



CAREER SERVICES

Examples of Networking e-mail: Weak and Strong

1681 5th Avenue | (304) 696-2370 | www.marshall.edu/career-services

Weak example:

Subj: Hello

Dear Mr. Smith,

My name is Jane Doe and I'm a junior marketing major at Marshall University looking for internships this summer. I saw your information on the Marshall Mentor Network and was wondering if you might be able to help me. I have an interview in three days at a branch of your company and was hoping to speak with you either tomorrow afternoon or Wednesday after 5PM. If you are not available during those times, perhaps you could respond by email to these questions:

1. What kinds of interview questions should I prepare for?
2. What are the main differences between your company and the other top 3?

What are the most important trends in the marketing industry?

Thanks,
Jane Doe

Why the e-mail above is weak:

- The subject line is meaningless to the recipient.
- An e-mail does not need to be written like a telephone script; the sender's name closes the e-mail. No need to state your name at the start.
- By e-mailing only three days before her scheduled interview and offering limited options for speaking with the alumnus, Jane Doe appears unprofessional, presumptuous, and inflexible.
- It is important to ask to schedule a time to speak at the alumnus' convenience giving as much advanced notice as possible. You should work your schedule around his or hers.
- She is asking him to help and do things for her before he knows anything about her. You need to make a good impression on someone before asking him/her to do you a favor.
- It is inappropriate to ask the alumnus to answer questions via e-mail, especially in the first e-mail initiating contact. What takes you a few words to ask could require a lengthy and involved response on the part of the alumnus.
- The questions asked should be researched by the job seeker. Asking these questions, and expecting someone else to answer, makes the job seeker look lazy.

www.marshall.edu/career-services





CAREER SERVICES

Examples of Networking e-mail: Weak and Strong

1681 5th Avenue | (304) 696-2370 | www.marshall.edu/career-services

Strong example:

Date: February xx, yyyy

Subj: Marshall Mentor Network contact from marketing student

Dear Mr. Smith,

I located your contact information through the Marshall Mentor Network and was hoping that we may be able to connect over the telephone for 10-15 minutes at your convenience. I would love to learn more about your background and the marketing industry in Southern West Virginia.

Currently, I am a junior marketing major at Marshall University and am interested in exploring internship opportunities in the field this summer. I am specifically interested in value-based marketing strategies, advertising, and communications.

Thank you for your time. I sincerely hope to hear from you. *(Note alternate ending below.)*

Cordially,

Jane Doe

Marshall University class of 2011

(Alternate ending if Jane has a phone number for Mr. Smith:)

Thank you for your time. I will also call you in the next day or two to see if we might arrange a time to speak. *(Why: By indicating she will call, Jane is taking the initiative, instead of asking Mr. Smith to get in touch with her. By writing in advance of calling, she is giving him the opportunity to be prepared for her call.)*

Why the e-mail above is strong:

- The subject line is meaningful to the recipient.
- She's not demanding time, and she's not telling the alumnus to do anything. She is expressing a hope that they can speak with one another.
- She is indicating an interest in learning about Mr. Smith and his work. Expressing interest in others is a courtesy, and most people are willing to talk about their work.
- She provides enough information about herself for the recipient to know her basic interests; she keeps the information brief.
- She is writing in February, planning ahead for summer, showing she is not scrambling at the last minute to seek a summer internship.
- If there is something particular about his background that interests her, she could mention that. (Just be careful not to sound like you just want to work for the person's employer, and that is the only reason you are writing.)

