Non-Academic Job Search
Kickstarting Your Network
UChicagoGRAD
What We Fear...
Agenda:

- Why is this hard?
- What’s...your...agenda?
- Who ya’ gonna’ call?
- What to say?
- What comes next?
Agenda:

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Asking for things ain’t easy
Asking for things ain’t easy

- Isn’t it cheating?
- Do people really want to talk?
- Can I really just ask a CEO for a job??
- What can one conversation do?
- Do they want to hear twice?
- But academia is different...
Agenda:

- Why is this hard?
- What’s...YOUR...agenda?
- Who ya’ gonna’ call?
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- What comes next?
What's your agenda?
What’s your agenda?

- Set clear objectives
- Realize what’s possible
  - Connections/introductions
  - Resume Review
  - First steps advice
  - ...a job....?
- So: start early
- Make it easy to help you
The Four-Month Timeline

August 24: Initial Outreach

September 7: Initial Coffee/Chat

Sept. 14: Follow Up / New Connection(s)

Nov 1: Update on academic progress

December 15: Start Date?

November 5: Job posted
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The Real Answer: EVERYONE.
Areas to Consider

- Position
- Program
- Potential to help
- Proximity to your goals
- ARE YOU CURIOUS?
Judge your affinity.
Create a Hierarchy...

- Your program, your desired career
- Your program and looks interesting
- Not your program, but interesting career
- UChicago graduate alum, your career
- UChicago alum/Undergrad alum
- Graduate alum from your field
- Generally interesting person

...but don’t be dogmatic
Areas to Consider
Don’t Forget About

- Undergraduate affiliations
- Family connections
- Social Groups (Your Friends!)
Gray’s Okay!

- Cast a broad seniority net
- Insider/Outsider Knowledge
  Entry level employees provide a different, but often equally useful kind of insight
- Busy People Get Things Done... and sometimes fewer people email them.
Start at LinkedIn

Michael Washburn
Director of Programs at New York Council for the Humanities
New York, New York | Nonprofit Organization Management

Current: New York Council for the Humanities, Freelance
Previous: The Graduate Center, City University of New York (CUNY), Cultural Policy Center, The University of Chicago, DePaul University

Education: The University of Chicago

Send a message  Endorse
415 connections

People Also Viewed

Sara Ogger
Executive Director at New York Council for the Humanities

Hilary Dobel
Tutor at Borough of Manhattan Community College & Freelance Translator

Adam Capitanio
Program Officer at New York Council for the Humanities

Laura M. Browning
Editorial Manager at The A.V. Club I Freelance Writer & Editor

grad.uchicago.edu
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Access to the Alumni Directory is open to University of Chicago alumni, students, and faculty.

You have reached this page because we need you to sign in before you can access the content you were trying to view.

If you are an alumna/us, student, or faculty member, please click the yellow "Sign in or Register" button to sign in and let the system know who you are.

First time here? Please click the yellow "Sign in or Register" button and register using your e-mail address on file with the University (listed on your profile in the old directory).

Still having trouble?
If you are having difficulty registering on the site or signing in, please contact the Alumni Association at Alumni-Support@UChicago.edu, 877.292.3945 (toll free), or 773.702.3945. A staff liaison will return your message during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. CST/CDT Monday-Friday).
Fire away.
Agenda:

- Why is this hard?
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Common Mistakes

Hi

My name is

What?

Are you serious?
Be aware of your audience
Common Mistakes

- Dissertation/Thesis-fest
- Me, me, me, my, my, my, I, I, I
- 1000 words will convince you!
- “I don’t have [x], but…”
- “I know you are VERY busy.”
- “If you can’t talk, that’s okay.”
- I will not ask for anything, sir!
- Best, a Gmail stranger
- Goodbye forever.
Subject: UChicago Connection

Dear Michael -

I'm a current student in the MA Program in Humanities at the University of Chicago. I work on post-9/11 literature, and am studying the ways in which short fiction in particular has changed over the past decade. After finishing the program, I'm interested in entering work in the public humanities, potentially in an outreach role.

I found your contact information in the alumni directory and wanted to reach out about your work at the New York Council for the Humanities. I was interested to see the range of programs that UCH supports in New York and farther afield, particularly when it comes to literary studies. And I was wondering if you might have time in the next two weeks to chat on phone about your trajectory into the organization after UChicago.

I'd be grateful for any advice you might have. At this point, I'm still exploring a range of options, and I'd be interested to hear your thoughts on nonprofit work generally, and the humanities in particular. I'm happy to work around your schedule and can follow up in a few weeks if that's easier.

Thanks and looking forward to talking soon.

Sincerely,

A-J

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A-J Aronstein
University of Chicago
Associate Director, Graduate Career Development and Employer Relations
Lecturer, Humanities Division
aj@uchicago.edu
773-834-7933
Convey:
- Curiosity
- Flexibility
- Warmth
- Persistence
Agenda:

- Why is this hard?
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Track Assiduously

- Last
- First
- First contact
- Follow-Up (bad contact?)
- Result
- Next Steps
- Notes
- Turn connections into more
Outline of Conversation
Outline of Conversation

1. Introduction
   • Thank them for agreeing to meet/speak
   • Small talk about how you found them
   • Elevator speech

2. Questions about job/company/industry
   • Follow up questions demonstrate interest/attentiveness

3. Questions about person
   • Opportunity to find out about possible career path
   • Allows person to open up and relate as human

4. Make request
   • Introductions to additional people
   • Advice for someone in your position
   • Resume help
   • Opportunities
Typical Questions

- Could you tell me what a “typical” day is like for you?
- What do you like about your work? What are the most challenging parts?
- What skills did you gain from your PhD/postdoc that have helped you in your career?
- Would you mind telling me about your career path and how you got to your current position?
- What advice do you have for someone with my background who wants to enter this field/company?
- Is there someone here or elsewhere that you’d recommend I speak with? (Goal: Gain 2 contacts from every interview)
Do not get discouraged!
Follow-Up Assiduously

- RE: instead of a new subject
- Be useful
- LinkedIn connection
- Send links, updates
- Check in by replying to original email thread
- All follow-ups should be brief
- Let them know if you apply
Goals

- Make an advising appointment
- Draft initial email
- Identify/contact 10 leads
- Secure 5 informational interviews and 10 more!
Business Cards for You!

chicagograd.biz.vistaprint.com

$6.79 for 50 cards

grad.uchicago.edu
Questions?

aj@uchicago.edu