

LinkedIn + Online Networking For Grad Students & Postdocs

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Graduate Career Services: Introduction

- Career Center unit dedicated to serving the ~17K masters, PhD, and professional students and postdoctoral scholars at UCLA
- Offer a variety of services, resources, and programs centered on unique needs and strengths of different graduate student populations

The logo for UCLA Graduate Career Services is displayed on a solid blue rectangular background. The word "UCLA" is written in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, the words "Graduate" and "Career Services" are stacked in a smaller, white, bold, sans-serif font.

UCLA
**Graduate
Career Services**

Graduate Career Services: Staff Members



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(primary focus with
HASS PhD students)



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(primary focus with
Masters students)

Graduate Career Services: Offerings

Online & In-Person Programs

- Career Essentials (ie Networking)
- Specialized topics
- See [PhD](#) and [masters](#) websites or quarterly calendar for current offerings

Events with Outside Speakers

- Employer Info Sessions, Panels, Coffee & Careers, and Case Competitions
- Networking Events with Alumni & Recruiters
- Career Fairs

One on One Appointments

- Career Exploration & Self-Assessment
- Resume, Cover Letter
- Interview Prep & Negotiation
- Academic Job Search
- Navigating UCLA, Advisor, Supervisor

Digital Resources

- GCS Website: career.ucla.edu
- GCS Instagram: [@uclagcs](#)
- [12twenty](#)
- [UCLA GCS LinkedIn Group](#)
- Biweekly Newsletters

By the end of this session, you will learn to:

Identify concrete ways to improve your LinkedIn profile based on your individual career needs/goals

Develop drafts of two profile sections (Headline and About Me) that convey a strong first impression

Identify people within your wider network(s) to connect with who relate to your specific career needs

Practice techniques to engage in productive informational interviews

What is LinkedIn?

What is LinkedIn?

... is “must-have” in today’s interconnected world!

- A professional landing page to manage your own personal brand
- Fosters a sense of trust
- More than 90% of recruiters use LinkedIn at some point during the hiring process
- LinkedIn saw a 55% increase in conversations among connections in 2021



Founded in 2002

+722 million users,

**59.9% are between
25-34 years old**

Source:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/5-stats-you-need-know-linked-in-2022-sterileprocessing-hank-balch/>

Developing Your LinkedIn Profile

LinkedIn: Profile Basics Checklist

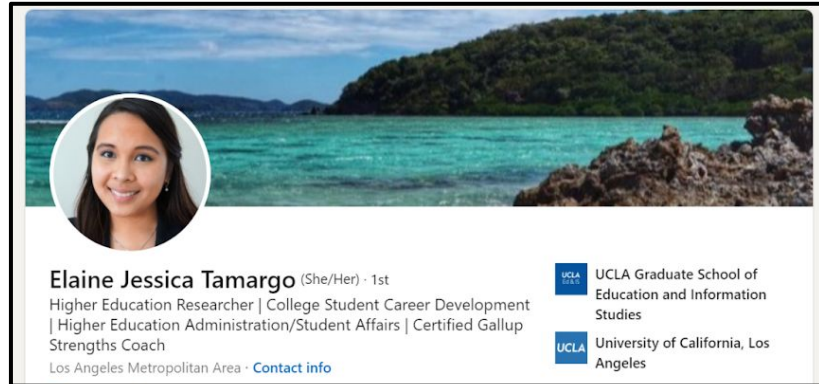
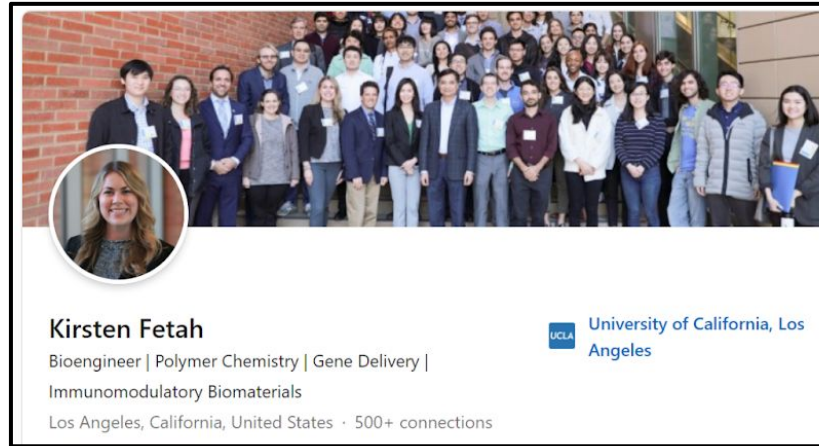
- ☐ Upload a profile photo
- ☐ Create an eye-catching LinkedIn profile headline
- ☐ Fill out the education, experience, and skills section in detail
- ☐ Write a profile summary/About Me in 1st person and use keywords to be found in searches

LinkedIn: Profile Photo

Profiles with a photo are 14x more likely to be viewed

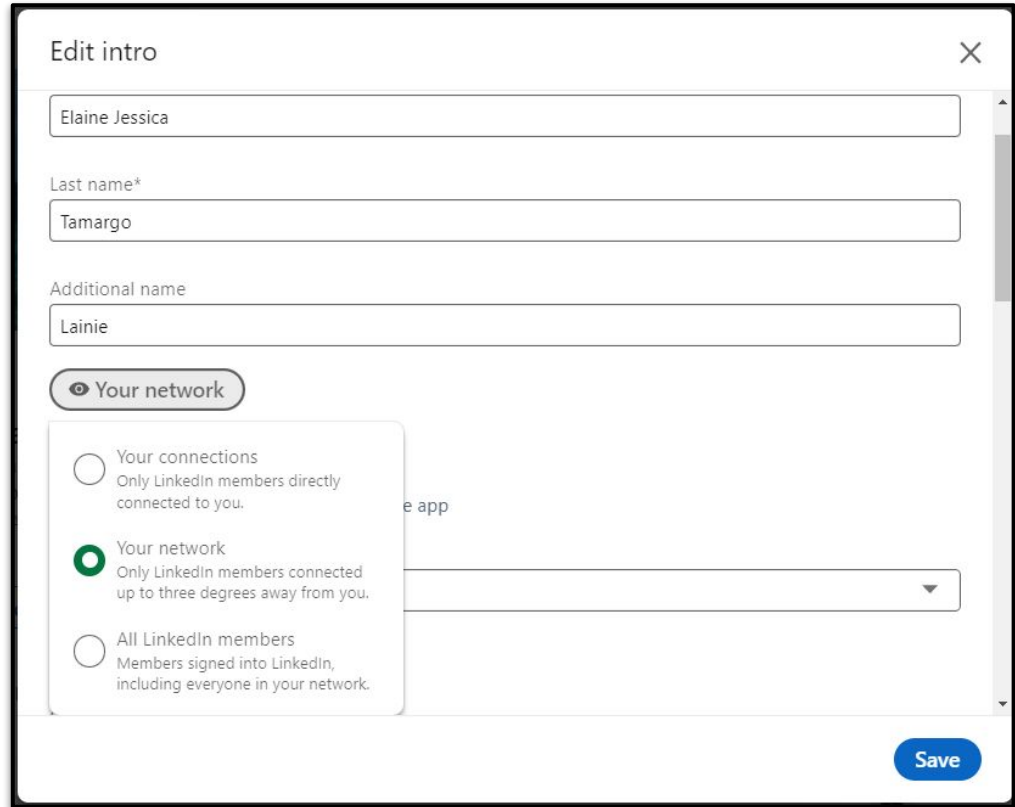
What makes a professional photo?

- Clearly shows your face
- Background can be plain or something undistracting (e.g. UCLA bricks, cityscape, blurred backdrop)
- You don't need a fancy camera, a selfie from a cell phone is just fine.



LinkedIn: How to List Your Name(s)

- Generally, use your formal first and last name(s)
- If you have another name that you are known by, you can add it as an “Additional name” which will appear in ()s after your First Name.
- Some add their degree as past of their last name (e.g. [Last name], PhD)



The screenshot shows the 'Edit intro' modal on LinkedIn. It contains three text input fields for names: 'Elaine Jessica' in the first field, 'Tamargo' in the 'Last name*' field, and 'Lainie' in the 'Additional name' field. Below these fields is a section titled 'Your network' with three radio button options: 'Your connections' (unselected), 'Your network' (selected), and 'All LinkedIn members' (unselected). Each option has a brief description of the visibility scope. A 'Save' button is located at the bottom right of the modal.

Edit intro

Elaine Jessica

Last name*

Tamargo

Additional name

Lainie

☒ Your network

☐ Your connections
Only LinkedIn members directly connected to you.

☒ Your network
Only LinkedIn members connected up to three degrees away from you.

☐ All LinkedIn members
Members signed into LinkedIn, including everyone in your network.

Save

LinkedIn: Creating an Eye-catching Headline

The default headline is always “[*Most recent job title*] at [*Company/Organization*]”
Convey that you’ve done more than the minimum! Edit your headline:

- 2-5 Keywords/Phrases | Use vertical lines to separate phrases
- List specialities, research methods, and/or areas of expertise
- Template: Keyword + Job Title (or Student) + UCLA | Area of specialization

Examples:

- Bioengineer | Polymer Chemistry | Gene Delivery
- Qualitative Research Grad Student at UCLA | Consumer Insights
- Social Scientist | Survey Design | Focus Group Facilitation

LinkedIn: Education & Experience Sections

Experience

- Use your resume bullet points
- Stick to 2-3 bullet points → viewer has to click on “See more”
- Can connect with Skills keywords

Education

- Include your Graduate institution(s) and Undergraduate institution(s)
- Make sure to spell out your degree(s)

 **UCLA**
5 yrs 10 mos

- Clinical Neuroscientist**
Sep 2015 - Jun 2021 · 5 yrs 10 mos
 - Investigated biological mechanisms underlying psychiatric disorders in patients with rare genetic disorders predisposed to psychiatric illness, including schizophrenia and Autism Spectrum Disorder ...see more
- Senior Graduate Career Consultant**
Dec 2020 - Mar 2021 · 4 mos
 - Developed and led innovative core professional development programming, services, and resources geared toward advanced-degree STEM scholars ...see more
- Graduate Career Consultant**
Jan 2019 - Dec 2020 · 2 yrs

Show all 6 experiences →

 **The National Institutes of Health**
2 yrs 3 mos

- Clinical Researcher/Coordinator**
Jun 2013 - Aug 2015 · 2 yrs 3 mos
 - Completed research fellowships at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) ...see more
- NIH Fogarty International Center Conference Volunteer**
Nov 2013 - Feb 2014 · 4 mos

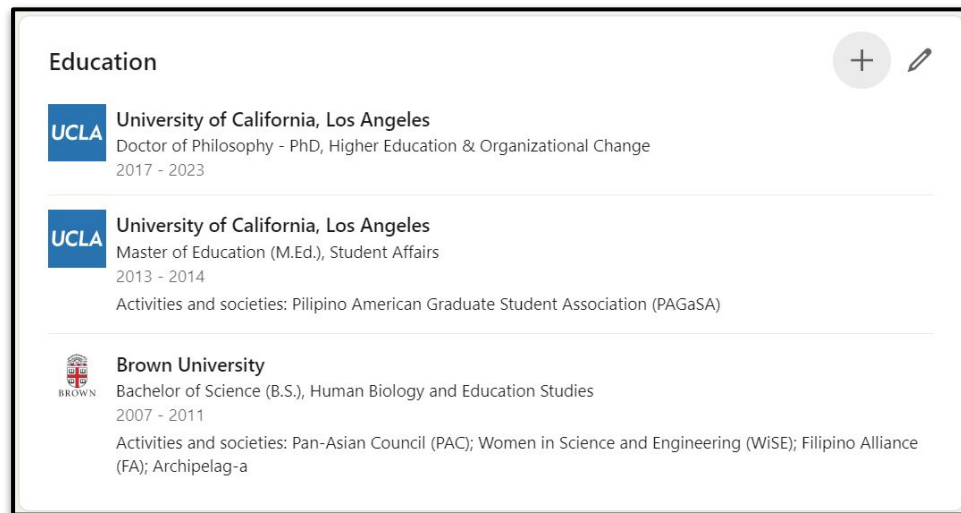
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- Make sure to spell out your degree(s)



LinkedIn: About Me/Summary

- Write in 1st person; Length: a short paragraph or slightly longer

<u>Some Suggestions for Structuring Your “About Me”</u>	
Academia/Research Project Focus • High level overview (goals, purpose) • More detail on your work (methods) • Outcomes (deliverables, findings)	Industry/Non-Academic Focus • What are you doing now? What are your goals for after graduate school? • What’s your unique contribution?
<i>Guiding Question: Is this information relevant to my target audience?</i>	

- Be specific and unique to your experiences
- Make sure the most important things are first: Reader needs to click “See more” after the first 2-3 lines
- Paired with “Top Skills” in default profile layout - make them complementary!

LinkedIn: About Me/Summary

About



From examining centuries-old bones to A/B testing, I use mixed research methods to better understand the behaviors of both contemporary and historical communities. My career has focused on using novel combinations of data to better speak with, about, and for people:

...

...see more



Top skills

Program Evaluation • Data Analysis • Qualitative Research • Program Facilitation • Public Speaking



LinkedIn: Profile Basics Checklist

- ❑ **Upload a profile photo**
 - ❑ Profiles with a photo get more engagement
- ❑ **Create an eye-catching LinkedIn profile headline**
 - ❑ “Keyword + Job Title or Student + affiliation | Area of specialization.”
- ❑ **Fill out the education, experience, and skills section in detail**
 - ❑ Use your CV/Resume
- ❑ **Write a profile summary/About Me in 1st person and use keywords to be found in searches**
 - ❑ A short paragraph is plenty

What is networking?

It involves more than small talk at conferences.

Networking: More Than Shaking Hands

**Exchanging
Ideas**

**Finding
Collaborators**

**Sharing Info &
Opportunities**

**Assessing
Yourself**

**Supporting
Others**

**Growing Your
Confidence**

**Networking → Professional
Relationship
Building**

Elements of Successful Professional Relationships

**Length of time
you've known
one another**

**Number of
positive
interactions**

**Sense of
reciprocity**

Networking: For Graduate Students

- Sharing research skills with colleagues
- Presenting your projects outside of class
- Finding a mentor, being a mentor
- *Conducting informational interviews* (which can happen virtually)
- Attending events (on campus, with community partners, etc.)
- Creating your own event/space
- Sending a personalized LinkedIn message after an event

What is an informational interview?

Informational Interviews: Overview

What is an info interview?

Conversations you have with people to learn about their professional experiences in order to explore your own career options

- Usually between 20-60 minutes
- Also called coffee chats, meetings

Goal: ask for information, not for a job!

Tools & Resources

- [UCLA LinkedIn Alumni Page](#)
- [UCLA One](#)
- [ImaginePhD Info Interviewing Guide](#)

How do info interviews fit into career planning/job searching?

Research Method: snowball interviewing

- Learning about field(s) of interest
- What jobs are interesting?
- What organizations are interesting?
- What skills are valuable?

Networking

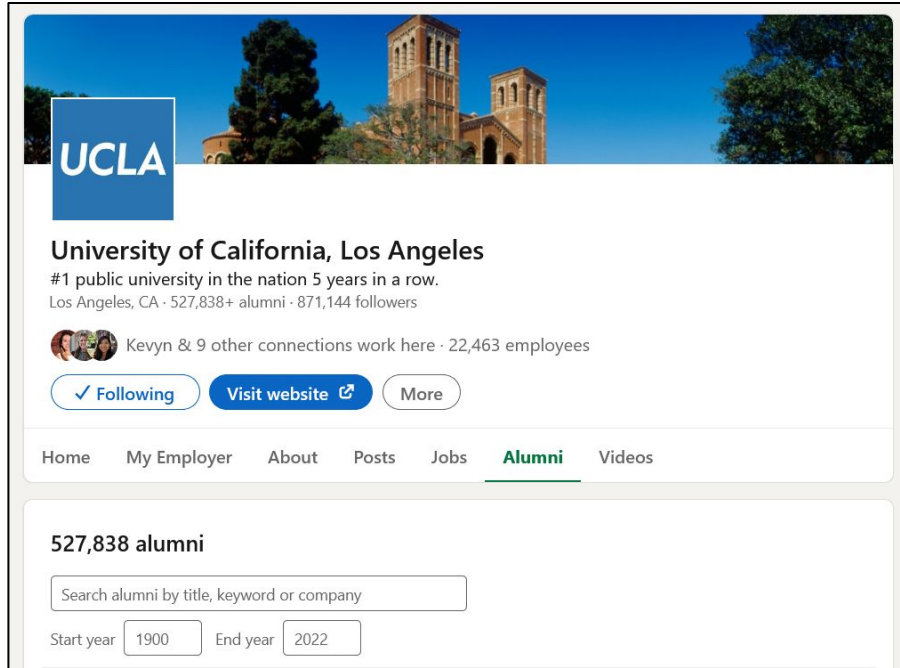
- Building relationships with professionals in your field(s) of interest
- Network can connect you to unknown contacts, opportunities, resources

How can I identify people to interview?

Informational Interviews: Start With People You Know

- Coworkers
- Family
- Friends
- Fellow students
- Personal acquaintances
- Professors
- Researchers and professionals in your field
- Clients or customers

Informational Interviews: UCLA LinkedIn Alumni Tab



- [linkedin.com/school/ucla/people/](https://www.linkedin.com/school/ucla/people/)
- Keyword search through 500,000+ alumni profiles
- Can filter by
 - Keyword
 - Graduation Year
 - Location
 - Company
 - Field
 - Major/Program
 - Skills
 - Degree of connection

Informational Interviews: UCLA ONE



- uclaone.com
- **Available filters include:**
 - Graduation Year
 - Major/Program
 - Campus organizations
 - Work Experiences
 - Company
 - Industry
 - Job function
 - “Offering Help”
 - “Offering Mentorship”

Activity: Identifying New Contacts

Pull up UCLA's LinkedIn Alumni Tab at [linkedin.com/school/ucla/people/](https://www.linkedin.com/school/ucla/people/)

Take 5 minutes to identify at least 3 people you want to meet.

Remember you can search and/or filter by:

- Keyword
 - Skills, role titles, organizations
- Graduation Year
- Location
- Company
- Field
- Major/Program
- Skills

How do I set up an informational interview?

Informational Interviews: Set Up

- Contact via email, LinkedIn/UCLA One, or in-person
- Share that you're interested in their career and/or industry
- Make it clear you're only seeking advice (*not* a job)
- Include a structured ask ("Would you be willing to meet on Zoom for 30 minutes to discuss...?")

"I'm exploring opportunities in X area, and Joe Bruin mentioned you'd be a great person to chat with. Are you available to meet?"

"Your job at Y Corp sounds fascinating. I'd love to learn more about it. Could we schedule a meeting?"

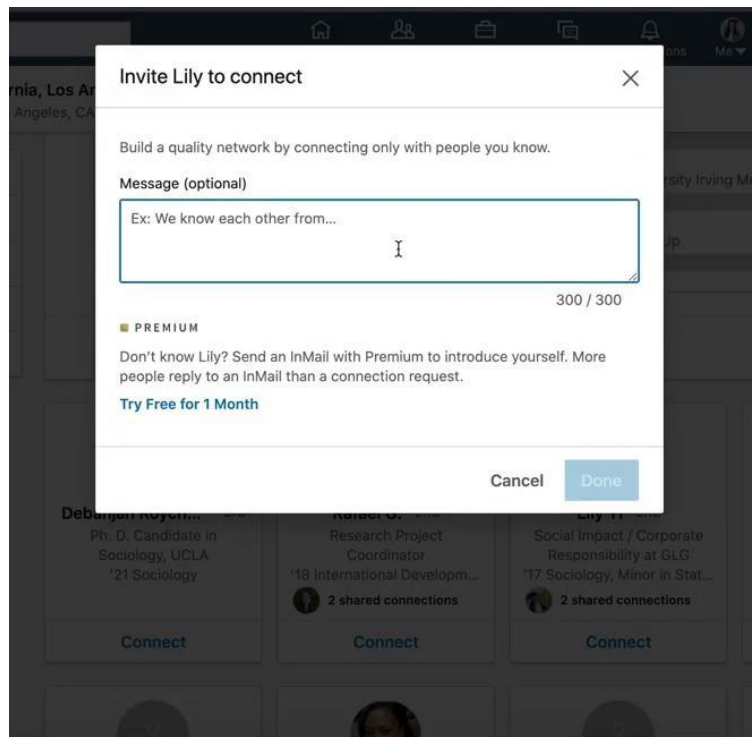
~~"Do you have any jobs available for me?"~~

~~"Could you help me out with the job search?"~~

Cold Call Message: Key Components

Best practice is to write a message when you request to connect! Key components:

- **Short Greeting**
 - **Establish** common ground if you haven't met ("cold call")
 - **Remind** how you are connected if you've met ("warm call")
- **Ask** them for something specific, concrete (e.g. informational interview)



Cold Call Messages: Examples

Cold Call Example

- Establish common ground
- Ask for an informational interview

Example (276/300 Characters)

“Hi Joel, my name is Jesse, and I just started my masters at UCLA. I saw your profile and was really interested in your time at Bruin Clinic. Would you be open to meeting over Zoom for 20-30 minutes, so I could ask you some questions about your experience as a qual researcher?”

Warm Call Example

- Remind how you are connected
- Ask for an informational interview

Example (225/300 Characters)

“Hi Jay, It was really great meeting you at the Big Conference on June 30th. I really enjoyed learning more about the team at Bruin Co. Would you be available to meet on Zoom for 30 minutes to chat about your experience there?”

Cold Call Messages: More Examples

Post-Application Template

“Hi (name), I just submitted my application to (job req #). As a person who’s passionate about (insert your passion), I’ve (insert key experience, skill, or qualification). I recognize that you’re very busy, so no worries if you can’t help, but I’d love to talk with anyone who knows more about the role. Hoping to hear back from you. Thanks for your time.”

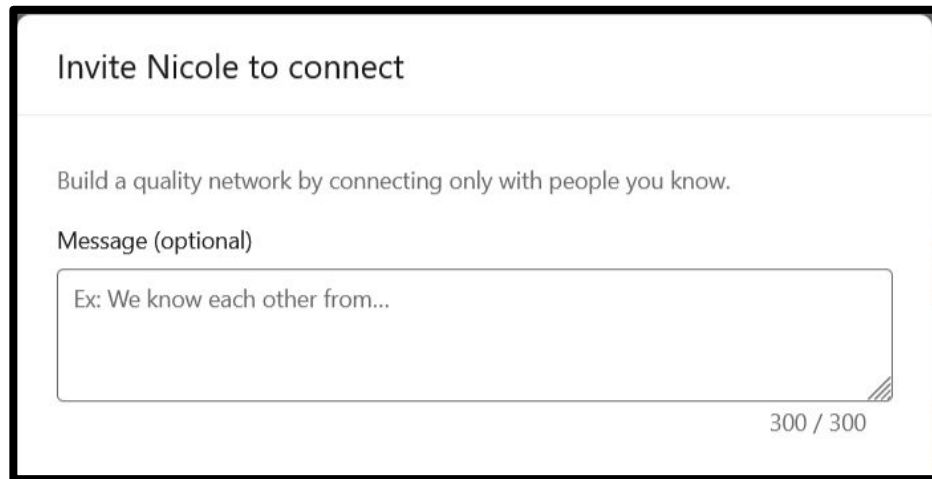
Post-Application Example

(300/300 Characters)

“Hi Lily, I applied to BruCo’s Analyst role (#5309). I’ve used mixed methods to help nonprofits identify better alignment of their strengths and clients’ needs. I’m sure you’re busy, so no worries if you can’t help, but I’d love to talk with anyone who knows more about the role. Thanks for your time!”

Activity: Drafting a “Cold Call”

- Select one of the people from the previous activity.
- You have 5 minutes and 300 characters to write an initial message.
- Key Components to an Intro:
 - Common ground
 - Clear ask
 - Reason to respond



Invite Nicole to connect

Build a quality network by connecting only with people you know.

Message (optional)

Ex: We know each other from...

300 / 300

The image shows a screenshot of a LinkedIn interface for inviting someone to connect. It has a title 'Invite Nicole to connect', a guideline 'Build a quality network by connecting only with people you know.', a label 'Message (optional)', a text input area with an example 'Ex: We know each other from...', and a character count '300 / 300' in the bottom right corner.

How do I ensure a productive informational interview?

Informational Interviews: Steps & Example

Example Informational Interview Steps

Introduce yourself briefly

Spend the bulk of the time asking questions about the other person

- Background, current position, future career trajectory, advice

Toward the end, ask for their explicit advice, especially:

- People in their network they can connect you with
- Organizations to know
- Useful resources

End by thanking the person for their time and advice. Be specific!

Example Structure

Focus	Length of time	Topics
Present	~10 minutes	Current role/responsibilities, organization they're at
Past	~5 minutes	Academic/professional background, how they found job, interview process
Future	~5 minutes	Professional vision/plan for the next 2-5 years
Advice	~5 minutes	Relevant people they can connect you to, organizations to learn about, useful resources

Informational Interviews: SOPs/Worksheets

Informational Interview Prep: Standard Operating Procedure

- Identify the information that is most important to you
- Develop Present, Past, Future question lists based on that info
- Create post-interview checklist
 - Add contact on LinkedIn
 - Thank you notes
 - New contact follow up

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW WORKSHEET	
NAME: TITLE & ORG: CONTACT INFO:	
PRESENT (10 MINUTES)	
PAST (5 MINUTES)	
FUTURE (5 MINUTES)	
PEOPLE (NAME, ORG, EMAIL)	
RESOURCES	

Informational Interviews: Sample Questions

- Can you tell me a little bit about your current responsibilities?
- What are common qualities of individuals who are successful in your position?
- How did you get into this field? What path led you to this position?
- What was your interview process like?
- What type of training did you receive when you first began working here?
- What would be a professionally interesting next step in your career?
- Can you recommend anyone else who might be willing to talk with me?

Tip: Prepare plenty of extra follow-up questions in case you are meeting with someone who is less talkative. Sometimes people need prompting to provide more details and clarification.

How do I follow up after an informational interview?

Informational Interviews: Following Up

Day Of

Send a brief
thank you note
the same day

After ~1 Week

Send *another* thank
you note, detailing
how you have
benefited from
their advice

Long Term

Reach out when
you are searching
or applying

Informational Interviews: Writing Thank You Notes

The Two Notes Strategy

Send a thank you note the day of and a more detailed thank you note 3 - 5 days after an informational interview.

If you scheduled via email, the first thank you note can be in the same email thread, but the second thank you note should be in a new thread.

Why?

Lengthens relationship

Increases interactions

Demonstrates reciprocity: if they take time to help, you'll follow through.

- The thank you
- Follow up on advice, ie:
 - You reached out to their contact
 - You read article they mentioned
- Share link, article, etc. about common interest

Thank You Note: Template & Example

Subject Line: Thank You

Hello [Name],

Thank you for chatting with me the other day. It was great to learn about your career and *[info they shared that was interesting or helpful to you]*.

I *[follow up on their advice]* and found it so helpful, (Optional: particularly *[detail]*. After *[describe follow up]*, I found *[link]* that I thought you might enjoy.)

Thank you again—I really appreciate your insights.

Sincerely,
Jesse Bruin

Subject Line: Thank you!

Hello Jamie,

Thank you for chatting with me the other day. It was great to learn about your career and the publishing world.

I checked out the Social Science Research Association website and found it so helpful, particularly their resources for early career professionals.

Thank you again—I really appreciate your insights!

Sincerely,
Jesse Bruin

Networking: Scheduling & Tracking

- Find a weekly time to reach out to people
 - Start with a half hour and increase as needed (ie 12-12:30 on Thursdays)
- Make a copy of [GCS' Networking Tracker](#)
 - Add people from the “Identifying New Contacts” activity (using LinkedIn or UCLA One) onto the Tracking Spreadsheet
- Right now, put a time on your calendar this week to reach out to the person you identified in the “Who Do You Know?” activity to set up an informational interview

Stay in the know!



@uclagcs



UCLA Graduate Career Services