

Connecting on LinkedIn

Sample Connection Messages

Hi John,

I'm a junior at Rollins and found your profile through our alumni group. I'm interested in exploring a career in publishing and really admire your career path. I am also a blogger and have enjoyed following your blog posts.

I'd be honored to be a part of your LinkedIn network.

Regards,
Laura

Hello Sarah,

I am a sophomore at Rollins and found your profile in our LinkedIn group. I admire your career in public relations and hope to pursue a similar path.

Would you be willing to connect with me and possibly offer some advice by email or phone? I would greatly appreciate your time!

Thank you,
Chris

Hello Elizabeth,

I'm a senior Biology major at Rollins and was impressed by your profile and career as a Science Education Consultant. I am considering this career path and would like to connect with you.

Would you be interested in a brief phone chat sometime soon?

Thanks for considering my request and keep up the excellent work!

Regards,
Julie

Tips for Connecting

- Write a brief, customized, polite note to explain your connection and why you want to connect.
- It's also a good idea to thoroughly read the person's LinkedIn profile and mention something that stood out to you or something you have in common
- It is not appropriate to directly ask for a job in a connection request. As you can see in the example above, I recommend using the request to build rapport and establish contact, then once the person accepts you can ask for advice or for the person to keep you in mind if he or she hears of any job opportunities that might be a good fit for you.
- Remember to use proper grammar and spelling - this is a professional communication that is contributing to your reputation.
- Remember that HOW you build your network is just as important as why you build it. Always be authentic, polite and positive. People will remember that when they hear about job opening.

Connect with a Contact

Once you've found a networking contact, you need to reach out to them to schedule an informational interview. Here is a sample message you could use when it's time to connect with a networking contact. Make sure you include a specific question or two in the email so the contact understands what you want to discuss as well as your contact information.

Sample Email or LinkedIn message

Subject: Rollins College Student Seeking Information

Dear Ms. Thomas:

I found your name through the Rollins College Alumni Group on LinkedIn. As a senior at Rollins College, I am majoring in psychology with a minor in English. After graduation I am interested in pursuing a graduate degree in counseling and working with children with behavioral problems and families in transition. I see from your profile that this is your specialty area. Would you be open to letting me email, call, or meet you in person so that I can learn more about your career path? Like you, I am currently in the Orlando area and would be available to meet at your earliest convenience. I am free any day next week 2-5 p.m. I appreciate your consideration of my request for advice, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Laura Wilson

407.546.7183

Informational Interview Questions

Job Description

- Provide a brief description of the career field and of the specific position held by your interviewee. List and briefly describe any related positions also in this field.
- Why did he/she initially choose this position/field?

Education, Training & Skills

- What academic degree(s) or field(s) of study is typically required for this position?
- What are the minimum qualifications typically required of one entering this career field?
- What are the suggested/preferred qualifications for one entering this career field?
- What are some obvious and not so obvious skills needed to be successful in this career? (This may include computer, technical, presentation, communication, people/social, sales, foreign language skills, etc.)

Starting & Potential Salaries

- What is a typical entry level salary in this field? What is mid-level salary? It is okay to use salary ranges if a specific salary figure is not known. (Be sure it is clear that your interviewee knows you are not asking his/her current salary.)
- Aside from the salary, what are some of the perks of the position? (These could include benefits, flexibility of work schedules, vacation time, training/professional development opportunities, travel, etc.)

Job Accessibility, Future Growth & Potential for Advancement

- How difficult is it to find employment in the field? Easy – moderate – difficult? Why?
- What is the anticipated job outlook for this field? Are job openings expected to grow or shrink? Why?
- Are there opportunities for advancement or are there other jobs that this position could lead to?

Work Environment & Conditions

- Describe the environment in which you do your work (inside office, lab work, outdoors).
- What are the work hours? How flexible is the work schedule?
- What is the dress code?
- Is there a lot of sedentary/desk work? A lot of field work?
- Do you work in teams, alone or both?
- Is there much interaction with others, inside or outside of your organization?
- What do you like most about your work? What do you like least about the job?

Career Path

- Since graduating from college, describe the career path that lead to their current position. Is this typical?
- Ask your interviewee to reflect upon their experience and describe any recommendations he/she may have for college students preparing for a future career.

Follow-Up

ALWAYS send an email or hand-written note to thank them for their time and career insight within 24 hours after your interview!