

Formula for a Successful Networking Email

1. Establish a connection.

- Start with an introduction: What is your connection to this person? Is this person a fellow Newhouse or Syracuse alumnus? Are you being referred by a mutual contact? (“Cold networking” —a.k.a. when you don’t have a built-in connection: Skip to next bullet!)
- How did you get this person’s name? Did you use the Newhouse Network or LinkedIn? (“Cold networking”: be sure to make yourself stand out. This is where your research pays off!)

“Professor Peter Moller said you give good advice and suggested I contact you. I am interested in film development and am looking for some professional input as I begin the job hunting process.”

“Your LinkedIn profile shows that you’re currently an account manager at Edelman, which caught my eye because I am really interested in the work the agency is doing with the ___ and ___ accounts.”

2. Be straightforward about what you want.

- State your purpose. Remember you are to ONLY ask for advice and “few minutes” of the person’s time.
- Be sure to include an example or two of questions that you have. This will keep your letter short but still give the contact a “jumping off point.”
- You can give one or two lines about who you are and why you’re interested but be very careful that you are NOT PITCHING the contact. The quickest way to lose a potentially stellar contact is to seem presumptuous!

“When I interned at Tribeca films, I screened of scripts and really enjoyed not only the actual reading, but the politics involved in the film development. I am curious if you have any thoughts on the career trajectory needed to land in this part of the business.”

“I would love to hear about how you got started in the business, if you are willing to share.”

“I have learned that I really enjoy the work that goes into media planning and I am interested to learn what it’s like to work at XYZ Company. For example, do you think your entry-level employees are able to readily contribute?”

3. State the “next steps.”

- Establish who will make next contact.
- Always express gratitude and acknowledge that your contact likely has a busy schedule.

“Please let me know if this is something you would be willing to do.”

“I will follow up with you later this week.”

“I know you have a busy schedule, but I would greatly appreciate a few minutes of your time to get your thoughts.”

