

Professional Communication

Whether you are submitting an application for a position or developing a networking contact online, all of your communication needs to be done with professionalism. Employers are evaluating your communication skills with every piece of correspondence, so be sure they will get a good impression.

Many of your connections with professionals will be done through electronic media. In online correspondence it is important to follow the same basic guidelines as you would in any other formal style of communication. Below are some examples.

Networking Through Email

Subject: Request to Connect from a KU Student

Dear Ms. Ellsworth:

Dr. Studia, professor of sociology at the University of Kansas, suggested that I contact you. As a fellow Jayhawk, she felt you might be willing to visit with me about my career path.

I am a junior at KU, majoring in sociology, and am currently exploring career options. Your background in human rights work and your leadership in non-profit organizations are both very interesting to me. I would like to learn more about what it's like to work for a nonprofit, and was hoping you might be willing to give me advice on how to prepare myself for this career path.

Would you be willing to visit with me briefly about your experiences? I'm available between December 5 and January 10 and would be happy to connect through email, on the phone, or in person.

Sincerely,

Jay Hawk
jhawk@ku.edu
555-555-5555



Informational Interview Request Through Email

Subject: Informational Interview Request from Jay Hawk

Dear Mr. Budig:

I am currently a junior finance student at the University of Kansas and am interested in learning more about careers in the finance industry. After a class discussion and personal research, one particular career that has sparked my interest is financial advising.

Would you be willing to take 20 to 30 minutes out of your day to provide me with advice and expertise based on your experiences in this field? I am available on Monday and Friday afternoons through the next four weeks. If this is a possibility, please email me back or contact me at 555-555-5555. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Jay Hawk
jhawk@ku.edu
555-555-5555

Job Prospecting Through Email

Subject: Positions in Software Development

Dear Mr. Haworth:

After reading a description of your company on LinkedIn, I would like to know about possible job opportunities in your software development department. I am a senior in Computer Science, and will earn my bachelor's degree in May.

Last summer, I had the opportunity to do an internship for the XYZ Solutions Firm where I worked closely with a team to develop business technology programs. My training also included testing existing systems. This experience confirmed my interest in a career in software development, and I believe your company would be an excellent match for my skills.

My resume is attached for your consideration. I realize that you have many demands on your time, but I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss employment possibilities with your company. Would you be available the week of January 10 to meet briefly? If you would prefer to contact me by phone, my number is 555-555-5555.

Thank you very much for considering my request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

Jay Hawk
Jayhawk@ku.edu
555-555-5555

Networking Introduction Through Social Media Messaging

Dear Ms. Fraser:

I am currently a psychology major at the University of Kansas exploring career options. While researching people who work in higher education and live in Chicago, I found your profile. I will be in Chicago during the week of March 18-22. Would you be willing to take 20-30 minutes of your time to talk to me about your experiences in this field? If you would rather connect by email, I can be reached at jhawk@ku.edu. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jay Hawk
jayhawk@ku.edu
555-555-5555

LinkedIn Invitation to Connect Message

(Someone you've never met)

Dear Mr. Sabatini:

I am a photo media major at the University of Kansas exploring career options. I joined the Photo Marketing group, and enjoy reading the discussions there. Would you be willing to connect with me so that I can learn more about your work?

Sincerely,

Jay Hawk
jayhawk@ku.edu

LinkedIn Invitation to Connect

(Someone already known to you)

Dear Ms. Higuchi:

I enjoyed the time I spent working for you at ABC Company. The help you offered me during my internship was invaluable. I hope you will connect with me on LinkedIn so we can stay in touch in the future! Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jay Hawk
jayhawk@ku.edu
555-555-5555

TIPS FOR ONLINE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

DO

- Spell check ALL written communication.
- Proofread electronic messages just as thoroughly as you would printed documents.
- Use a subject line in ALL emails such as "Application for Marketing Internship".
- Be respectful of the person you are contacting; don't ask for something they can't provide.
- Use formal greetings and closings when possible.
- Create an email "signature" that includes all of your contact information.
- Use a formal greeting such as Mr./Ms. unless they have given you permission to call them by their first name or you know them well.

DON'T

- Use informal text shortcuts such as "ur" for "you are".
- Use emoticons in any of your communication.
- Use an informal tone in your writing.
- Attach a resume in a request to connect, or in a request for an informational interview.