

*make winter break your*  
**SEASON FOR  
CONNECTION**

Learn how to use effective outreach and networking to improve your job or internship search success.

# Outreach Guide

Winter Break  
December 1 - January 3

DUKE ENGINEERING  
Master's Career Services  
& Professional Development



## Table of Contents

Welcome	2
What to Expect	3
How to Use this Guide	4
Begin with a Goal in Mind	5
The Two-Hour Job Search	7
Techniques and Expectations for Holiday Networking	8
Use the Duke Alumni Resources	9
Use LinkedIn to Connect	10
Connect with an Alum: Ask a Blue Devil	11
Recruiter Advice for Reaching Out	12
Get Advice & Feedback on Your Process	13
Start the 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of Season for Connection	14
Refresh Your Target List	15
Refine How You Make a Request	16
Make a Request – Examples	17
Informational Interviews: One of the Easiest Ways to Connect as a Student	18
The Art of Asking Good Questions	19
Following Up is the Most Critical Part of Your Outreach	
Concluding Your Season for Connection Experience	20

Welcome



*make winter break your*  
**SEASON FOR  
CONNECTION**

Congratulations! You've finished the Fall 2021 semester and for some of you, completed your degree. Kudos to you for choosing to invest part of your winter break in developing a skill set that has high impact on your job or internship search.

Welcome to Season for Connection! In this experience, we'll focus on learning how to use effective outreach and networking to improve your job or internship search. We've curated a group of topics to help you develop these skills and increase your confidence.

Our goal is that you will develop your skills and test them during winter break, both through the structured approach of the experience and on your own.

Let's get started.

The Engineering Master's Career Services Team

## What to Expect

### Learn (& Practice) Effective Outreach & Networking

**Part 1** - We'll focus on the Two-Hour Job Search method developed by Steve Dalton, Program Director & Senior Career Consultant at the Fuqua School of Business. He wrote a book about his intentional method which uses technology to make the search more effective and efficient. Use this method, and commit to it, for the first part of Season for Connection.

**Part 2** - After focusing on the Two-Hour Job Search method, we'll transition and highlight ways you can adapt your search, allowing you to create an approach that feels even more authentic for you.

### Pick Your Pace

Here are 3 ways to engage with the content.

1. Download this Outreach Guide and work at your own pace. Inside you'll find an introduction for each topic from the career services team along with links to online content. If you're an Engineering Master's student, chat directly with a career coach in MS Teams if you have questions.
2. Follow along as Career Coaches publish blog posts from December 1-January 3 on the [Engineering Master's site](#) within the Duke Career Hub. These posts will feature many of the segments included in this guide.
3. Create your own combination of 1 & 2. This structure is meant to be easy and flexible. Follow along when you want, and work at your own pace through the guide when it suits you.

### Grow Your Skills in Connecting with Others

Our goal in providing this experience is for your confidence in your ability to conduct outreach and network will increase and you will be able to:

- identify professionals aligned with your career interests
- write a concise outreach message, customized for the recipient
- introduce yourself in an informational interview
- develop engaging questions customized for informational interviews
- review results of outreach efforts and make adjustments to increase effectiveness in connecting with professionals

### Be Supported

The Engineering Master's Career Coaches are excited to support you whether you are asking a question in a 1:1 chat with a coach through MS Teams or connecting in a 1:1 appointment. You will be supported as you make this winter break your Season for Connection! \*If you're reading this resource and aren't an Engineering Master's student, reach out to Career Services for your degree/program for additional support.

## How to Use this Guide

If you're working through this Outreach Guide at your own pace, we have a few suggestions.

1. We are intentional with the order of topics included in the Outreach Guide. We recommend you work through them in order, but also acknowledge you may want the flexibility to pick a topic.
2. Contact a Career Coach ([Cameo](#), [Erin](#), or [Jenny](#)) if you get stuck or are looking for additional help with any of the topics. These coaches work specifically with Engineering Master's students. If you've found this resource and aren't an Engineering Master's student, please connect with Career Services for your degree/program to receive support in developing outreach and network building skills.
3. Set a goal for your Season for Connection experience, so don't skip over the next page.

## Begin with a Goal in Mind

Take a few moments to imagine January 3, 2022, the last day of Season for Connection. As you think about that day, consider the questions below and jot down a few notes.

- Why did you choose to join Season for Connection?
- What do you hope to accomplish by being part of this skill building experience?
- What are small points of progress you anticipate you will make and can celebrate along the way?
- What will success in Season for Connection look like to you?
- In what ways do you think you may view connection differently after this experience?

With the notes from above, brainstorm a goal as you work through Season for Connection.

Two considerations as you brainstorm your goal.

1. Be specific. Setting a goal that is vague will make it difficult as you try to determine the steps for achieving that goal. For example, a student could make the goal of “Connect with more people” more specific with “Conduct two informational interviews with professionals in data science roles within the healthcare field.”
2. Try Backwards Goal Setting. Reverse engineer your process by starting with the goal you have in mind, and then think about the small steps of progress to reach your goal. This could be 3 steps, or it could be 6. As you finish, you have a plan for how to approach your goal in a less intimidating way. Learn more about backward goal setting from [this](#) Positive Psychology article.

My Season for Connection Goal



*make winter break your*  
**SEASON FOR  
CONNECTION**



## The Two-Hour Job Search

Does submitting online applications feel ineffective and unsatisfying? Consistently, data show that the majority of Duke engineering master's students find their post-graduation jobs using alternate methods. In fact, connecting with other people often exceeds websites as the largest source of post-grad job offers, and this is most true in the US market.

How do you get started building a network when job or internship searching? Our colleague at Fuqua, Steve Dalton, has literally written the book on job search outreach with [The 2-Hour Job Search](#). His background includes a chemical engineering degree and MBA. His directions for an outreach-based job search will be especially effective for those who want clear directions and no fluff.

We recommend starting by following his recipe.

1. Learn the elements of a 2-Hour Job Search.
  - o Watch the October [Two Hour Job Search presentation](#) to Duke grad students. We were thrilled to co-host this annual event and make a new recording available to you.
  - o Get a copy of his book, the 2020 edition. It's short with clear directions and has all of the information you might need. [Duke Library](#)
  - o Join the [2HJS LinkedIn group](#) to ask questions and get clarification from Steve and a community of searchers using the method in their search.
2. [Make](#) and sort your LAMP list, identifying your top six target companies.
3. Find a potential contact and send your first 6-point email.
4. Mark your calendar using the 3B7 method.
5. Repeat.



## Techniques and Expectations for Holiday Networking

December is a unique month for job seekers. It's a season for vacations and time away from the office. It's also the final month in the fiscal year for many businesses. What does this mean for you? Many professionals may be away from email and work communication tools for extended periods, so expect delayed responses. Having a slower work pace can also mean that people have the time and added motivation of holiday spirit to reply to your messages and schedule a call.

In December, many businesses and teams also have the incentive to complete their hiring process before the fiscal year ends. It's the perfect season to put yourself in the right place at the right time and prepare for quick search processes and decisions. Wouldn't that be great?

Here are five tips for boosting your job or internship search by connecting during the holiday season.

1. **Send seasonal messages and thank you notes.** December and January are the perfect season for reconnecting and reaching out. These can be chats or emails, or you could send digital (or paper!) greeting cards for a special touch. Cards can make it easier if you're not sure [what to say](#).
2. **Say yes to invitations and attend holiday events with a mission to meet new people.** Developing the ability to [meet](#) others and strike up a conversation in an online environment is becoming an essential modern skill, and now is a friendly season for practice. When you meet someone you'd like to stay in touch with, connect on social media appropriate for that setting within 24 hours.
3. **In your conversations and informational interviews, don't just stick to business.** Be interested in others by asking about holiday plans, family, or their reflections on the year. This [article](#) has thoughtful advice on the art of small talk from a researcher on the topic.
4. **Set up friendly and informative auto-replies for the holiday season.** Mention your job/internship search, your interests, and how to be in touch if readers know of any way to support you. The Duke Daily has published an [article](#) with some nice examples.
5. **Take a moment to write a reflective post on LinkedIn or another platform.** This approach creates an opportunity for people you've lost touch with to discover that you're searching, with a clear sense of what priorities you have in mind. Invite people to message you if they have ideas, advice, or leads to share. If you would like to see samples of how others have shared what they have been doing, what matters to them, and where they are going, [here are a few examples](#).

## Use the Duke Alumni Resources

The Duke Alumni community is passionate, active, and generally welcomes you, as a student, to participate. When talking to alumni, the “rules” of building connection are just the same as any other area of your life: Be willing to lead with your own investment to create a mutual effort.

Relating about shared Duke experiences is a fantastic way to create connection. Don’t rush through this part! This might look like:

- attentive listening and follow-up questions for their stories and memories
- sharing your own anecdotes about what life at Duke is like right now
- talking about your specialization and classes
- connecting about a favorite faculty member you both know

Here are Duke tools to connect with a group who is oftentimes very happy to hear from you!

### Attend Alumni Events

This [page](#) has a summary of upcoming events, some at Duke and many hosted by the various alumni groups around the world. For example, on the day I looked, the Duke NY group was hosting an online conversation with a Vice President for Global Franchise Planning for Nickelodeon. The Duke Black Alumni (DBA) from the Duke Atlanta chapter was hosting a virtual cooking event titled “Home for the Holidays” and Duke Richmond was hosting a virtual wine tasting.

### Connect with Alumni Groups

The [directory](#) of alumni groups is also easy to use and find. You’ll find Dukies who convene by location, school, industry, affinity, and graduation date. (Be sure to look up the places you want to live, there’s likely a community there!)

After exploring any online resources (many have websites, social media presence, and more!) you are encouraged to introduce yourself to group leaders as a current student who also aligns with the theme. Leaders of these groups tend to be invested and well-connected because of their role and commitment. You can share your appreciation for their efforts, and after sharing a bit about how your past and future connect to their role, ask if they have any ideas for how to get and keep connected with the group efforts and alumni members.

### Use the Alumni Directory

The Duke Alumni [Directory](#) is an incredible tool to use in tandem with LinkedIn. With over 180,000 members, it should be a key element of your winter outreach effort.

Before you get started, we recommend that you watch this two minute [video](#) packed with tips for how to introduce yourself successfully.

Here are three more tips for using the tool successfully:

1. The default sort order is by recent sign-in. This means your top results will generally have current information and an indicator of investment into the Duke community.
2. You can email alumni from the site. While you don’t see their contact information directly, clicking the envelope icon sends your message directly to the inbox of their chosen email address. When they choose to reply, you’ll get a regular email and see their address displayed.
3. Use the side filters! This is one of the killer features that beats LinkedIn because of the “at Duke” section where you can specify things like degree and participation in some of the big clubs. Like modern search fields, you can type slowly to have it autofill the best keywords.

## Use LinkedIn to Connect

One of the best tools in your career toolbox is networking. And LinkedIn assists you in building a long-lasting network that influences your career growth and paves the way for new and better opportunities.

LinkedIn is by far the largest online platform for connecting working professionals and a great resource for your internship, job and career search. You can upload your resume to be seen by recruiters, search for opportunities, build on your professional standing by being engaged, posting updates and articles and staying involved. By building a solid foundation now, and continuing to foster that network through LinkedIn, you will have easy access to the many people you will meet throughout your career.

Here are 3 ways to harness the power of LinkedIn in your outreach and networking.

1. Watch [this](#) 3 ½ minute LinkedIn Learning video\* to develop your outreach messages. You'll learn the best tips and tricks to meaningful outreach. Learn how to get your messages read and answered and build that solid foundation all in one place: LinkedIn.
2. Subscribe to the LinkedIn blog to learn about platform updates and catch articles like [this](#) on outreach via LinkedIn.
3. Enhance your LinkedIn profile, or create one if you're new to the platform. Anticipate those you reach out to will look at your profile which means you want it in good shape. Watch [this](#) video from LinkedIn Learning which details how to "rock your LinkedIn profile."

\*Remember to access LinkedIn Learning through the Duke portal to take advantage of the Duke benefit.

## Connect with an Alum: Ask a Blue Devil

Are you looking for insights into a future career? Do you have a question that needs input from others? Are you stuck in knowing how to move forward? Are you looking for a one-on-one connection with a Duke alum? With a community of more than 175,000 alumni, [Ask a Blue Devil](#) will connect you with the best Duke alumni experts who can help you with advice and introductions.

Asking questions allows you to connect and learn from individuals with similar careers of interest to you. The art of asking questions is a powerful professional and essential life skill. Ask a Blue Devil is a technology that allows you to ask a question and receive an answer from at least one Duke alum.

### Get started:

1. **Decide on a question to ask alumni.** The purpose of a good question is to stimulate interesting conversation and deeper understanding, so be sure to follow your curiosity. Consider what you want to know more about. As you draft a question, review the advice from [Ask Questions to Connect & Learn](#) in the 8 Steps for Search Success.
2. **Write & send your message.** Share [who you are](#), [what you like and are good at](#), and what you need help with. Keep it short and clear. Check out the tips on [asking a question](#) through this technology.
3. **Wait for your response.** Be patient as you wait, you might get a response quickly or it could take 2 weeks. You will be matched with an alum based on availability, proximity, experience and skills.
4. **Send a thank you and schedule a follow-up on your calendar using the 3B7 method described in the [Two-Hour Job Search](#)** When you receive a response, say thank you and make a decision on if and how you would like to continue the conversation. Review this flow chart for inspiration on [next steps](#).

Additional questions? Watch the [video and review the FAQs](#) to learn more about Ask a Blue Devil.

## Recruiter Advice for Reaching Out

With Season for Connection we're focused on connections with professionals in fields, organizations, and roles you're interested in. We also acknowledge the valuable role recruiters play in the search process and want to spend this time sharing insight on how to connect well with them.

Wouldn't it be great to get insider information from multiple recruiters at various organizations all in one place? Well, look no further. [Here](#) are some great tips for making sure your outreach is working. Recruiters from companies such as IBM, Penguin/RandomHouse, Nightfall AI, Intuitive Surgical, EA, and Facebook, have shared some of their top tips for internship and job seekers.

As you read through the advice, you'll see three main themes.

1. Messages customized with the recipient in mind stand out
  - *"A message that stands out is one that is clearly tailored to me and my employer. There is a lot of content on my profile so when I see a generic message it tells me the student copied and pasted to a bunch of people."*
2. Concise messages are best
  - *"I would say keep it short and get straight to the point about your work experience - tell me in a couple of sentences about the work you did at your most recent internship(s). Maybe add one sentence on why it's relevant to the job at hand. The email shouldn't be paragraphs long. Also let me know when you are graduating."*
3. Demonstrating a true interest in the person and/or organization makes an impact
  - *"Think carefully about what industries and companies interest you and send a few quality messages rather than a lot of generic messages. Students that stand out to me indicate that an internship with our company is one of their top goals/interests and then give background as to why they are so interested and/or how they learned about us."*

## Get Feedback and Advice on Your Process

While searching for an internship or a job we often want to go faster to reach the finish line, however, there is value in pausing to reflect and adapt based on the advice you receive from industry professionals. Building a habit of reflection early, will make it more sustainable during hectic times of the year when you have even more competing priorities.

### Reflect & Adapt:

- **Reflect prior to each informational conversation.** What do I hope to learn from this conversation? Will I explore a new field, organization, or role of interest to me or deepen my knowledge? Do my goals for this conversation align with my prepared questions? If not, mix it up!
- **Use systems to track your meetings and takeaways from each conversation.** As you are chatting with industry professionals, you will receive a lot of advice. While it can be overwhelming, create and use a knowledge management system, such as the meeting tracker in [Interstride](#), to record and track advice shared during the process.
- **Reflect on what you learned during the conversation using the reflection prompts to get started.** What were the exciting parts of the role? (interests, skills, values, and goals). What were the least exciting parts? (interests, skills, values, and goals). What new information did you discover? What are potential obstacles? How does this conversation help you to clarify your own career objective? ● Stop & Reflect Further - If you did not receive any new information from this conversation. Take a moment, and consider why not? Revisit your goals of the conversation and questions. It might be time to level-up your questions that lead your discussions into learning areas. Review the [TIARA Framework](#) for asking questions in informational conversations.
- **Strategize and prioritize your next steps.** What do I plan to do differently based on what I learned? What additional information do I need? Based on your answers, plan your next steps through actionable goals.
- **Build a habit of reflection into your career search.** Keep a record or journal of the input and feedback you receive using [Excel](#), Meistertask (mind mapping tool – free through Duke OIT), the [Interstride meeting tracker](#), or a notebook. Reflect on your discussions to pull out themes to [adapt your search](#). Similar to reviewing your class notes, review your feedback and input conversation notes on a bi-weekly, monthly, or bi-monthly schedule.

We encourage you to take spend some reflective time here before going to the next part of the Outreach Guide.

## Start the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Season for Connection

Congratulations! You're halfway through the Season for Connection experience and the Outreach Guide.

Did you take time to reflect on your process and the advice and feedback you've received so far? Did you reflect on your use of the Two-Hour Job Search method and what worked and didn't work for your individual approach? If you haven't taken time to reflect, refer back to our previous post, because adapting your process is important for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Season for Connection.

Up to this point, you've learned about, and committed to, the Two-Hour Job Search method of outreach and networking. From here we'll focus on adapting your process for your specific search needs. Here's what you can expect:

- Target List (aka Lamp List in 2HJS): Revisit the target list concept and explore how you can revise yours to better align with your targets and goals.
- Making a Request: Learn additional ways to make a request with examples of outreach messages.
- Performing Informational Interviews: In the 2HJS these are called informational meetings. Take another look at the informational interview process and tailor your approach for your style.
- Asking Good Questions: Dive deep into the art of asking good questions that demonstrate your curiosity as you prepare for informational interviews.
- Following Up: Identify ways to stay engaged with professionals - one of the most important things you can do in building a connection.

Keep your momentum-the Career Services Team is here to support you!

## Refresh Your Target List

Moments of reflection and adaptation are vital to moving your search forward productively and as efficiently as possible. Refresh your target list by revisiting the LAMP list method provided by Steve Dalton to add new employers and update your motivation ranking and posting information.

To refresh your target list:

1. Add new organizations to your L column by re-visiting the four LAMP list approaches you used to create your target lists (dream employers, alumni/affinity employers, actively hiring employers, trending or open to sponsorship employers). *Spend 10 minutes on each approach, and if you get stuck refer to the [recording of Steve Dalton's 2HJS presentation](#) or [How to Make a Target List](#). Remember, focus is important in this exercise.*
2. Complete the A column with a Y or N for the newly added organizations. *Spend 10 minutes on completing this column.*
3. Redo all of your motivation rankings for the organizations in the L column. Consider this a temperature check on your motivation level for each employer. This step is important to NOT overthink. *Spend 5 minutes adding in a motivation ranking of 0 to 3 (3 is the highest).*
4. Redo the posting column with a Y or N if the organization is actively hiring at this point in time. *Spend 15 minutes for 40 organizations, add additional time if you have additional organizations.*
5. Prioritize and sort your Target List. Use the sort dialog box in Microsoft Excel to sort with the highest-level priority of motivation, posting, and advocates.

REFRESH: Create action steps for your top six organizations:

- Determine if there are areas where you should do some further research or gain more clarity about your alignment with your targets.
- Use LinkedIn or the Duke Alumni Directory to identify the first contact you'd like to be introduced to, or send an introductory message.
- Use professional associations, LinkedIn groups and community calendars like [Meetup](#) and [EventBrite](#) to find events and activities that you can participate in as a way to grow credibility within a community.

Your target list is now refreshed based on your recent learnings and the most current information. As you move forward, review [How to Use Your Target List](#) to embed it into your search routine.



## Refine How You Make a Request

Requests during the job or internship search are sent to a variety of individuals with different goals in mind.

As you make a request, consider your goal. If your goal is to ask directly for a job - STOP - this can lead to frustration, inauthentic conversations, or tarnished relationships as the conversation is transactional and self-serving. Rather, be curious and seek out information that will help you spend your search time wisely and give you insider knowledge on fields that are interesting to you.

As you think about your requests, consider the categories of people you want to reach out to. It could be individuals doing the job you want to do, hiring managers/decision makers, peers, colleagues, TA, faculty, previous supervisors, and people you admire! LinkedIn and the Duke Alumni Directory are awesome resources (see previous topics!) to use to find individuals to whom you would like to make a request!

Here are specific resources from Make a Request to pay attention to:

- [This](#) video with advice from Duke alumni about networking.
- [This](#) guide focused on using 3 parts of writing a request.
- [This](#) article from *The Muse* that provides outreach examples. It's written from the perspective of LinkedIn outreach but can be adapted for other communication channels too.
- Revisit [outreach tips from recruiters](#).

If you're stuck, or want feedback on your requests chat with a career coach in MS Teams!

## Make a Request - Examples

[Steve Dalton's 6-point email, from the Two Hour Job Search](#), is one example of an outreach method to industry professionals. Here are other examples of outreach messages you might find helpful as a starting point.

### LinkedIn Connection Requests & Messages

As you connect with people on LinkedIn remember it is vital to add a connection note. Not sure how to do it? Check out this [LinkedIn tutorial](#).

Use [this guide](#) to writing an introductory request message that includes three elements: who you are, why you're introducing yourself to them, and what you're asking for. [This](#) article from *resume worded* has some templates for your LinkedIn messages.

### Emails

Review the [key findings from this study](#) on email outreach to learn some tips you can incorporate into your cold email outreach.

### Outreach through Twitter - HashtagChats!

This is a different approach to outreach, but in times of pandemics why not add a new approach- especially if this approach gives you energy. Learn more about HashtagChats and how you can connect with industry thought leaders through [this](#) article from The Muse.

## Informational Interviews: One of the Easiest Ways to Connect as a Student

During your search, you build assumptions about the type of work you want to do and the fields and organizations where this work can be found. How do you know if your assumptions are correct? One way is through informational interviews. Dorie Clark, author of *Stand Out Networking* puts it simply.

*Informational interviews are essential to helping you find out more about the type of industry, company, or role you're interested in. You may think you already know all about a certain position but speaking to someone directly gives you the opportunity to test your assumptions.*

Informational interviews also have another important benefit, the opportunity to connect with a professional. Some conversations will end after the initial informational interview. Others will go so well; the person will become part of your professional community.

Earlier in Season for Connection, you learned about the 2 Hr. Job Search approach to informational interviews (called informational meetings in 2HJS). Now is the time for you to refresh on informational interviews and make adaptations to your own approach based on what you're learning.

Next we'll dive deeper into asking good questions, a key to a high-quality informational interview, and how to follow-up with connections.

Visit the Engineering Master's site in the Duke Career Hub [here](#) to see our feature on informational interviews. Here are a few resources you'll find.

- [This](#) HBR article with an overview of informational interviews and additional insight from Dorie Clark.
- [An article](#) from Psychology Today with tips on how to make conversations better and perform well in an informational interview. Stick with it to the bulleted section and you'll see how the application of a marriage counseling communication approach can be applied to other settings for effective conversation.
- Action steps for each phase of the informational interview
  1. Making a request
  2. Preparing for an interview
  3. Performing during an interview
  4. Following-up after an interview

## The Art of Asking a Good Question

Asking a good question is an essential life skill. In fact, in October 2020 when searching “ask questions” in the LinkedIn Learning platform, 595 results appeared. In August 2021, there were 745! Results included entire courses on asking questions ([How to Ask Productive Questions](#), [Using Questions to Foster Critical Thinking and Curiosity](#), [Applied Curiosity](#), and [Asking Great Sales Questions](#)) as well as individual videos within professional courses on communication, professional skills, negotiating, and interviewing. Also not surprising: the top results featured videos about how questions factor into success across a range of professional tasks for engineers. Just a few of these include design, project management, proposal-writing, data, coding, managing, and marketing.

With its range of applications, learning to ask a good question is a powerful professional skill, one that sets you apart from others quickly. There are many exciting questions to be asked when talking to professionals about what they know, do, and care about. While there are plenty of useful question lists (like [this](#), [this](#), and [this](#)), don't fall into the trap these lists can sometimes create. You don't want to become formulaic and boring! The purpose of a good question is to stimulate interesting conversation and deeper understanding, so be sure to follow your curiosity.

Here are some steps to consider when developing questions.

1. Consider what you want to know more about and what the person knows. Perhaps it's their field, the company they work for, their specific role, or maybe where they live.
2. Consider common areas for exciting professional conversation. Four are teaching and learning; solving a problem; sharing excitement about an interest; and current events.
3. Combine elements of 1 & 2 to create your own list of questions. For example, “What lessons did you and your team discovered about working productively off-site instead of in the lab? What practices stayed in place as you returned?” Or “My research has been varied, exploring ways that materials science can influence temperature in liquids and textiles. Can you help me to better understand that interest and expertise connects to R&D in your consumer products company?”

Use the [Asking Questions to Connect & Learn](#) section of the Duke Career Hub to learn more about asking good questions and apply this in informational interviews, in job or internship interviews, and while attending events.

## Following Up is the Most Critical Part of your Outreach

Following up might feel like a complicated topic, but it can actually be quite simple! Whether it be new people you meet in your search process or those you've lost touch with over time, remember that others generally like to get messages that show they've made an impact on others and that they are remembered.

To simplify things for you, here are responses to three frequently asked questions:

### How soon do I follow up after sending the initial email if I don't hear back?

If you are familiar with [The Two Hour Job Search](#), you have heard of the 3B7 practice for following up on an initial outreach email. It is a great way to keep this part of your search simple, and focus your attention on other things. In short, for the companies you are targeting, you write an outreach message to one person at a time. If you do not hear back from that person in 3 business days, try someone else. In 7 business days, send your email to the person again, creating one more opportunity for them to reply. Keep repeating until you find a booster at the company, then stop. You don't want to alienate a booster!

### What do I do after an informational chat? Should I follow-up with everyone I meet?

Sending thank you notes is an important habit, and we encourage you to [write them](#) to the people who generously share their time and insights with you. You definitely do not have to keep in touch with everyone you meet, and the best advice is to trust your judgement. Like other parts of your life, you meet lots of people superficially, and some are those you would like to keep in touch with. As time passes, develop a sense of whether you are not selective enough (more correspondence than you think is worth it or you can keep up with without damaging your reputation with slow responses), too selective (noticing that you rarely find someone who interests you enough), or even that there is something in your search that needs troubleshooting (for example, your chats are ineffective or your search is not targeted towards your interest areas).

### What are some ways to follow up, exactly?

- **Send a "status update" a couple weeks after informational interviews.** Your chats should be generating plenty of interesting suggestions that further your search and professional development. If they are not, it is a cue that you should make some changes. (Please connect with a coach to troubleshoot together!) Read your meeting notes and take time to investigate their recommendations. For each, attempt to understand the rationale for sharing, its relevance to you, and how much time to invest. After you follow through on some of their suggestions, you have got something interesting to write back about that accomplishes a few things. First, they know you were listening and truly valued their input. Second, they get evidence that you are serious about the field, organization, or role because you're spending your time to become a better candidate. Third, you stand out and earn credibility because your attentiveness, communication and follow-through demonstrate the qualities that correlate with being a strong employee.
- **Ask if they are active on any professional social media or publishing platforms and follow them.** You could even set up a Google alert. Simply reading the posts of a person you admire has lots of learning benefits, and finding the right opportunity to comment, ask a question, or make a remark based on your own specialization is even better. You will also begin to see who else they connect and communicate with, potentially leading to future informational chats or someone else to follow online. It is an organic way to discover and develop your own network. Finally, becoming a part of a small community is FANTASTIC for you professionally. While you are searching, it is great to become and be seen as someone who has earned a place and belongs. It shows you are no longer an outsider attempting to start in a profession, but someone who simply has not gotten the job yet.
- **If something in your day-to-day life reminds you of them, write a note.** From time to time, you will think about someone you have met. This might be prompted by the news, a memory, something you learn, or

anything else. Rather than keep it to yourself, use the genuine cue to write a few sentences to say hello. This would look like: a sentence or two to share the reason for writing, a few sentences updating them about you, and perhaps a question about them. If you build the habit you will learn how to send these out in just a few minutes and without stress. Remember, it is not an intrusion and easy to get right. People really like getting notes like this!

## Concluding Your Season for Connection Experience

You've done it! You're at the end of Season for Connection and we hope you have enhanced your skills in outreach and networking to improve your job or internship search. We also hope you found value in the Alumni Chats if you participated, and you practiced your outreach to additional professionals on your own too.

### Your Goal

At the beginning, you set a goal, an intention for the investment you were making during your winter break. Revisit that goal again below.

### My Season for Connection Goal

You may have accomplished your goal(s) entirely or made good progress through small wins. Note the progress you made in this experience and keep that momentum to continue building your skills in outreach and networking.

Progress toward your goal:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Moving Forward

We want you to keep the momentum you've gained through this experience as you move forward. Write down way(s) you will change your approach to outreach and networking as a result of your Season for Connection Experience. Share with a peer or a Career Coach to stay accountable for incorporating this into your search!

I'm committing to changing my approach to outreach and networking by:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



*make winter break your*  
**SEASON FOR  
CONNECTION**

Thank you for coming along with us during Season for Connection. We applaud your commitment during winter break to improve your search. Please continue to stay connected by visiting the [Engineering Master's site](#) within the Duke Career Hub and reaching out to Career Coaches for support you need in your search.

*The Engineering Master's Career Services Team*