

CALL

ME



Cold Calls and Emails

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Agenda:

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



Agenda:

- **Why is this hard?**
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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...**



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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

FEBRUARY 9: Initial Outreach

FEBRUARY 28: Initial Coffee/Chat

March 5: Follow Up / New Connection(s)

April 1: Update on dissertation progress

July 1: Start Date?

May 1: Job posted



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EVERYONE.

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Areas to Consider

- **Position**
- **Program**
- **Potential to help**
- **Proximity to your goals**
- **ARE YOU CURIOUS?**



Judge your affinity.

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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



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

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn profile for Michael Washburn. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the LinkedIn logo, a search bar, and links for Home, Profile, Connections, Jobs, and Interests. A banner for ICIMS Applicant Tracking is visible. The profile header includes a profile picture, the name Michael Washburn (1st degree), and his current role as Director of Programs at New York Council for the Humanities. Below this, his education at The University of Chicago and previous roles at various institutions are listed. A 'Send a message' button and an 'Endorse' button are present, along with a '415 connections' badge. The 'Background' section is expanded to show his experience as Director of Programs and a Freelance Writer. On the right, a 'People Also Viewed' section lists four other professionals.

Michael Washburn 1st
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

www.linkedin.com/pub/michael-washburn/9/7ab/4b9/en [Contact Info](#)

Background

Experience

Director of Programs
New York Council for the Humanities
October 2014 – Present (5 months)

Writer
Freelance
April 2007 – Present (7 years 11 months)

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 | Freelance Writer & Editor



Move to Alumni Directory

UChicago Community Online

UCHICAGO
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION

HOME ALUMNI DIRECTORY CLUBS LISTING EVENTS UCHICAGO RESOURCES

Welcome to the Alumni Directory!

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).

SIGN IN HERE

[Sign in or Register](#)

By signing in or registering, you are joining the **UChicago Community Online** community website.

[Learn more](#)



Fire away.

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**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.**



The Email

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 CCH 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 the 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

~~~~~  
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**



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# Track Assiduously

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



**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!**



# Questions?

