When someone accepts your connection request, send a follow up message asking for an informational interview.

Responding to a Connection:

It's helpful to be very specific in your request, and to make your new connection do as little work as possible. Here are some tips:

- Ask how they'd prefer to communicate: LinkedIn messaging? Email? A short (15 or 20 min) phone or video call?
- If they choose a call, give them specific windows of availability (i.e. "between 3 and 5 pm on Tues or Wed") so they can easily check their calendar.
- Express your appreciation! Let them know how much they're helping you.
- Whether communicating electronically or on a call, *have specific questions ready*. Don't expect them to steer the conversation. What do you really want to learn from someone working in the industry?

Key point: Your goal is to learn and build a connection with another human being. *It is not to ask for a job or referral for a role you applied for.* If you ask for too much before they get the chance to know you, you risk burning the connection. The good news is that allowing someone to talk about their work and professional interests is an effective way to build a connection!

Ideally, once the connection has developed, the topic of a referral will come up organically. In the meantime you've learned valuable info from an industry insider.

Informational Interview Talking Points:

Here are some ideas for questions you can ask in informational interviews:

- You hear a lot about XYZ Company in the news, but I'd love to hear about your experience working there. What's your favorite part? What are the biggest challenges?
- What is one totally unexpected lesson you've learned from working at [Current Company]?
- What is the learning environment like at XYZ Company? What were the ways you learned the most when you started?

- What are the most technically challenging aspects of your work? Where do you get stuck, and how do you get unstuck?
- What tech do you love to work with the most? What problems have you solved with it?
- I'd love to hear about your work with X tech or concept (i.e. React, Postman, unit testing, front end design). Can you share a bit about what you've been working on lately?
- What advice would you give to someone who is breaking into the industry?
- What are your favorite tools/resources to help with your work? Were there any tools or resources you found helpful during your job search?
- What skills, techs or concepts do you think new developers should pick up to make them more competitive?
- What's the biggest challenge your team is facing right now?

Always leave your meetings with a "Call to action" in other words, Don't leave conversations without highlighting next steps. Here's some examples of next steps:

- **The "Million Dollar" Question:** "What is the biggest challenge your team is facing right now?"
 - Perhaps, build a project that addresses this challenge. Follow up in the future with your solution!
- Now that you know me and my interests a little more; is there someone else you might recommend that I reach out to or speak with in your network?
- I'm sure you have a really interesting network. If I spot someone in your network that is doing something that I'm interested in; is it okay if I ask you to introduce me?
- I'd like to keep an eye on jobs at your company. I don't see opportunities that fit what I'm looking for now but in the future if a vacancy comes up could I reach back out to you for a referral?
- Would you mind giving me feedback on my resume and or projects?

FOLLOW UP

First, send a thank you email. Second, create a notification to send a check-in follow up in the future. In this follow up (it could be a few weeks, 2-3 months). Don't expect this person to think about you ALL THE TIME. However, At this point you have established a professional relationship and a follow up message may stir up a referral or even additional support . Send a check-in message to give them an update on your job search status perhaps refer to a point from your previous conversation (did you build a software solution that addressed the "Million Dollar" question—the company's "biggest challenge?")