

Network with Confidence

Career Development Centre

2025 - 2026

Career Development Centre
students.wlu.ca/career





Learning Objectives Questionnaire

Step 1: Use your device to fill out the first portion of the questionnaire before we begin the session

Step 2: Keep your browser open to this questionnaire. Complete the second half of the questionnaire after the session

URL: bit.ly/cdcworkshops



Learning Objectives



Explore different networking approaches



Understand the purpose of and how to conduct an informational interview



Practice creating a high-quality elevator pitch



Learn networking follow-up methods



Avoid networking mistakes

Introductions

Thank you for joining!

**Let us know who is here
by providing your first
name, program and year.**

You'll find templates,
samples, and more in the
final slides posted in
Navigator. No need to copy
everything down!

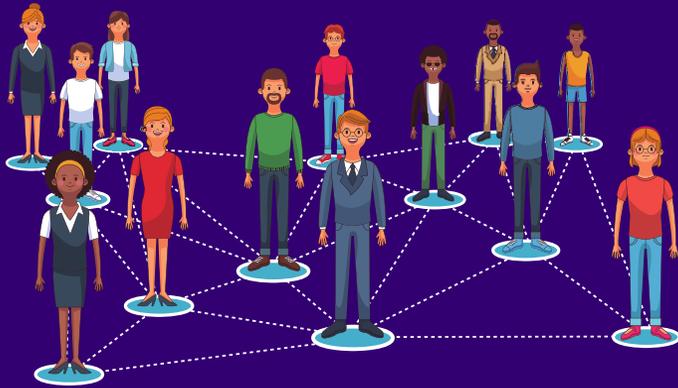


Answer the Following Question:

**Why is
Networking
Important?**

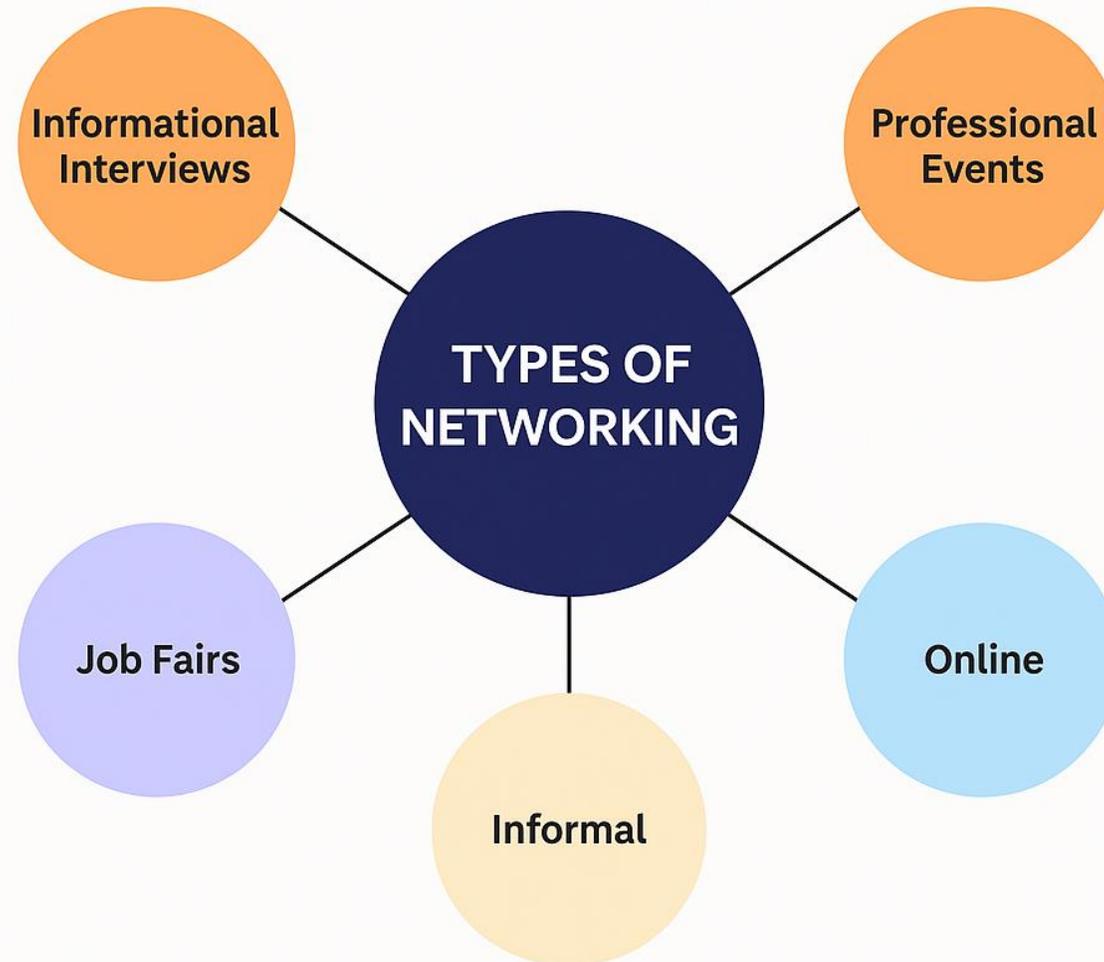


Networking



- A willingness to network and **build connections** will be the single most useful tool in your job search
- Everyone is capable of networking (even if some people seem to have an easier time making new connections than others)
- You already have networking experience! Any time you meet someone or make a new friend you're engaged in a form of networking

Types of Networking



Types of Networking



Informational Interviews



Professional Networking Events



Informal Networking



Job Fairs



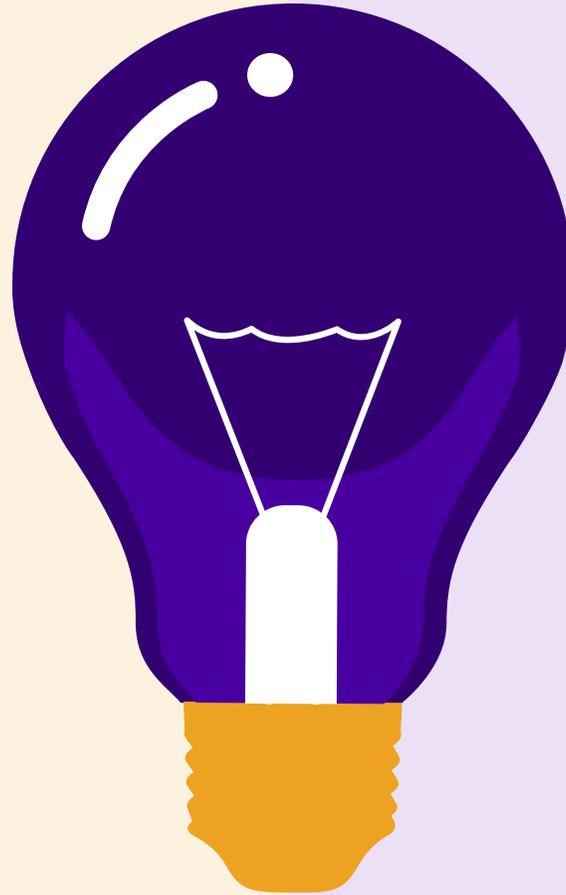
Informational Interviews

A meeting used to

- Gather information on your field of interest
- Find employment leads
- Expand your professional network

Common Questions Students Ask About Informational Interviews

Who should I reach out to?



How do I find people to talk to?

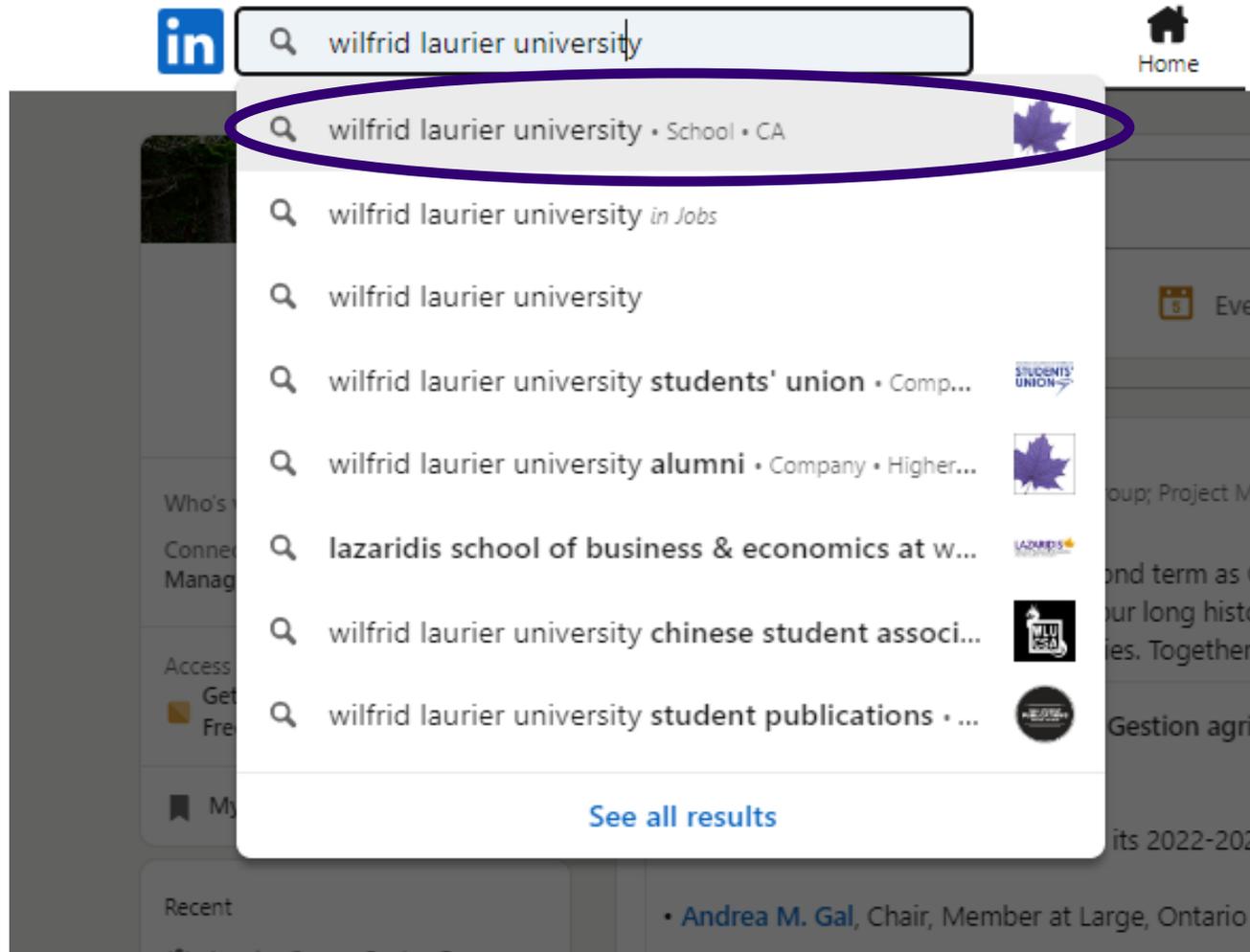
Informational Interviews



Networking Rule:

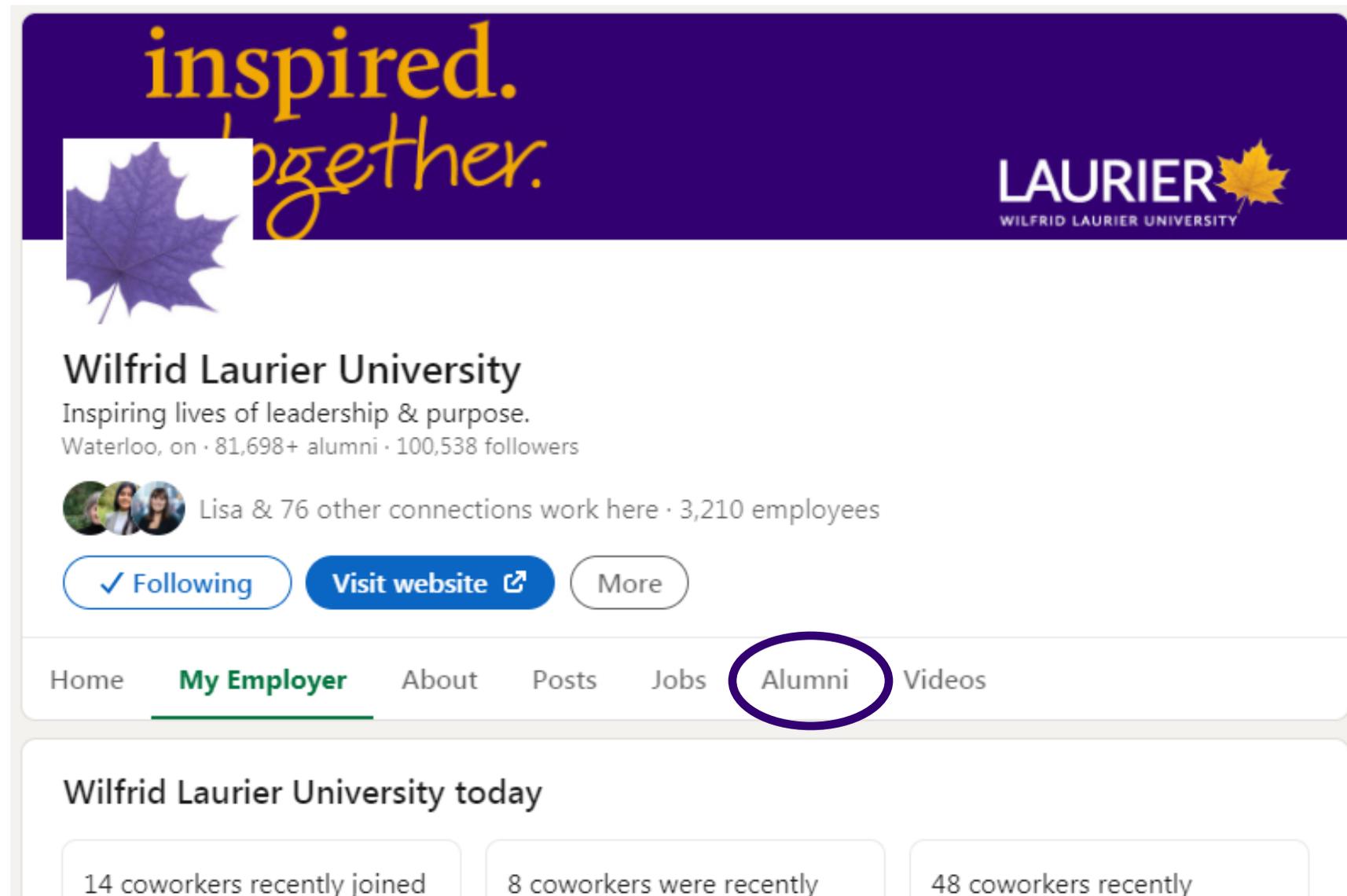
Reach out to people you either have **SOMETHING** or **SOMEBODY** in common

How to Find Contacts: The LinkedIn Alumni Tool



- Something in common – find Laurier alumni!
- There are over 81,000+ Laurier alumni on LinkedIn
- Search for: ‘Wilfrid Laurier University’ or ‘Lazaridis School of Business and Economics’

LinkedIn Alumni Tool



The screenshot shows the LinkedIn profile for Wilfrid Laurier University. At the top, there is a banner with the text "inspired. together." in yellow and white, and the Laurier logo on the right. Below the banner is a profile picture of a purple maple leaf. The company name "Wilfrid Laurier University" is displayed, along with its tagline "Inspiring lives of leadership & purpose." and location "Waterloo, on". Statistics show 81,698+ alumni and 100,538 followers. A section indicates that Lisa and 76 other connections work here, with 3,210 employees. Action buttons include "Following", "Visit website", and "More". A navigation bar at the bottom of the profile section has tabs for "Home", "My Employer", "About", "Posts", "Jobs", "Alumni", and "Videos", with "Alumni" circled in purple. Below this, a section titled "Wilfrid Laurier University today" features three cards: "14 coworkers recently joined", "8 coworkers were recently", and "48 coworkers recently".

inspired.
together.

LAURIER
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

Wilfrid Laurier University
Inspiring lives of leadership & purpose.
Waterloo, on · 81,698+ alumni · 100,538 followers

Lisa & 76 other connections work here · 3,210 employees

✓ Following Visit website More

Home My Employer About Posts Jobs Alumni Videos

Wilfrid Laurier University today

14 coworkers recently joined 8 coworkers were recently 48 coworkers recently

Alumni Tool: Refine Your Filters

- Search by keyword
- Location
- What they studied
- Where they work
- What they do

The screenshot displays the Alumni Tool interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, My Employer, About, Posts, Jobs, Alumni (highlighted), and Videos. Below the navigation, the page shows "588 alumni" and a search bar with the placeholder text "Search alumni by title, keyword or company". To the right of the search bar is a "Start year" dropdown menu set to "1900". Below the search bar, there are three active filters: "Communication, General X", "Toronto, Canada Area X", and "Marketing X", along with a "Clear all" link. The main content area is divided into two sections: "Where they live" and "Where they work". Each section has a "+ Add" button and a list of categories with corresponding horizontal bar charts. The "Where they live" section shows categories like Canada (1,128), Toronto, Canada Area (588), Kitchener, Canada Area (172), Ontario, Canada (64), United States (38), and France (34). The "Where they work" section shows categories like RBC (10), TD (7), TJX Canada – Winners, Marshalls, HomeSe... (4), Corus Entertainment (4), Microsoft (3), and Canadian Tire Corporation (3).

People you may know



Caroline Clement · 2nd
Senior Marketing & Communica...
'12 Brand Communication and ...
17 shared connections
[Connect](#)



Michael Domin... · 2nd
Marketing Manager at Intel Cor...
'09 Communication Studies, Soc...
4 shared connections
[Connect](#)



Joanna Burke · 2nd
Director of Marketing and Com...
'11 Communication Studies, min...
20 shared connections
[Connect](#)



Vivian Yu · 2nd
Senior Marketing Manager at Bell
Brand Communication & Manag...
27 shared connections
[Connect](#)



Kristen Roberts... · 2nd
Brand Strategy | Global Marketi...
'17 Brand Communication and ...
3 shared connections
[Connect](#)



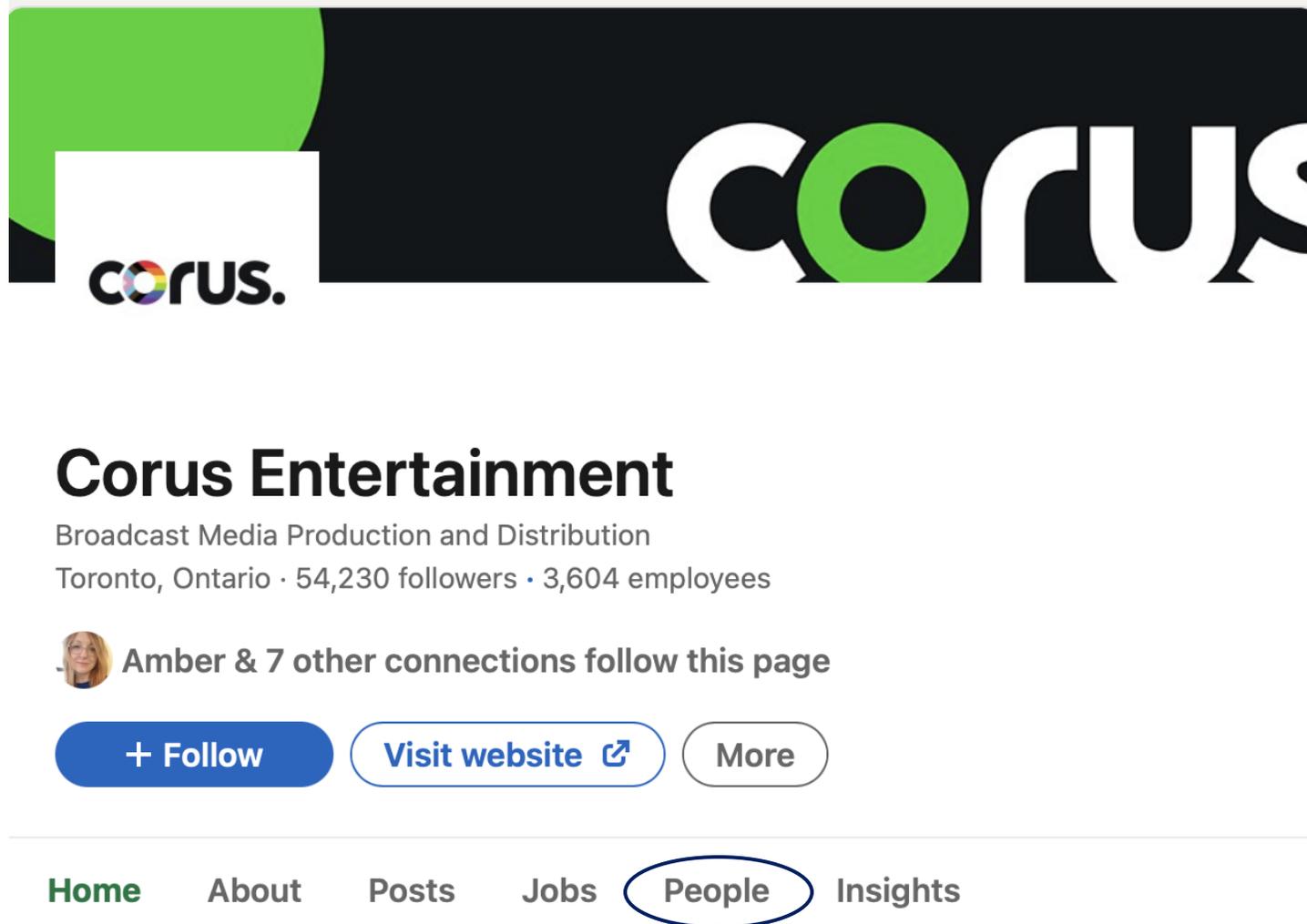
Chloe Stanois (s... · 2nd
Communications, Digital Media ...
'14 Honours Communication St...
6 shared connections
[Connect](#)



Explore
Results for
Titles &
Organizations

Review profiles
Don't click 'connect'
without reviewing
their full profile first

LinkedIn: Company Pages



Corus Entertainment
Broadcast Media Production and Distribution
Toronto, Ontario · 54,230 followers · 3,604 employees

Amber & 7 other connections follow this page

+ Follow Visit website More

Home About Posts Jobs **People** Insights

Consider reaching out to a company's recruiter or employees on LinkedIn

Strategy: Being strategic about your personalized messages on LinkedIn might mean personalizing messages for recruiters and using a template message for alumni

LinkedIn: Company Pages

10 employees

Keyword search already applied

recruiter X Clear all

Where they live + Add

10 | Canada

8 | Ontario, Canada

7 | Toronto, ON

7 | Greater Toronto Area, Canada

Where they studied + Add

2 | Sheridan College

2 | Ryerson University

1 | Coaching Psychology Academy

1 | Alliance française de Toulouse

Show more

People you may know



Harpreet Buttar · 2nd
Recruitment Specialist at Corus
Entertainment | Hiring news,...

3K followers

Follow



Kathryn T. · 2nd
Recruiter

3K followers

Follow



Melissa Mellis, ... · 2nd
HR Business Partner | People &
Culture Strategist | Workforc...

1K followers · Olga Greszata is a
mutual connection

Follow

“Hello Ms. Buttar, as a driven student at Laurier with a passion for research and storytelling, I would be well suited for your News Department. Please look at my profile; I would love to have a conversation. Thank you, Barbara.”



How To Find Contacts

Connect today:

[LAURIER.TENTHOUSANDCOFFEES.com](https://www.laurier.tenthousandcoffees.com)

Career
Development
Centre

LAURIER
ALUMNI
For Life.

Search for contacts using
[Laurier Ten Thousand Coffees:](https://www.laurier.tenthousandcoffees.com)

LAURIER 
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

Informational Interviews can also come in the form of informal networking

Talking to a student in the same club about where they've had summer jobs

Talking to a neighbour about their current position

Talking to your professors about their research

Common Questions Students Ask About Informational Interviews

How should I reach out?



Won't this feel awkward?

1. Have a Hook



Why do you want to meet this person?



What questions do you have?

2. Be Considerate



Recognize they are busy



Appreciate any time they can provide

3. Start with a Soft Ask



Invite wisdom



Don't begin with the job search

4. Be Clear

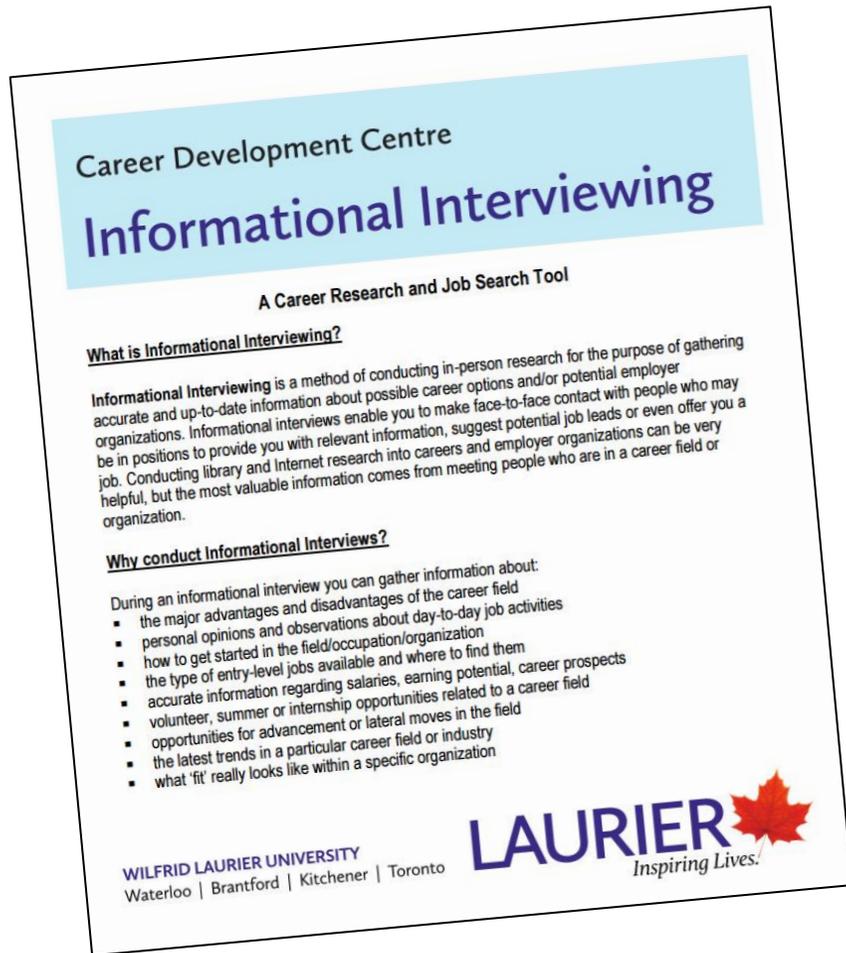


Ask for something specific



Acknowledge time requests

Examples



Sample #2 - Sample LinkedIn® Message Scripts

A) Initial Message (character restricted)



Hello Mr. _____

I am a current student at Wilfrid Laurier University. I am conducting research on careers in _____. I am interested in learning more about _____ and was hoping to connect with you on LinkedIn as part of this research.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my request!

Anita Jobb

B) After Your LinkedIn Invitation has been accepted by the contact

Dear Mr. _____

Thank you for accepting my LinkedIn invitation! I am very interested in careers in _____ and was hoping to ask you a few questions about your experience in the field. Would that be okay? One of my most burning questions is what do you deem to be the biggest rewards and challenges of being in _____.

Thank you so much for your insight, it is greatly appreciated.

Anita Jobb

Track Your Progress

Follow-up and be pleasantly persistent

| Name of Contact | 1st Date of Message | 2nd Date of Message | Date of meeting | Date of Follow up | Notes from conversation |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Nancy Campbell, Researcher & Consultant, Cdn Council on Social Development | Feb. 4 – LI message | Feb. 20 | March 6 | March 7 | Suggested speaking with Jason Chan in Y department |
| Eloise Harris, Project Co- ordinator, Canada 2020 | Feb. 5 - phone | Not needed | March 9 | March 10 | Discussed joining municipal youth committee as avenue to employment |
| Bob Pierce, Social System Strategist, Conference Board of Canada | Feb. 9 - email | Feb. 26 | | | |

Use AI Tools Like Teal for Tracking

» Jobs **People** Companies

0 selected Group by: None Columns Menu Add a New Contact

| Full Name | Company | Location | Goal | Status | Relationship | Follow up |
|--|---------|----------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Susan Malcolm | WLU | Waterloo | Informational Interview | Follow Up Needed | Alumni | 05/05/2025 |

Common Questions Students Ask About Informational Interviews

How do I build rapport in an informational interview?



Should I ask about job opportunities?



The Approach to Build Rapport

Begin with information-gathering questions about your interviewee

Continue the conversation by demonstrating genuine interest in the company/position

End with fostering job lead questions

* Review the informational interviewing [handout](#)

The Approach to Build Rapport



Begin with tailored information-gathering questions:

- What type of work or volunteer experiences did you focus on to build your resumé in this direction?
- What are some of the challenges you face in this line of work?

Continue with questions that demonstrate interest:

- What specific qualifications or skills does your organization seek in candidates?
- What do you feel are the most important skills, interests and attitudes that would make a person successful in your organization?

End with fostering job lead questions:

- After your elevator pitch, ask, ‘Are there any next steps you’d recommend to increase my competitiveness?’

Common Questions Students Ask About Informational Interviews

How do I
follow up?



How often
should I
follow up?

Follow-up is Important!

- Send a thank you note within 24-48 hours
- Send a customized LinkedIn request
- Look for ways to reciprocate (e.g., share articles, information, etc.)
- Ask for information regarding their hiring process when appropriate

Bonus – follow-up templates found in the slide deck on Navigator

Professional Networking



An event where:

- You can build and strengthen professional relationships
- You can connect with others in your field or industry
- You may engage in structured activities like panel discussions, keynote speeches, and workshops

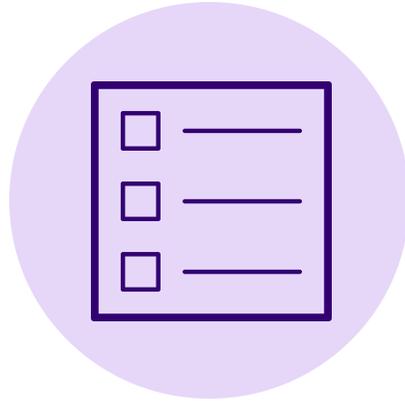
Networking at Events



Elements of Event Networking



Identify
events



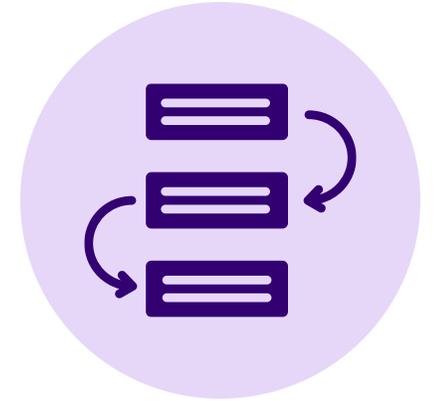
Set event
goals



Research
event
attendees



Prepare
your
introduction



Follow-up

Identify Networking Events

Examples

- Search eventbrite.ca and meetup.com – insert location and theme to find events in your area of interest
- [The Chamber Young Professionals](#) (CYP)
- Look at events through the Career Centre by registering at navigator.wlu.ca

Examples of Professional Networking Events

- Speed Networking
- Breakfast or Lunch Meetings
- Virtual Networking
- Industry Seminars
- Conferences
- Workshops
- Job Fairs



Career
Centre
Events



P4E JOBFAIR
LARGEST OF ITS KIND IN THE COUNTRY

September and February each year

Connect with **employers** in diverse sectors

partners4employment.ca

Plan Ahead for the Event



Research Attendees

- Look at social media for mentions
- Consider what individuals or organizations may be strategic for you to engage with

Set Goals

- Network contacts and names
- Work environments
- Types of training opportunities
- Types of positions relevant to your career focus
- Key hard and soft skills the organization seeks
- Upcoming changes, news and opportunities
- Hiring practices
- Timelines for recruiting

What to Leave Behind



Update your resumé so it is ready, but only provide if it is **requested**

Joe B. Hunter Toronto, Ontario | 226-929-1579 | joe_b_hunter@gmail.com | ca.linkedin.com/joe_b_hunter

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS

- Knowledge of and interest in capital markets developed through work experience, academics and personal learning
- Independently improving valuation and financial modeling skills using various self-training tools, books and tutorials
- High proficiency in Microsoft Office applications including Excel, PowerPoint, Word and Access
- Excellent teamwork and communication skills with strong problem solving abilities in case work

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Financial Analysis
- Forecasting
- Financial Modelling
- Risk Analysis

EDUCATION

Honours Bachelor of Business Administration 20XX – Present
Lazaridis School of Business and Economics at Wilfrid Laurier University – Waterloo, Ontario
Concentration in Finance, Minor in Economics
Cumulative GPA: 10.2 /12 (A-)
Awards: SBE Dean's Honour Roll (80 %+) and In-course Scholarship for best Accounting grade Semifinalist, ICE Week competition

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Investment Banking Analyst (Co-Op) September – December 20XX
BMO Capital Markets – Toronto, Ontario

- Developed project financial models by evaluating company and industry information
- Wrote and presented a proposal for corporate management team, resulting in broader portfolios

Associate, Accounting/Finance Department (Co-Op) May – August 20XX
Money Matters Inc. – Waterloo, Ontario
Associate, Accounting/Finance Department

- Examined the company's aged receivables to clear past due transactions from the company's balance sheet
- Accurately applied client payment deposits into the accounting system using program specific macros
- Produced bi-weekly client invoices and handled all other client/vendor inquiries regarding billings and payments

Intern, Clients and Markets Department July – August 20XX
Deloitte Southeast Asia Ltd., – Manila, Philippines

- Analyzed various industry and business classifications of the firm's current clients
- Prepared presentation and collateral materials for the firm management's use in client engagements
- Worked closely with the Managing Partner and Chairman on various assigned tasks

SKILLS, ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS

Technical Skills: Breaking Into Wall Street – Financial Modeling (DCF, Company Comparables, Precedent Transactions, Accretion/Dilution and LBO) and Excel Fundamentals, Bloomberg Analytics Certification Program
Clubs: Laurier Investment and Finance Association, Xlerate Business Club, Laurier Accounting Association
Activities: RAC Basketball Team, Intramural Indoor Soccer, High School Soccer and Basketball Varsity Team
Interests: Intermural sports (basketball and soccer), keeping up with industry headlines around the world, learning about basic investing theory, music, travelling and mixed martial arts

Networking Cards

WANG LI

Honours BA in Sociology + Applied Social Research option
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

123-456-7890 · 123 Anywhere St., Waterloo, ON N2L 3C5
wang.li@gmail.com · www.linkedin.com/in/wang.li

Students can order business cards from The Hub
(thehub@wlu.ca)

Event Networking Attire



What is an Elevator pitch?



- Brief persuasive statement about who you are, what you do, what you want to do
- Explain in 30 seconds or less (the time it takes to ride an elevator, hence the name)

Remember it is customized to the listener and context

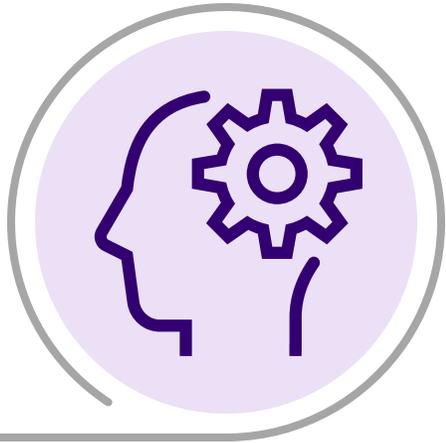
Elevator Pitch Example

“

Good morning. My name is Barbara, and I am completing my Psychology degree at Wilfrid Laurier University. I am interested in working in human resources and recently refined some recruiting strategies for a campus club. I was pleased to learn that your organization would be represented here today. Can you tell me the kinds of entry-level HR opportunities you currently have?

”

The Elevator Pitch Framework

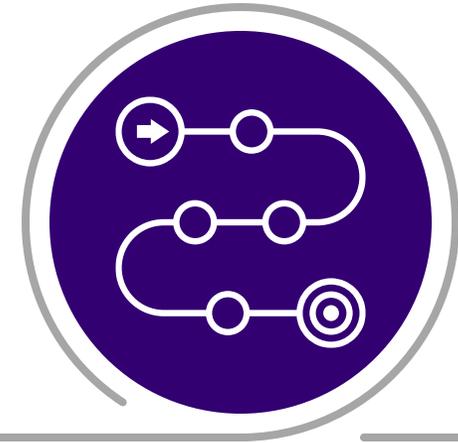


- Who am I?
- What do I have to offer? (degree, skills)



- Current/past role
- What problems have I solved? Accomplishments?
- What are the main contributions I can make?

What have you done?



- Call to action
- What should my contact or potential employer do as a result of hearing my story?

What do you want to do?

Make it Personal



Want to make this pitch your own?



Try writing a draft now using the template or record a 30-second voice note on your phone to practice!

Bonus – there's a template at the end of the slides to return to in the future

Less Formal Conversation Starters

“

Good morning. My name is Barbara, and I am a Psychology student at Wilfrid Laurier University interested in human resources.

”

Follow your introduction with a question

Examples:

- What stood out to you about the speaker session?
- What brings you to this event today?
- How did you become interested in X (theme of event)?

Questions to Ask at Networking Events

- What brings you to this event and how long have you been involved with the organization?
- Can you tell me a bit about your role at [Company]?
- What do you enjoy most about your job?
- How did you get started in your field?
- What advice would you give to someone looking to advance in this industry?

*** Questions can be similar to those asked during an Informational Interview!**



Follow-up After Event

Send a message within 48 hours after the event

- Express your enjoyment in meeting them
- Connect on LinkedIn
- Carry it further by asking about the next steps and a potential informational interview

Nurture your network by making efforts to stay in touch

Remember

You won't always get a response, and that's okay. Keep building your confidence and relationships at your own pace.

What to Expect: Response Rates on LinkedIn

- **Typical response rates** for cold outreach messages range from **10% to 25%**.
- This means you might need to send **10 messages** to receive **1 to 3 responses**.
- **Personalized, concise messages** tend to perform better.
- **Follow-ups** can improve your chances. Don't hesitate to send a polite reminder if you don't hear back.

Online Networking Tips



-  Ensure good lighting
-  Use a quality microphone
-  Keep the camera at eye level
-  Choose professional attire
-  Minimize distractions

Common Mistakes at Networking Events

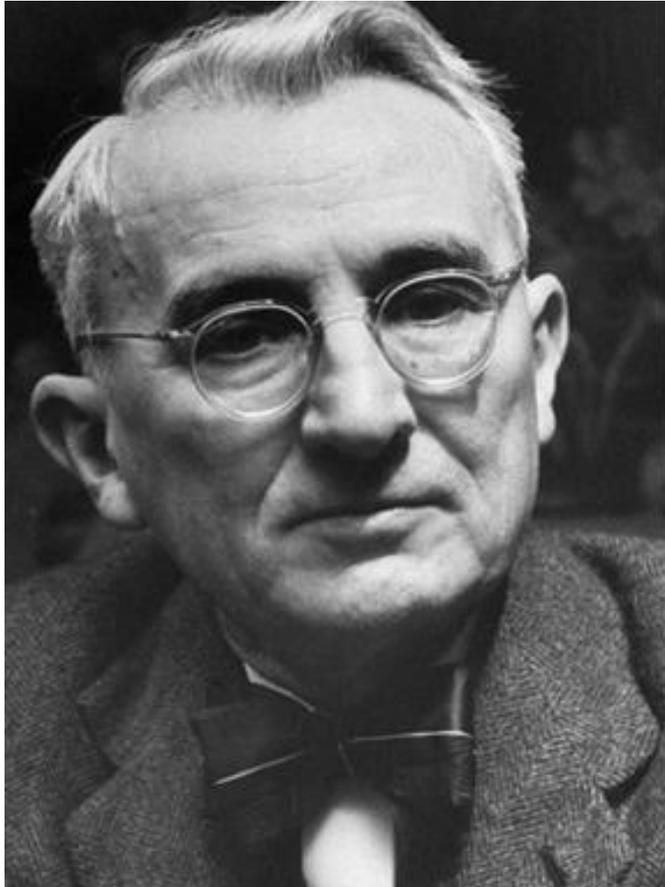
- Monopolizing one person/employer's time
- Negative comments
- Asking about specific salary and benefits
- Not being confident or overly confident ('too sales-pitchy')
- Going with a friend and not challenging yourself to talk to new people – try to approach on your own!
- Focusing on the technology in front of you and not giving your attention to the speaker

Final Networking Tips



- Polish your introduction/elevator pitch
- Dress professionally
- Be sincere and courteous
- Ask questions, listen attentively, and show genuine interest in what the person you are speaking to has to say
- Follow-up (send a personalized follow-up message or email within a day or two and express gratitude for the conversation you had)
- Be confident. Be humble. Be yourself.

Why Network?



You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.

— Dale Carnegie —



Learning Objectives Questionnaire

Step 1: Use your device to fill out the first portion of the questionnaire before we begin the session

Step 2: Keep your browser open to this questionnaire. Complete the second half of the questionnaire after the session

URL: bit.ly/cdcworkshops



Earn the Engagement & Employability Certificate



A great addition to your
Laurier Experience Record!

Enroll and view your certificate
progress in Navigator.

Components

- Unlock Your Competencies Workshop
- Thrive in the Workplace Workshop
OR Network with Confidence Workshop
- Complete a Mock Interview Appointment
OR Conduct an Informational Interview
- Attend 3 Career Centre Events

Choose from Special Event or Special Topic Workshops category (Career Centre Event Calendar) or Laurier-Exclusive Recruiting Session category (Employer Event Calendar)

+ Reflection questionnaire in Navigator

Connect with us

careercentre@wlu.ca | 548.889.3254

navigator.wlu.ca | students.wlu.ca/career

Waterloo Career Centre 192 King Street North, Waterloo

Brantford Career Centre One Market, OM-206-40, Brantford

Instagram [@lauriercareercentre](https://www.instagram.com/lauriercareercentre)

LinkedIn [Laurier Experiential Learning & Career Development](https://www.linkedin.com/company/laurier-experiential-learning-&-career-development)



Career Development Centre
students.wlu.ca/career

**Templates &
Reminders to
Keep You Moving
Forward**



-  Message Templates
-  Elevator Pitch
-  Follow-Up Checklist

Follow-up Template Messages – Informational Interview

Thank-You Email (Informational Interview)

Subject: Thank you for your time today

Hi [Name], Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me today. I really appreciated hearing more about your experience at [Company] and your insights into the [industry/field]. I found your advice about [specific takeaway] especially helpful, and I'm feeling more confident about my next steps.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if I can ever be of help to you as well. I'll definitely stay in touch as I move forward.

Warm regards,
[Your Name] [Phone (optional)] | [LinkedIn URL]

Follow-up Template Messages – LinkedIn Connection Request (Short & Polite)

Hi [Name],

Thank you again for our recent conversation. I appreciated your insights into [topic/industry] and would love to stay connected here on LinkedIn.

All the best,

[Your Name]

Polite Follow-Up (If No Reply to Initial Message)

Subject: Just Following Up

Hi [Name],

I hope you've been doing well. I wanted to follow up on the message I sent last week about connecting. I understand things can get busy, but if you're still open to a quick chat, I'd really value your perspective.

Let me know if there's a time that might work for you in the next couple of weeks.

Thanks again, [Your Name]

A good follow-up shows gratitude, curiosity, and professionalism, without pressure. Keep it short, kind, and real.

Fill-in-the-Blank Elevator Pitch Template

Hi, my name is [Your Name], and I'm currently [your role/what you're studying] at [School/Organization].

I'm particularly interested in [industry/topic], and I've been building experience through [a course, project, internship, or job].

Right now, I'm exploring opportunities to [goal or learning aim], and I'd love to learn more about your work in [their role/organization/field].

Checklist for Following Up

- ✓ Send a thank-you message within 24–48 hours
- ✓ Personalize your note: mention something specific from your conversation
- ✓ Keep the tone professional but friendly
- ✓ Send a LinkedIn connection request (if you haven't already)
- ✓ Add any important points from the conversation to your networking tracker
- ✓ If no reply after 7–10 days, send a polite follow-up message
- ✓ Look for ways to stay in touch (comment on LinkedIn, share an article, etc.)