

Worksheet for Developing a Networking Outreach Email

Before starting to write an email to a professional contact, think about:

- your goal - what you would like to learn from talking to them
- how you can make a connection/explain to the reader of your email why you are writing to them
- how you came to be interested in this person's career field and/or organization

Answering the following questions will help you think of the content before focusing on the particular words and sentences. All of this information may not be relevant enough to include in your email; use your judgment. The questions are grouped to give you a general sense of the order:

Beginning of the email:

How will you introduce yourself in a way that interests the reader? What is the connection?

What context could you give them to explain what prompted you to reach out?

Middle

Why are you interested in this field? What experiences have you had that have led to an interest in this field/organization?

Why are you writing to this particular person? How did you get his/her name (if relevant)? What interests you about their field?

End

What do you want to happen as an immediate result of writing to this person? (an informational meeting in their office, over the phone/Skype, etc.). You should suggest a range of dates and times that you are available.

Sample Sentences for Developing a Networking Outreach Email

Do not copy these sentences verbatim but rather adapt them to fit your own interest, experiences, and circumstances.

Beginning of the email:

How will you introduce yourself in a way that interests the reader?

I am a sophomore at Hamilton College, where I am planning to major in Comparative Literature.

As a junior at Hamilton College, I have become very involved in student assembly.

I am from the Bronx and am currently a sophomore at Hamilton College, a small liberal arts school in Upstate New York.

I am a junior at Hamilton with a strong interest in business.

What context could you give them to explain what prompted you to reach out?

I am currently exploring careers related to a (fill in the blank) major.

This fall, I took part in a career development program where I learned about the benefits of talking to professionals in career fields that interest me.

Middle

Why are you interested in this field? What experiences have you had that have led to an interest in this field/organization?

In my sociology class, we discussed the struggles of immigrants in U.S. cities and I got very interested in working with immigrants.

I have always liked working with people and my recent experience tutoring for Let's Get Ready SAT Preparation got me excited about teaching high school students.

I have been reading about different career options in business and recently talked to a Hamilton alumnus who works in sales and marketing. I really enjoyed hearing about his work and think that I would like working in an atmosphere similar to his company.

Last summer, I had the opportunity to intern at an art gallery. While I learned a lot and found this experience very rewarding, I am hoping to gain experience at an art museum such as [art museum name here] this summer.

I have become involved in theatre at Hamilton College and have participated in multiple productions, both on stage and behind the scenes. I would like to learn more about professional opportunities in theatre.

On campus, I am active in the entrepreneurs' club and hope to start a business of my own one day. Gaining experience at a successful startup, such as [insert company here] would help me gain knowledge and skills to move me towards this goal.

Why are you writing to this organization or particular person? How did you get their name (if relevant)? What interests you about this organization?

Though we see each other at family gatherings, we haven't yet talked about your career path. I would like to learn more about what you do and what advice you would give a college student who wants to pursue a career in [insert career field].

When we met on family weekend, you mentioned that you would be willing to talk more about the path you took to become a [insert profession here].

I got your name from Heather Wixson at the Career Center, who mentioned that your company does PR for environmental agencies, which is in line with my interest in environmental science.

I found your organization on idealist.org when I looked for companies that focus on women's issues. When I read your website, I was especially intrigued by the work you do with single mothers.

A friend of my family, [name here], suggested that I talk to you when I told her about my interest in helping children who are struggling.

End

What do you want to happen as an immediate result of writing to this person? (an informational meeting in their office, over the phone/Skype, etc.). You should suggest a range of dates and times that you are available.

I will be at home in Miami from March 18 - March 29 and hope to have the chance to meet with you to ask you some questions about your role at your organization. I have attached my resume for reference.

Would you be willing to talk by phone about the work you do at [company name] so that I could learn more about [industry name]? I am generally available at lunch time and all day on Friday. Please let me know what time would work best for you.

Please let me know if you might be willing to have me visit your office to get some advice about my career path and internship search. I am available most afternoons after 2:00 during the month of January.

I would appreciate an opportunity talk with you or a colleague of yours who focuses in [insert specific area within company]. Please let me know if this is possible, and if so, with whom I should follow up.