

# OUTREACH AND THANK YOU MESSAGES

## BEFORE YOUR CONVERSATION: SENDING AN OUTREACH MESSAGE

Now that you've identified someone you'd like to connect with professionally, here's an outline you can use to write an effective outreach message, as well as a couple of examples.

### DRAFT A MESSAGE USING THESE ELEMENTS

- 1 Greeting**  
Research their proper title; if you aren't sure, you can use their first and last name
- 2 Introduce yourself**  
Give affiliations; let alums know you're a U-M student
- 3 Personalize the message**  
Share a common interest or connection
- 4 Ask to set up a conversation**  
Provide next steps with a time frame
- 5 Sign off**  
Keep it formal

### EMAIL EXAMPLE

**1** Dear Dr. Ahmad,  
**2** I'm a political science major at the University of Michigan interested in doing campaign work. **3** My instructor Anita Correa talked about your work during our class today and I wanted to reach out because I'm very interested in your approach to political consulting. **4** I wondered if you would be able to meet by phone or video call for 30 minutes for a conversation sometime in the next 2 weeks.  
**5** Sincerely,  
Cristina

### LINKEDIN EXAMPLE

**1** Hi Casandra,  
**2** I'm currently a sophomore majoring in Chemistry at U-M and **3** I'd love to hear about your journey working in healthcare after you graduated. **4** Would you be willing to talk for 15 minutes by phone to share your experience?  
**5** Thank you so much,  
Marcus

## FROM OUTREACH MESSAGE TO CONVERSATION

### If your contact says yes...

Great! Now you can set the date, time, and medium (phone, video call, etc.) for the conversation. Sending a final confirmation message the day before can be a useful way to double-check that you're all set for the meeting.

### If your contact responds and is unable to meet...

Between professional and personal responsibilities, sometimes the people you contact won't have time to connect. Thank your contact for their reply and consider following up with them in the future.

### If you don't hear back...

It's likely your contact lost track of your message or has a lot going on. If it's been about a week since your first message, you can forward your original message, make sure your contact received it, and reiterate your interest in connecting.

### If you've followed up and still don't hear back...

You've already brainstormed other potential people to connect with – go back to your list of contacts and make plans to reach out to someone new!

## AFTER YOUR CONVERSATION: SAYING THANK YOU AND FOLLOWING UP

Sharing your appreciation with your contact after a conversation serves a couple of purposes. It's a way to acknowledge the time and advice they shared with you. It also is an important way to deepen your connection and grow your professional relationship with them over time.

### Here are some general tips for your thank-you message:

- Send within a day or two of your meeting
- Thank your contact for their time and what they shared
- Share a specific piece of advice, story, or recommendation that you found especially meaningful

### EMAIL EXAMPLE

Dear Dr. Ahmad,

Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me yesterday. I really appreciated you sharing about your career journey in politics and the inner workings of running a campaign. Since you talked about the importance of gaining experience within campaign work, I'm hoping to volunteer with one in the near future. If you have any recommendations for specific local campaigns, I'd love to hear your suggestions. Thanks so much again and I hope to continue to be in touch in the future.

Best wishes,  
Cristina

### LINKEDIN EXAMPLE

Hello Casandra,

It was wonderful to speak with you this morning. Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences and answer my questions. I really valued what you said about getting involved with community health organizations, and I will definitely plan to look into the two groups you mentioned. I'm so glad to have connected with you!

Thank you again,  
Marcus

## DETERMINE YOUR NEXT STEPS

If you're interested in staying in touch with your contact after your conversation, add their information to your Networking Tracker. Determine a plan for how you want to reach out in the future (send an update about your professional work, share an article, send holiday wishes), set a date for that communication, and put it on your calendar.