



KANIA

THE ARTHUR J. KANIA SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Cold Emailing

The first and most important rule when reaching out to a stranger is to BE CONCISE. No professional wants to feel his or her smartphone vibrate during a meeting, look down, and find a page and a half email from some college sophomore begging for an internship. You won't make it past the first few lines before they hit delete.

Email Guidelines and Samples

Subject Line: This should be very short (remember, many business professionals are likely to be reading it on a smartphone screen) and should include your connection with the person if you have one. Any connection will increase the likelihood they open it.

Intro: Always begin with "Dear Mr. /Ms. ____." If (and only if) their response uses *only* their first name, you may *consider* using it. However, you can't go wrong by staying formal and conservative and continuing to use their last name. Then you should identify yourself and state the purpose of your email in the first line or two.

Background and Connection: Pick people you have something in common with. Typically this will be alumni or a parent of a student from your college or university. There are no set rules here, but by emailing someone with a connection, you can potentially create a personal bond. This will make them more likely to help you, which is always the most important thing.

Content: As mentioned above, keep it short. Explain who you are and what your goal is. Ask them if you could arrange a time that works for them to briefly speak with you. A short paragraph explaining your story in more detail can come in a follow-up email.

Thank you: Thank them in advance for their time, and tell them you hope to hear back from them soon. Sample emails are provided below.

If you send an email and don't hear back from them after a couple of days, it's okay to assume that they were busy and send a follow-up. If they "miss" a second email, they likely don't want to be bothered or are not interested in helping you. However, if you want to be very persistent, you could follow up one more time with a phone call the following week.

Sample #1:

Subject: University of Scranton student interested in investment banking

Dear Mr. Johnson,

My name is Jason Schwass and I am a junior finance major at the University of Scranton, who is very interested in a career in investment banking. I found your name by searching LinkedIn and was hoping we could set up a time to speak briefly about your job and the industry so I could gain some insight from your experiences.

I know you must be busy, so I appreciate any time you can spare. Thank you in advance, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Best,

Jason Schwass

Sample #2:

Subject: Dr. Rajan referred me to you

Dear Ms. Morgan,

My name is Jason Schwass and I am a student of Dr. Rajan, who suggested I reach out to you, I am a rising junior at the University of Scranton and I am interested in pursuing a career in finance. Dr. Rajan mentioned that you might be a good resource given your expertise in [industry x.] I was hoping we could set up a time to speak so that I could ask you a few questions about the different areas I am considering.

Thank you in advance, Ms. Morgan.

Sincerely,

Jason Schwass

Sample #3:

Subject: Fellow Scrantonian seeking advice

Dear Mrs. Moore,

My name is Jason Schwass, and I am a fellow Scrantonian who found your contact information on LinkedIn. I am a junior at the University of Scranton, and while I have spent my whole life in Scranton, I am considering a move to New York to pursue a career in finance.

I see that you have successfully made this transition so I was hoping you might be willing to spare a few minutes to discuss how you made the most of it.

Thank you, Mrs. Moore. I look forward to connecting.

Best,

Jason Schwass

These emails are short, to the point, and mobile friendly. If you can make a connection to your potential contact in the subject line, consider that a plus. A professional receiving hundreds of emails a day may not bother to even open a generic email with “I am interested in finance” in the subject line. However, if you can make a connection to your school, your hometown, a sport, or a professor you shared – anything – the person will be much more likely to open the message and help you.

Here are some additional suggestions for your email:

- Always proofread your emails, no matter how short. Make sure your message is succinct, clear, and do not use any slang
- Do not forget to attach any documents you promise in the email.
- Always remember to your full name and include your contact information at the bottom of the email.
- Do not attach your resume. If all goes well, you will hopefully be asked for it at the end of your informational interview.