



UNC

HUSSMAN SCHOOL  
OF JOURNALISM AND MEDIA

# GUIDE TO NETWORKING

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***START*** / ***NEVER***  
***HERE*** / ***STOP***

# BE AUTHENTIC

## IT'S YOU WHO MAKES THE MESSAGE UNIQUE

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

This guide is intended to help you reach out to the people who inspire you. With that being said, it is to be used as just that— a guide. While templates are helpful, you should be authentic and make each outreach message your own. We advise you to avoid copying each template word -for-word. Rather, use them as a starting point when reaching out to others.

**Remember, it's you who makes the message unique.**

# LINKEDIN OUTREACH: THE INITIAL MESSAGE

## TO UNC ALUMNI...

“Hi [NAME],

I see that you are a fellow Tar Heel, and also serve as [CURRENT ROLE] at [COMPANY] in [CITY]. As a current journalism student at UNC, I think that’s incredibly inspiring! I would love to connect with you and chat about your career, at your convenience!”

“Hi [NAME],

I’m currently a student in the UNC Hussman School and am looking to go down the advertising agency route. I see that is what you’ve done, and I would love to ask you a few questions about your experience whenever you are available!”

“Hi [NAME],

I recently saw your webinar about client service, from [COMPANY]’s program. I was thrilled to hear from someone in the industry from NC, and even more thrilled to find out you are a fellow Tar Heel! I would love to chat with you sometime, at your convenience.”

## TO FOLLOW UP WITH GUEST SPEAKERS...

“Hi [NAME],

I loved hearing you talk about [COMPANY] today for UNC. I had no idea that [SPECIFIC FACT ABOUT COMPANY]. You made me excited about applying there in the future! I’d love to connect and chat more one on one.”

“Hi [NAME],

I enjoyed hearing you speak at the UNC Hussman School’s Virtual Atlanta Career Trek this morning. Thank you for providing such great insight about [COMPANY] and about your personal career journey. Looking forward to connecting!”

# LINKEDIN OUTREACH: THE INITIAL MESSAGE

## TO MUTUAL CONNECTIONS...

“Hi [NAME],

I am a UNC sophomore studying advertising and PR. I wanted to reach out because [MUTUAL CONNECTION], a mutual connection of ours, recently shared the [COMPANY] internship with me. I'd love to chat about [COMPANY] and learn more about your career in PR!”

## TO LEARN ABOUT COMPANY CULTURE...

“Hi [NAME],

I'm a UNC-CH student who just applied to the [COMPANY] summer internship. I would love to hear about your experience there as a [JOB TITLE] at [COMPANY]. Would you be willing to share your perspective via email or a phone call this week?”

“Hi [NAME],

I saw you joined [COMPANY] two years ago. How have you enjoyed the work environment since moving over? I'm beginning a job search myself, and [COMPANY] is one of the top companies on my list. Are you willing to share your experience via a phone call this week?”

“Hi [NAME],

I am a senior at UNC-Chapel Hill with a passion for digital storytelling. I see that you are a Visual Storyteller at [COMPANY], which is so inspiring! At your convenience, I would love the opportunity to ask you some questions about [COMPANY] and about your career in general.”

# EMAIL OUTREACH: THE ART OF THE COLD EMAIL

## MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION

“Dear [NAME],

I am an undergraduate journalism student at UNC-Chapel Hill, interested in entering the broadcast industry when I graduate in the Spring of 20XX. I came across your LinkedIn profile in the [LINKEDIN GROUP] group we are both members of and wanted to reach out to introduce myself. Looking over your current and past positions within the journalism industry, I thought you would be an excellent person to ask questions about [XYZ]. Having interned at [COMPANY] as a [TITLE], I am now wanting to take my career in a different direction, and work on the business end within media. I would very much like to set up a time to speak with you over the phone and hear your perspective. Please let me know if this is possible.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to connecting.”

“Dear [NAME],

My name is [NAME]. I'm a freelance writer covering science and psychology. I've written for several publications, including [X], [Y] and [Z publications]. I've been doing this work for about three years, and

I'm really passionate about making people think critically about the world.

My former boss, [X boss' name], who you used to work with at [COMPANY], mentioned you when I told her I was looking for a full-time position. She said your magazine is hiring a senior science reporter. I was pleasantly surprised to hear your name, as I've been reading your work for years! I especially enjoyed the cover story you wrote for [X name of publication] in 2016 about the psychology of consumer spending. I submitted an application for the position online, but even if things don't work out, I'd be so grateful for a 30 minute call to learn about your experience and what advice you have for young professionals in this field.

I'm free any time after 3 p.m. (ET) on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday this week.

Thank you for your time.”

# INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

## A CAPTIVATING CONVERSATION

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

How did your early career choices lead to where you are today?

What did you learn in this role that you couldn't have learned anywhere else?

Could you walk me through your workday yesterday?

What are common attributes of people who succeed at this company?

What is the most challenging part of your role?

What did you do/participate in at UNC that set you up for this role?

When you were interviewing with [COMPANY] why did you decide to accept the offer?

What is the company culture like?

What is your favorite part of your job/the company?

You received your Master's at [UNIVERSITY] which is awesome! What made you pursue postgrad and how has it given you a leg up in the industry?

Does your job require you to travel, or is most of your work done from your office in [CITY]?

What is your favorite thing about being in [CITY]?

Career-wise, what advice would you give your college self?

Do you have any book recommendations about this field of work?

Do you have any suggestions for professional resources/certifications I should look into, or even courses I should take at Carolina?

# GENERAL NETWORKING TIPS

## MAINTAINING PROFESSIONALISM

### HELPFUL PHRASES & CONVERSATION STARTERS

“I see we are both connected to [MUTUAL CONNECTION] ...”

“I’d love to hear your perspective on [TOPIC] ...”

“I see that you are a fellow Tar Heel...”

“I really enjoyed your article discussing [TOPIC]. Could you tell me more about how you became interested in [TOPIC]?”

“If you are open to it, I would love to chat with you via Zoom, FaceTime, or phone call! I understand your schedule may be busy, so I’m also happy to pass along some questions via email if that works best for you.”

“I know you’re busy and I want to be respectful of your time, so please let me know if we need to hop off!”

“Do you know who typically does the hiring for that type of role? I was thinking of applying for the position, but I didn’t want my application to get lost in the shuffle online.”

“Would you be willing to float my resume over to them? I’m very interested in learning more about the role.”

“Is there anyone else in your network who might be able to continue this conversation with me?”

“Thanks so much for your time, I’ll be sure to keep you updated regardless of where I end up!”

### REMEMBER...

Be specific and sincere when reaching out.

Be mindful of others’ schedules and thank them for their time.

When applicable, send out a calendar invite to remind your guest of your meeting time.