

CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Guidelines for Contacting Mentors

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- Send a brief e-mail to your mentor as soon as you receive your mentor assignment. Your first objective is to start the conversation and introduce yourself. The subject line of your email could state “Gonzaga University Student Seeking Career Advice.” Do not send your resume or other attachments in the initial correspondence to avoid problems with corporate e-mail filters.
- The key element in networking or mentoring is establishing a relationship based upon mutual trust and respect. A good way to start the relationship is by getting to know the other person. Be prepared to ask about the life experiences of your mentor and the lessons they have learned since leaving college. Your mentor will be a stronger advocate for a person they know and trust.
- Be prepared! Spend some time thinking about your interests and abilities and how you will communicate that information to your mentor. Make sure your resume meets professional standards and accurately conveys your interests and accomplishments. Career & Professional Development is your resource for resume preparation.
- Research basic information on your career field that will enable you to ask intelligent questions. Convey a sense of commitment to your career field that clarifies to your mentor that you are motivated and mature.
- Clearly define what specific information or assistance you want from the mentor. Are you looking to learn more about a career field, seeking job hunting advice, or looking for specific job opportunities? After you have established the relationship, ask your mentor for referrals to other individuals that might be helpful to you.
- If you plan on scheduling an appointment, please ask your mentor for guidelines on appropriate dress and protocol for the visit. You should also discuss the frequency and preferred means of communication.
- Always follow through on your commitments to your mentors and conduct yourself in a professional manner in all your interactions. Keep your mentor informed of any changes you make and share any successes that you experience. Mentors are anxious to know what happens to the people they help.
- You should not directly ask for a job or internship. You are seeking advice and trying to develop a relationship. Job offers will result if you are effective in developing a positive relationship with your mentor and follow-up on their recommendations.
- Always send a thank you note to your mentor.
- Please let Career & Professional Development Office know if you need additional mentors or if you have questions on how we can help you succeed in securing a great career.