How to Identify & Contact Potential Mentors

It is very important to maximize on the Rutgers University network of alumni: not only from the MFinA program, but also those from the Rutgers Business School, and from the University. These people are potential mentors, and can give you the best advice about getting into your industry of interest.

People you already know:

1. Professors & Classmates
2. Former co-workers & Supervisors
3. Family & Friends
4. Community members

People you can get to know:

Professionals in your industry of interest
Alumni you have not met
Contacts via Linked In
Potential employers at career events

Contacting your potential "mentor"

Show curiosity about the people you contact, and demonstrate your interest in learning about the work they do. You can contact people on Linked In or email. You can use Linked In to search by employer and find Rutgers alumni at those companies you want to apply to. Most people prefer initial contact via email. Be sure to explain how you found their information (either via Linked In, or a mutual connection.) Let them know you are a current Rutgers student, requesting to discuss their perspective on what it's like to work in the financial services industry (or any other industry areas of interest.)

1. Ask for a specific day and time to meet, or talk on the phone. Ask for only 15-20 minutes
2. Give basic information about yourself and that you want to learn about the industry from people working in the field
3. Explain you are early in the job search process and conducting research to help you make better career decisions – don't send your resume- it is too early
4. The goal is *to start a conversation* that will develop into a mentor relationship over time
5. Remember, people like talking about their own career path, so do not be afraid to ask
6. Connect on Linked In with Rutgers Alumni here.

(see sample email on page 2)

Follow this example:

I am writing to introduce myself and ask for your advice. I will be graduating with my Master's of Financial Analysis from the Rutgers Business School this May. I am preparing to take the CFA exam and starting my job search. I am in the process of researching and determining if the financial services industry is the best fit for me.

To this end, would you be open to answering my questions in person or via email regarding the work that you do? If you want to meet in person, I would like to have a brief information discussion, no more than 15 minutes, if your schedule permits. I think it's always helpful to put a face together with a name and would love the chance to introduce myself in person. Thank you for your time and l look forward to talking with you soon.

Best Regards,

Do your research

Show your mentor you have done your homework and are prepared and interested in learning more about their career. Start a list of questions as you review their Linked In profile, things that you want to better understand about the work they do. Here are a few to get you started:

1. How did you get started in this industry/company?
2. What personality traits do employers value in this industry?
3. What professional associations are connected to this industry?
4. What is an average week/day on the job like?
5. What is required (such as: degree, skills, or experience) to start working in this industry?
6. What advice can you give me about my resume?

Before you get started…

Meet with Career Management (Email Ying Ni for a meeting: YingNi@business.rutgers.edu) to develop your strategy and prepare your questions!