

Message Templates and Guides

This resource guide provides templates and suggestions for specific types of messages you might send in the course of networking. As much as you can, try to personalize each of the messages you send based on what you know about the person you're reaching out to. And always feel free to work with the Career Center to develop personalized, targeted emails. You can reach us by emailing careers@muhlenberg.edu for help with writing or reviewing these messages.

LinkedIn Request

If you're requesting to connect with someone on the desktop version of LinkedIn, you should always include a short message along with your request. You only have 300 characters, so this doesn't need to say a lot. And you shouldn't necessarily expect a response to this message, so no need to put in a question at this point, just introduce yourself and why you're hoping to connect. To add this message, click "Add a note" on the box that pops up after you click "Connect."

Here's an example of what you should put in that message:

Hi Mallory - I'm a fellow Muhlenberg alum and I'm interested in learning more about your job with Boston's Children Hospital. It would be great to connect - thank you!

Email Introduction or LinkedIn Message

You've found someone, you have their email address, and you're ready to send them a message to ask for their advice in an informational interview. Or maybe you've connected with them on LinkedIn and you're using LinkedIn's message feature. Here are the five things that message should include:

- Brief introduction - Your name, your background, current employment info, etc.
- How you're connected - You're both Muhlenberg alumni, you both used to work at the same company, you share common interests (even a tenuous connection can help!)
- Tell them what you want to talk about - Don't list every question you have, but do give them a sense of the direction you want to take the conversation.
- Give them times you can talk - Make it easy for them to reply with a yes by sharing lots of times you're available to give them a call or meet for coffee, etc.
- Finish with a thank you! And send a thank you after you actually talk to the person.

Here is an example message:

Hi Tom - My name is Christine Brommer and I'm a fellow Muhlenberg graduate looking to change careers from journalism into marketing. I found your profile on LinkedIn and see that you've got extensive experience marketing for a few different companies. I'd really like to learn more about your career in marketing as I try to pivot from journalism into marketing roles. If you're open to talking about your experience I'm free any day after 2pm and on Mondays and Wednesdays before 9:30am. I'd be happy to give you a call. Thank you so much!

Follow-Up

Following up can be one of the hardest parts of networking. When do you follow-up? What do you say? How do you balance persistence without being overly aggressive? This guide breaks down following up into three categories

Follow-up when you haven't received a response

If you've sent an introductory email, but haven't heard back within a reasonable time, then you should definitely follow-up with that person. Consider giving people at least a week to respond, and extra time if there's a holiday in-between. You should reply to your original email, so you don't need to re-type any of that message, and this follow up could say something like:

Hi Emily - I just wanted to follow-up on my earlier email, included below. I look forward to hearing from you when you've had a chance to review. Thank you!

Follow-up after a conversation to remain connected

If you've had a conversation with someone, and you want to remain connected with them, consider sending them a follow-up message after a few weeks, or even a month or two. In that follow-up message, you can consider doing a few things:

- Re-iterate how helpful the conversation was
- Share something of value with them - through talking did you realize you can help them solve a problem? Did you find a resource they could use, too?
- Follow-up on an action item they gave you, like sending them your resume after you made updates or subscribing to an industry publication they recommend
- Share with them how you utilized their advice in some way - big or small
- Send a news article that makes you think of that person or your conversation
- Ask them a follow-up question, or for a follow-up conversation if it would be helpful

Here is an example that hits on a few of these points:

Richard - Thanks again for taking the time to speak with me a few weeks ago. It was so helpful to learn more about your career in biotech. I attached my resume with the tweaks you suggested to my experience section. I think this version makes my accomplishments really stand out - thank you for helping me with that, specifically. I also shared your message about needing study participants with my undergrad advisor, I hope that proves helpful to you. I know you said you might have more information about possible open positions soon - when would be a good time for me to follow-up with you about that? Thanks again for all of your help so far.

Follow-up if it's been a long time

Perhaps you can think of someone you talked to a long time ago, maybe an old boss, former teacher, or contact from somewhere in your past. It might feel strange to reach out to someone you haven't talked to in forever, but it's likely that if you had a good relationship with this person in the past, they'll be glad to hear from you again. If you think that person could be helpful to you now, then it's worth a try to rekindle that relationship. Some key points you should include are:

- It's okay to acknowledge that some time has gone by, just remind the person who you are and how you know them.
- If you can remind them of a particular shared experience, or some way they helped you in the past, that might help strengthen their recollection.
- Update them on where you are now, and what advice you're seeking.

- Treat the rest of this message like an introductory email, asking for an informational interview.

Here is an example message of how you can re-start that old conversation:

Hi Amanda - I know it's been quite a long time since we last connected, I hope things are going well for you! In case you don't remember my name, I interned for you after my junior year of College in your ad sales department. Your advice on how to manage multiple clients has proven helpful to me time and again in my career. I'm hoping to reconnect to learn more about your new company. I'm considering a career move myself, and I've had your employer on my radar for a while now. If you're open to talking with me I'm free any day after 2pm and on Mondays and Wednesdays before 9:30am. I would be happy to give you a call. It would be so great to reconnect! Thank you - I hope I hear from you soon!