

## Networking Emails

*Subject line of email to alumni: (e.g., Vanderbilt PhD Seeking Advice; Education Graduate Student Seeking Advice)*

1. Dear Ms./Mr. \_\_\_\_\_

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a student at Vanderbilt University, graduating with a master's/PhD in My Major in August 20xx. I am considering pursuing a career in (industry / job type). [or "I am currently seeking a job/internship in the \_\_\_\_\_ industry."] I found your contact information in the VU Connect online directory (or wherever you found them). I was wondering if you would have a moment to share with me any advice, ideas, leads or contacts. Any suggestions you could offer would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time.

Name

Phone #

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2. Dear Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. John Doe, professor of electrical engineering at Vanderbilt University, suggested that I contact you for advice about a career in \_\_\_\_\_. He mentioned that you worked in his lab while doing your PhD studies, and felt you might have some good advice for me.

I am currently exploring a career in industry, specifically research & development in the energy industry. I was wondering if you might have advice, suggestions, ideas or other contacts as I seek information about this career. I would be happy to visit with you by phone or by email, whichever is more convenient for you. Any assistance you could offer is greatly appreciated.

Thank you—

Name

Phone #

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## Informational Interview Questions

- 1) How did you get to where you are today?
- 2) What characteristics/skills make for a good \_\_\_\_\_?
- 3) How would you describe the culture of your organization?
- 4) If you were starting your career today, what would you do differently?
- 5) What can I do to make myself marketable for this career?
- 6) Any myths you want to shatter for me?
- 7) Where do you see opportunity areas, needs?
- 8) Who else does this? What other companies? Who else should I be talking to?
- 9) What advice do you have for someone like me?

During an informational interview **DO NOT ASK FOR AVAILABLE POSITIONS OR JOB OPENINGS**. You requested their help with advice and ideas, they didn't agree to serve as your agent. Asking if they know someone who can help is less demanding and doesn't limit opportunities to particular job titles. **Make sure you take detailed notes with each contact.**

VANDERBILT  Graduate School

Ruth Schemmer, Ph.D. ♦ Assistant Dean for Career Development  
411 Kirkland ♦ Appts: (615) 343-2727 ♦ Direct: (615) 322-8088 ♦ [ruth.schemmer@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:ruth.schemmer@vanderbilt.edu)