

Professional Email Guide



In the **Resource College Alumni**, we understand establishing strong interpersonal connections is a critical first step toward achieving personal and professional goals. With a focus on **REPP – reflecting, exploring, preparing and pursuing** – we know forward motion is made easier when you have people to talk with about your professional interests. With that in mind, it is likely you will initiate contact with a potential connection via email. RCA has created this guide to support your outreach to potential contacts, employers, graduate programs, and more. In it, you will find sample outreach emails and advice to assist you throughout the process.

We encourage you to look at these samples and suggestions. Use them as a foundation for emails you send. You will want to further tailor the emails to your particular situation, but know these samples are targeted to several different areas of outreach and are meant as a support. As with all communication, remember it is better to be more formal; you do not want to unintentionally close doors to opportunities by being too casual. However, if you know your industry of choice has a more casual approach to communication, or if you are reaching out to someone you have a close relationship with, you can back away from being overly formal.

Overall, all email communication should have structure, a level of formality, and proper grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Effective communication builds effective connections.

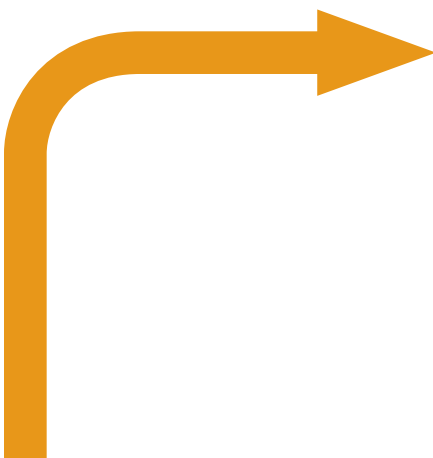


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General Email Structure and Guidelines

BASIC OUTLINE

Here is a suggested outline for an email; remember to use a professional and respectful tone. Details for each section are included below. We have also included a sample email at the end of this section to give you an idea of how to structure your communication.

Subject Line

I. Greeting

II. Content: Simple introduction of content stating the main point.

III. Content: Supporting information as needed.

IV. Conclusion/recommendations/results/question/request.

V. Closing

Signature Block

SUBJECT LINE

This is a crucial part of effective email communication, so take time to think about what you put in this space.

Good examples:

- History 101: Final Assignment - question about source variety
- COR 400: Questions about final project and rubric provided
- [FYI Only]: Update on X Job Application

***What makes these good examples?** Notice how these examples list what the email is about and what, if anything, is being requested. When emailing faculty about classes or assignments, it's helpful to mention the class and section you are referring to.

Bad examples:

- Do I have to write this paper on time
- Meet
- (no subject)
- Jobs

***What makes these bad examples?** These subjects are vague, overly casual, and show a lack of respect for the reader's time and attention.

General Email Structure and Guidelines

GREETING

Start your email with a “Hello,” “Dear,” or “Good Morning/Afternoon,” then address the person you are writing to with the proper title and/or name. Avoid starting with overly casual words, such as, “Hey” or “Hi.” For example:

- Dear, Ms. Meredith Tornabene,
- Hello, Professor Streissguth,
- Hello, Mr. Rapoza,
- Good Morning, Dr. Ford,
- Good Evening, Mx. Fahey,

CONTENT

Share your main point first, then include supporting content to provide context that is clear and to the point. Emails should be brief, and multi-paragraphed, for ease of interpretation.

~~you can look~~ throughout this guide to see other examples of tone and structure for effective, professional email content.

NOTE: If you have websites, Google docs, slides, etc, to attach/link to the email, hyperlink when possible. You can embed the content by highlighting the text and then selecting the *INSERT LINK* option in the email and pasting in the URL to outside material. In the end, your email looks cleaner without long URLs, makes understanding easier for readers, and shows respect for their time.

CONCLUSION

Wrap up the email by reinforcing/restating your main point and restating your question/recommendation/request, etc.

CLOSING

Close your email with an appropriate signoff. This lets the reader know you are finished with your outreach.

- Sincerely,
- Best,
- Best Regards,
- Thank you,

General Email Structure and Guidelines

GENERAL SAMPLE EMAIL

New message

To: Mr Charles

Subject: ENG 301-02: Question About William Carlos Williams' Poem

Good morning, Mr Charles

I am a student in your Mathematics 2 class,

I'm working on my reflection on William Carlos Williams' poem, *Spring and All*. I'm not sure what to make of the last stanza, and I am having trouble deciphering what "It" is. Here are the lines:

One by one objects are defined—
It quickens: clarity, outline of leaf

Do you have a suggestion? I'm happy to discuss this during your office hours, as well.

Thank you,

Riley Halle

General Email Structure and Guidelines

Re-read your email and make sure you are clearly and briefly explaining your point in a respectful manner .

As a rule:

- Make sure your email settings have the default as REPLY not REPLY ALL – there are so many ways REPLY ALL can go wrong
- Change UNDO SEND option to 30 seconds – gives you time to correct or pull back emails you did not mean to send/sent too early. You can go into your email settings and change this.
- Double-check your hyperlinks are going to the correct webpage

CREATE A SIGNATURE BLOCK

Go into your email settings and find the SIGNATURE block. Once in this space, use words/images to describe yourself in four lines or less. In general, your email signature should have your name, school, graduation year, major(s), and any other relevant leadership or campus involvement.

Examples:

Simon Le Moyne

He/His

Le Moyne College '26 | Communications Major

Resident Advisor: St. Mary's Hall | LSPB: Student Planning Co-Chair

Erica Dolphy (She/Her)

Le Moyne College - Class of 2025

Major: Computer Science & Cybersecurity

Women in Cybersecurity Club (WiCYS) Member

Career Conversation Request

This is an email you would send in order to introduce yourself and ask to meet with someone to find out more about an industry, company, graduate program, etc. Remember, developing relationships and connecting with others in the professional arena are fantastic ways to better understand what you want to do and how to achieve your goals.

Dear Mr./Ms./Mx./Dr. [Contact's Last Name or Full name of contact]:

My name is [your name], and I am a [school year] at Le Moyne College studying [major]. I really admire your [work/experience] with [organization/company]. I am in the process of exploring careers in your field and would sincerely appreciate 20 minutes of your time in order to ask you some questions and learn more about you and your [journey/career path].

I am available to meet with you [give a span of days and times] during your usual workday. Please let me know the day and time that is convenient for you to meet. I am available via phone, virtual or in person. (choose the best fit for you)

Thanks in advance for this great opportunity!

Sincerely,

[Your name]

KEEP IN MIND



- Most professionals are incredibly busy, it may take two or three emails to them before you receive a response.
- Give the person a full week to respond back to you before you send a follow-up email.
- When you email the person a second time, you can start off by saying something like, "I know you must be very busy so I wanted to follow-up on my earlier email."
- As long as you're polite, you will not be perceived as annoying or pushy because you sent a follow-up email.

IF THEY REQUEST CONTACT BY PHONE

- You can use a similar format for leaving a voicemail or message.
- Make sure the voicemail greeting on your phone is appropriate.
- Call the host back within 24 hours of receiving their message if you miss a call.

Job Shadow Request

This is a sample email you can use to reach out to someone who is in a field that sparks your curiosity. Shadowing at a worksite allows you to witness firsthand what kind of work is done, which skills are needed, and how you might fit into such an environment.

Dear Mr./Ms./Mx./Dr. [Contact's Last Name or Full name of contact]:

My name is [your name], and I am a [school year] at Le Moyne College studying [major]. I really admire your [work/experience] with [organization]. I am in the process of exploring careers in your field and would sincerely appreciate an opportunity to shadow you (or someone else you suggest) at your work. I believe that a job shadowing experience would help me determine if this field would be a good fit for me.

Would you be open to me shadowing your for (time frame)? If so, I am available [give a span of days] during your usual workday. Please let me know which day and time would be most convenient for you.

Thank you in advance for considering my request.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

KEEP IN MIND

- Most job shadowing experiences are either for a half day or full day.
- You may have more success asking for a job shadowing experience after you have a successful Career Conversation.
- Most professionals are incredibly busy so it may take two or three emails before you receive a response.
- Give the person a full week to respond back to you before you send a follow-up email.
- When you email the person a second time, you can start off by saying something like, "I know you must be very busy so I wanted to follow-up on my earlier email."
- As long as you're polite, you will not be perceived as annoying or pushy because you sent a follow-up email.

Job Application Request

Date

Dear Mr./Ms./Mx./Full Name of Contact _____:

I know the difference a strong team makes in achieving goals. From looking at your website and seeing [Company's name]'s accomplishments, I knew I wanted to be a part of the impact your company makes. That is why I was very excited to see an opening posted on LinkedIn for [position title]. I am very much interested in the position and have attached my resume and cover letter to this email for you to review.

As you will see, I have a great deal to offer [Name of Company] and your efforts in the field of [Type of business/work to be done].

It would be my pleasure to meet in person to further discuss my skills and strengths. Please feel free to contact me at (518) 222-2211. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

KEEP IN MIND

- It's all about that first impression—especially when it comes to your cover letter. Use these opening lines on your next cover letter to get the attention of any hiring manager: [5 Opening Lines That Will Make Your Cover Letter Stand Out](#).
- See the [Resume and Cover Letter Guide](#) for guidance on writing a strong cover letter to include with your email.

Job Inquiry Request

Dear Mr./Ms./Full Name of Contact _____:

Perhaps you are, or will soon be, seeking an addition to your team. Presently, I am a senior at Le Moyne College, majoring in Philosophy and English. I have been tracking the work you are doing at [name of company] and I would very much like to be a part of the difference you are making in the [name of industry] arena. In particular, I'm interested in delving into the work [company name] does around [what it is that interests you]. I see myself as a strong candidate for [position name/job title] with [company name] should that opportunity arise.

[What it is that interests you about the company and its work] is something I have explored while pursuing my degree. In classes such as [list two to three classes] I was able to learn more about what it is that proves successful and what does not work. Specifically, [include description of project, report, or other related work that shows your connection to what the company does and your interest in it]. I hope to take that academic acumen and apply it to the real world and the work [company name] does. Again, the work you do with [what it is that interests you] is compelling, and I can add value to your efforts as a [job title]. Clearly, if there is another way you see my contributions adding value to the work you do, I would be more than happy to discuss that as well.

Enclosed is my resume for your review and consideration. I would very much appreciate the opportunity to further discuss your company and my interest in becoming a part of your team. I can meet at your convenience during your work hours. If you prefer, I am also able to talk in the evenings at [(555) 555-5555].

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

KEEP IN MIND

- You can make this letter stronger by adding a reason why you're interested in this particular organization. This could come from research you've done on the organization's website or social media profiles, or from the news.
- If you have relevant internship or work experience, consider highlighting that instead of your classroom experience.
- You can use AI to find the similarities between the job description and your resume bullet points. Once you have done that, make sure to highlight those connections in your cover letter.

Job Reference/Recommendation Request

Asking someone to serve as a reference can feel intimidating, but know that if you have a strong connection with the person you are asking, that individual will feel comfortable letting you know whether or not he or she can offer a recommendation.

Hello [First Name],

I hope all is well! How have things been with you and [the person's company, organization, or personal interest]?

I'm reaching out because I have begun the job application process, and I'd love to list your name as a reference, if you're willing. I thought of you because we've [ways in which you've worked together], and you could speak to my [key skills and abilities needed in the new position].

Please let me know if you'd be willing to serve as a reference and, if so, your preferred contact information and any other details you need from my end.

And, of course, if you're busy or not comfortable, I completely understand. Thank you in advance for your time, and let me know if there is anything I can do for you!

All the best,

[Your name]

KEEP IN MIND



If you are selected for an interview, reach out to your references and let them know the company name and that someone may be contacting them. Again, thank them for offering to support you in such a tangible way.

Also share the following information with them:

- What the hiring team is looking for [very short description of key elements of the role].
- 1-2 of your skills, abilities, or talents that are key to the position.
- Specific project you worked on that's relevant to the role.
- Key differentiator between you and other candidates.

Job Offer Extension Request

Dear Dr./Mr./Ms./Mx.[Last Name or first and last name of person]:

Thank you for your telephone call and the email I received yesterday offering me the position of [position title] with [Organization/Company name]. I am excited about the opportunity this position offers both in terms of job duties and my ability to contribute to your efforts, and I very much appreciate your confidence in offering me the job.

You asked that I make a decision by [date requested by company/organization]. This is an important decision, and at this time, I do not have all the information I need in order to give you a response within the time requested. For this reason, I am asking you to consider letting me supply you with my decision by [date that is reasonable and gives you enough time]. I would very much appreciate such an extension, and assure you that I will be able to make a firm decision by that date.

Thank you very much for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

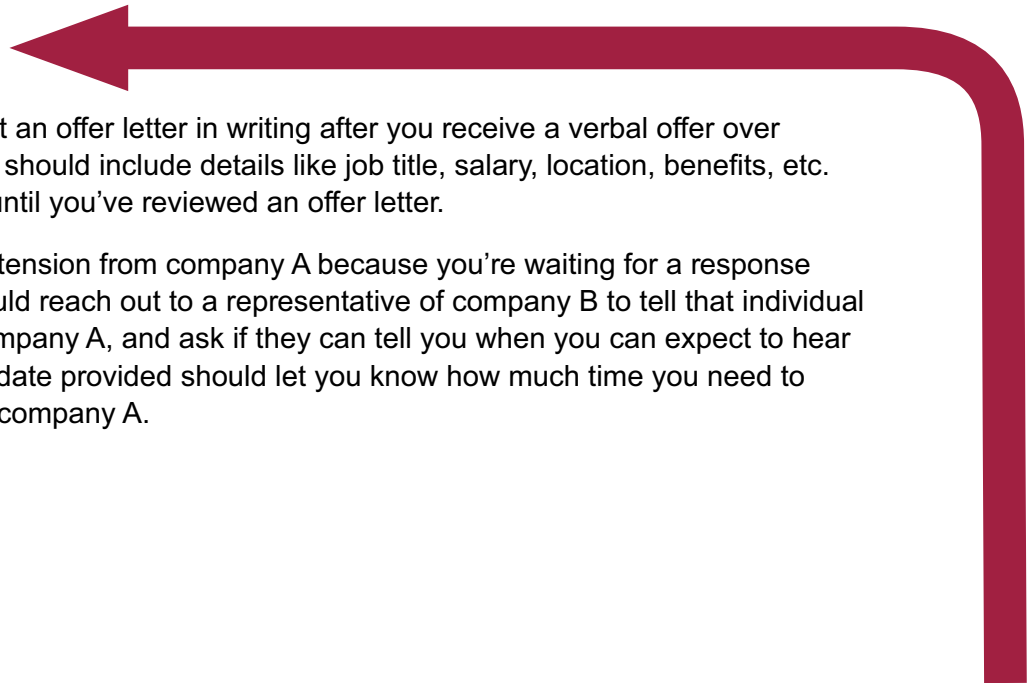
[Your name]

[Major(s)/Minor(s)] - Le Moyne College

[Phone]

[Email]

KEEP IN MIND



You should always request an offer letter in writing after you receive a verbal offer over the phone. The offer letter should include details like job title, salary, location, benefits, etc. Do not accept a job offer until you've reviewed an offer letter.

If you are asking for an extension from company A because you're waiting for a response from company B, you should reach out to a representative of company B to tell that individual you have an offer from company A, and ask if they can tell you when you can expect to hear back with an update. The date provided should let you know how much time you need to ask for an extension from company A.

Declining a Job Offer

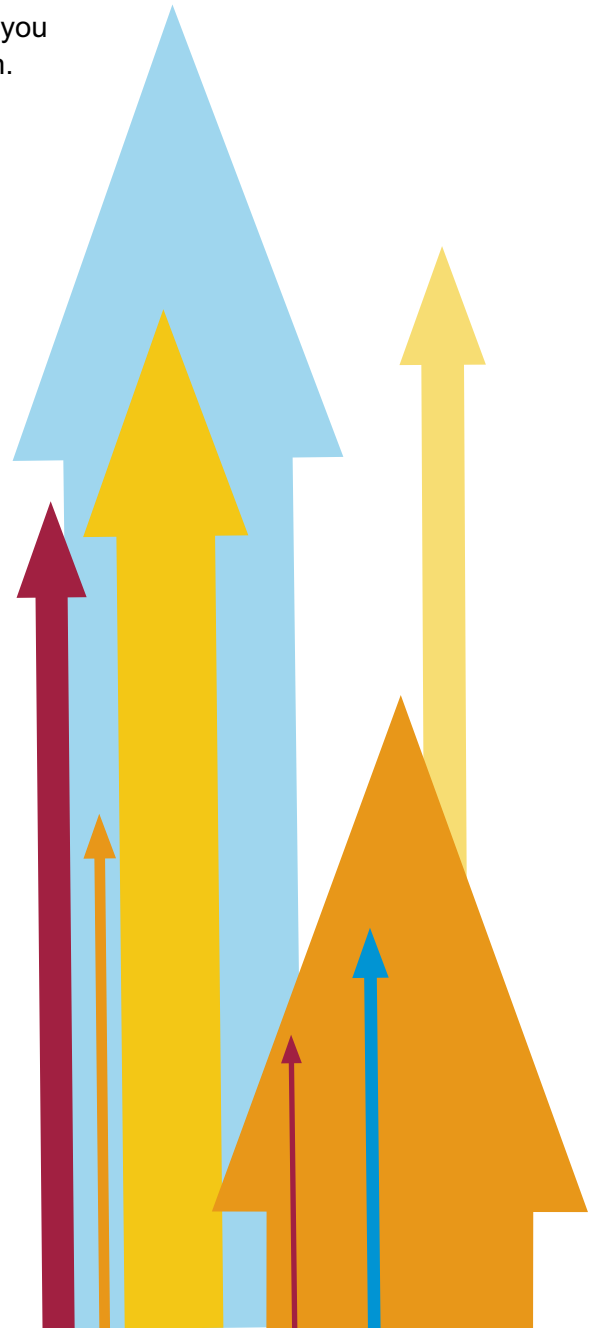
Dear Dr./Mr./Ms./Mx.[Last Name or first and last name of person]:

I wanted to follow up with you regarding the offer letter I received from [insert company name]. After much consideration, I made the decision to accept an offer from another organization. This was a difficult decision as I enjoyed meeting your team and learning about [company]. I am very appreciative of the time you took to review my application and interview me on [date].

I hope our professional paths cross in the future and I wish you the best of luck with your recruiting efforts to fill this position.

Sincerely,

[Your name]



Graduate School Reference/Recommendation Request

Asking someone to write a letter of recommendation can feel intimidating, but know that if you have a strong connection with the person you are asking, that individual will feel comfortable letting you know whether or not they can write a letter to submit with your application.

Hello Dr./Ms./Mr./Mx.[Name of person],

I hope all is well! How have things been with you and [the person's company, organization, or personal interest]?

I'm reaching out because I am applying to the [name program] at [university name], and would so appreciate including you on my list of recommendations, if you're willing. I thought of you because [ways in which your relationship has been instrumental in your personal and professional development/choice of attending graduate school], and you could speak to my [key skills and abilities needed in the program].

I've attached my current resume and here is a link to the description of the program for your reference. If you are willing to write a letter of recommendation, here are some key ideas that might be helpful:

[One to two skills, abilities, or talents that are key to the program]

[Specific project you worked on that's relevant to succeeding in a graduate program]

[Key differentiator between you and other candidates]

Please let me know if you'd be willing to complete a recommendation and, if so, your preferred contact information and any other details you need from my end. I believe the [university name] will reach out via email explaining the procedures to follow. The program has a deadline of [date] for all submissions, so the letter would need to be completed by then, I hope that fits into your schedule.

And, of course, if you're busy or not comfortable, I completely understand. Thank you in advance for your time, and let me know if there is anything I can do for you!

All the best,

[Your name]

Thank You Emails for Different Occasions

CAREER CONVERSATION THANK YOU

Following up an Career Conversation with a note of thanks shows your professionalism, your maturity and, most of all, your gratitude. Don't forget to complete this essential step in establishing long-lasting relationships and bridges to future opportunities. This note should be sent within 24 hours of the meeting.

Dear [Interviewer Name],

Thank you so much for meeting with me today. It was such a pleasure to learn more about the work you do and [Company Name]. As I said when we met, I am learning as much as I can about [industry/field of work], and meeting with you has helped me a great deal. I have a much clearer understanding of what I need to do moving forward thanks to your insight and advice. It was particularly interesting to learn more about [content you found interesting].

If you ever have any more advice or think there is someone else I should speak to about [field of work], please let me know. I look forward to staying in touch as I continue [job search/next steps]. I definitely plan on using your advice to [piece of advice that stuck with you]. Thank you again for your time.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

JOB INTERVIEW THANK YOU

Following up a job interview with a note of thanks shows your professionalism, your maturity and, most of all, your interest in the position. Don't forget to complete this essential step in establishing a bridge to future opportunities. This note should be sent within 24 hours of the interview.

Dear [Interviewer Name],

Thank you so much for meeting with me today. It was such a pleasure to learn more about the team and position, and I'm very excited about the opportunity to join [Company Name] and help [bring in new clients/develop world-class content/anything else awesome you would be doing] with your team. The energy I witnessed during the interview and while touring the office infused me with the feeling that I wanted to be part of [company name]'s growth and outreach.

I look forward to hearing from you about decisions you have made, and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

Thank You Emails for Different Occasions, cont'd.

Hello [Contact Name],

WHEN SOMEONE GIVES YOU ADVICE

I was excited—but also really nervous—when I was faced with [an unfamiliar task at work]. Thank you so much for taking the time to answer my questions. Hearing about your experience working on [something similar] was so helpful!

I ended up doing really well on [the project, event, etc.] and wanted to share how much I appreciate your advice.

WHEN SOMEONE MAKES AN INTRODUCTION

I wanted to let you know that I just got [back from meeting/off a phone call] with [mutual contact's name].

Thank you so much for introducing us! She/He/They told me what it was like working at her/his/their company. She/He/They also gave me some great advice about [helpful advice they shared].

It was also helpful when she/he/they told me I should feel free to send on my resume. I feel so much better/more confident/more ready to tackle [whatever is needed].

WHEN SOMEONE SERVES AS A REFERENCE

I'm really excited to have made it to the final rounds of interviewing with [company]/to have been accepted into the program to which I applied].

I've attached an updated resume and a copy of the position description, so you'll have them if you need them for future reference.

Thank you so much for agreeing to serve as a reference, and please let me know if I can be helpful in any way!

Best,

[Your name]