

Job Search: Contacting Potential Employers

Conducting a job search can be overwhelming & daunting. Our tip sheet *“Job Search: Targeting Potential Employers”* will show you how to develop a LAMP list, which will help you identify companies to reach out to. Once you have a list of target employers, the next step is to seek out advocates who can connect you with people involved with recruiting and hiring. This guide will help you connect with your potential employers.

1. FIND AT LEAST TWO CONTACTS

Identifying **at least two people** at your target company will help increase your response rate. Try to find someone who:

- holds a position relevant to what you are seeking
- is a Kent State alumni
- has a position a few ranks above what you are seeking
- has been promoted
- has a unique name (helpful if you have to determine an email address)

Utilize LinkedIn to identify contacts that can connect you to opportunities. Start with the search bar and enter your first key word (ie: preferred occupation). Click “all filters” to narrow your search to obtain a manageable list. For example, choose Kent State University for school then choose one of your top 5 companies as the current company. Narrow your field to a manageable number before you start clicking many profiles (that could identify you as a recruiter). See our *LinkedIn Guide for more information on using LinkedIn*.

Handshake is another tool to identify alumni and employers from your top preferred companies. Click the “employers” tab and use the filter options to identify your target company. Companies have public staff lists as well as list of students who have worked there, which can assist in identifying internal contacts.

2. GET CONTACT INFORMATION

Finding your contact’s email address is the next step. Here are some strategies to utilize to obtain contact information:

- May be included in platform profile (ie: LinkedIn, Handshake)
- Staff directory on company website or do a google search for the person’s name and company name.
- Hunter (www.hunter.io) allows you to verify email formulation
- Direct message within platform (ie: LinkedIn, Handshake)
- LinkedIn 2nd Connection (this is someone you have in common with the person you’re trying to connect with – they may be able to assist you in making the connection and providing contact information.)

EMAIL YOUR CONTACTS

Connecting with your contacts will help you identify additional contacts within the company and can provide you with a chance to learn more about the company and opportunities.

Utilize these contacts to conduct informational interviews to learn as much as you can. Not everyone will help you – and that is okay. Having multiple contacts will help offset those that don’t respond.



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For more information:
Career Services Office
buscareers@kent.edu

Use the following tips to write an email that will help you target what you want and (hopefully) result in responses.

- *Keep it under 75 words.* A short email elicits a short response, which the contact can respond to quickly. Email etiquette implies a long email requires a long response, which requires more time on the contact's part. Long responses are more thoughtful, require more time, and often are put off until later, then may never happen. Therefore, be direct and state your question / goal at the beginning of the email.
- *Ask for insight and advice, not job leads.* Ask for a favor instead of selling yourself. Be genuine in seeking their input (they already know you're job searching). Ask for an informational interview to build the relationship, which will help you learn of opportunities and make more connections. Don't ask for job help until you get to know the person.
- *Start with explaining your connection* with them. Telling the contact person how you know them provides context, peaks their interest, and increases the chances they'll want to help you.
- *Be specific with your reason for connecting* with them. State your "ask" in the form of a question. Questions require an answer, phrases do not. When asking the question, be sure to be specific on what you want from them...this helps your contact answer quickly and appropriately.
- *Articulate your career interests* – both specifically and broadly. Being specific articulates the sincerity of your interest in their role and company, being broad allows the contact to connect you to other employers who may be hiring (in case they are not) or who can also help you.
- *Keep half the email about them*, not you. Focusing on the contact helps send the message that you want to learn from them, not sell yourself. Commenting on their experience or what you want to learn from them will help them understand you're not emailing them simply to promote yourself.

(See the two "Example – Initial Emails on next page)

FOLLOW UP

Utilize a calendaring tool to set 2 reminders for each company you're trying to connect with.

1. Set a reminder for 3 business days after sending initial email to 1st contact within a company. If your contact responds within 3 business days, great! If not, send another email to the second contact person within that company and set up another reminder for 3 days later.
2. Set a reminder for 7 business days after sending your initial email to 1st contact. If your contact responded already, great! If not, send one of two types of follow up emails.
3. Resend the initial email with the assumption "maybe they never read my first email"
4. Remind them of your initial email and perhaps suggest a different time to meet. (see "Example Follow Up Email")

This tip sheet was adapted from:

Dalton, S. (2020) *The 2-Hour Job Search: Using Technology to Get the Right Job FASTER*. Ten Speed Press, Random House.



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EXAMPLE – INITIAL EMAIL

Subject: Your data analyst experience at Progressive

Hi Gayle:

My name is Linda, I'm a fellow Flash, majoring in computer information systems. I will be graduating in May 2023 and am interested in a career in data analytics. I would like to learn more about your experience with Progressive Insurance - may I set up a time to talk with you? I would really appreciate your insights on this career path.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Linda Jones
ljones@kent.edu*

69 words excluding subject line & salutation.

EXAMPLE – INITIAL EMAIL

Subject: Marketing role with Cleveland Cavs

Hello Steve:

I have really enjoyed the conversation in the LinkedIn "Sports Management and Marketing Group", especially the bit about social media marketing. I will be graduating from Kent State University with a marketing degree and am interested in working in the professional sports industry.

May I call you one day next week to ask about your social media marketing experience? I am especially interested in how you used Twitter to promote the Cav's new marketing campaign.

Best Regards,

*Gary Rose
grose@kent.edu*

77 words excluding subject line & salutation.

EXAMPLE – FOLLOW UP EMAIL

Subject: Re: Marketing role with Cleveland Cavs

Hello Steve:

I am following up on the email I sent last week (include date) regarding talking with you about your social media marketing experiences with the Cav's. Would next week be a more convenient time for us to talk? I'm looking forward to learning more about your role.

Thank you!

*Gary Rose
grose@kent.edu*

