

Never begin your email with “Hey” - address the person formally and respectfully with Dear Mr./Ms. (or their full name if you are unsure of their gender).

Dear Mr. Silliman:

I write to introduce myself. I am currently a sophomore at Yale pursuing an English degree. I saw your profile on the Yale Career Network and would like to learn more about the work that you are doing at ABC Publishing Housing. I have interned in the editorial department at a small independent publishing house, and though I enjoyed this experience, am looking to learn more about working in a marketing capacity within the publishing industry, as I feel this may be a better fit for my personality. My involvement with marketing a new literary magazine that will be launched this semester has exposed me to the important role of marketing within the industry and has been a thoroughly enjoyable experience for me.

Would you be available for a 30-minute informational interview? I would appreciate hearing about your experiences in the marketing department and any advice you might have. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Will Harkness  
will.harkness@yale.edu  
203-222-3333

Keep your email concise and focused. No one wants to read a long, drawn out introductory email.

Most alumni are willing to be contacted regarding their experience and expertise, but may not be as generous with their time if they sense that you are only using them for a position within their company.

Dear Ms. Morse,

I'm a Biology major who will be graduating from Yale College in May. My goal after graduation is to work at a biotech firm in the Boston area. Right now I'm evaluating what type of work environment would be the best fit for me. As someone with experience working at large biotech corporations and at a small biotech start-up, I would appreciate the chance to hear your thoughts on the differences between those work environments.

I'm from the Boston area and plan to be home from March 7<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> for Spring Break. Would you be interested in meeting for coffee and sharing your experiences with me? I look forward to hearing from you.

Best,  
Elaina Yale  
203.222.2222  
elaina.yale@yale.edu

Abbreviations and emoticons have no place in formal business communication.

Refer to something specific about the person or their profession - let them know what prompted you to contact them and what you are hoping to gain from speaking with them.

Elias Yale  
P.O. Box 200000  
New Haven, CT 06520  
(203) 203-2222  
elias.yale@yale.edu

John Edwards  
*New York Times China*  
Box 100-B33  
Beijing, China

Don't forget to provide your contact information and make sure your outgoing voicemail message is appropriate.

Dear Mr. Edwards:

I am a senior East Asian Studies major at Yale University hoping to pursue a career in journalism after graduation. I have been following your byline in the *New York Times* for several years now. I imagine after your extensive experience reporting in China, you might have some advice for a student hoping to break into the field, particularly in Asia.

I'm not sure how often you make it back to the New York office, but if you have a moment while you're in town, I would be most appreciative if you would be willing to sit down for coffee and answer some of my questions about pursuing a career as a correspondent in China. If that is inconvenient, perhaps we could speak on the telephone.

I was especially drawn to an article you wrote last year on unemployment in northeast China. As a summer student at Harbin Institute of Technology, the tension you described was palpable. On a bus to my teacher's apartment one afternoon, I couldn't help but notice three men scrubbing the asphalt of a round-about on their hands and knees (surrounded, of course, by government-funded yearly construction projects). The desperation of many of the citizens and the government of Harbin was something unfathomable to me before last summer. Reading your story on the economic crisis in the Northeast as I struggled to write my own experiences from the summer was inspiring.

Thank you for considering my request for an informational interview. I look forward to receiving any advice you might offer. I will contact you in two weeks to explore the possibility of arranging a meeting.

Sincerely,

Elias Yale

Mention your plan for following up with them.

If you were referred by someone, mention their name early in your email or letter.

You only have one chance to make a first impression - make your email professional and formal.

Dear Mr. Branford,

I am a junior at Yale University. Your name was given to me by Professor Berkeley. From your biography on the Branford & Partners website, I see that you are an experienced architect working on large-scale projects in Seattle. Last summer I interned in Seattle with an industrial development company called Major Technologies. I truly liked the Seattle area, and I have a general interest in real estate development, design and construction. I may want to do graduate work at some point, but I expect after I graduate next year to be looking for a job in Seattle.

Send emails from your Yale email address - anyone can have a Gmail or Hotmail account.

What I'm really curious about is what advice you might have regarding the kind of first job experience that would help me learn as much about all aspects of development, planning, design and construction as I can. I am not sure whether it would be best to look for an entry job with local government, an economic development group, a construction company or a design firm.

If possible, I would like to schedule a short telephone conversation with you to see what guidance you could offer me on this and perhaps suggest some companies or agencies in Seattle that it might be good for me to research further. Thank you for considering my request. I will be in contact with you next week to follow up.

Sincerely,  
Emma Yale  
emma.yale@yale.edu  
203-222-3333

Don't attach your résumé to an introductory email. Doing so makes it look like you are applying for a job instead of asking for an informational interview.

Be patient and don't expect an instant response from the person you are emailing. If they don't respond within 10 business days you can send a second email. If there is still no response, move on.