Script for contacting BC alumni

The Alumni are here to help and they love giving back, but they are extremely busy and you have to keep that in mind.

HOW TO REACH OUT TO ALUMNI

1. Sending Initial Email: Use an effective subject line to capture their attention; they get hundreds of emails a day and can easily skip yours. Keep the email to 4-5 sentences and avoid grammar mistakes, first impressions count. Ex. Boston College Junior Seeking Career Advice
   a) Greet the person by their first name; nothing screams a form email like “Hello Mr. X”. You are more likely to get a response by using an informal greeting.
   b) Introduce yourself
      Ex. My name is ___ and I am a rising _____ at BC.
   c) Inform them how you found their information; some may be off put about how you found their contact information. Say that you found their information through BC’s alumni database.
   d) Inform them why you are reaching out to them. Is it to learn more about their industry, their career, and feedback on your experiences or general advice?
   e) Ask for a few minutes to speak with them to learn about their careers and to hear any advice they may have for you.
   f) Thank them for their time and attention and make sure your signature is appropriate.
   g) Never ask for a job or an internship, if they don’t have any positions or don’t want to tell you about it, they will not answer your email. Let the subject come up organically through your conversations later on.
   h) Send a follow up email. Not everyone will get back to your first email, some will simply ignore it and others might miss it, so if you don’t hear back in a few days.
   i) Try to set up a 10-15 minute phone call whenever it is most convenient for them. It is not much time for the alumni, but if they like talking to you they can easily end up giving you more of their time. Make sure you are ready for the initial phone call; prepare a call plan with what you want to talk about before making the call.
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2. Call: Preparation is key. When calling the person at the agreed upon time, reintroduce yourself and ask if it is still a good time for them to talk for a few minutes. Tell them an outline for the call. This will give a structure to the call and give the alumna an idea of what to expect.
   a) Give them an overview of yourself, what you’re studying, where you are, what you want to ask questions about.
   b) Ask about their career experiences and how they got to be where they are right now, what they like, don’t like etc. These open-ended questions will give you more information about how to direct the conversation.
   c) Prepare thoughtful, open-ended questions that you might have for that particular alumni.
   d) Structure your phone call to give the impression that you are professional and have taken the time to get ready and are taking the conversation and their time seriously.
   e) After the phone call, send a thank you email to the person highlighting your conversation and asking if you can stay in touch.
   f) Follow up with the person if they tell you to look something up, keep in touch with them every 3-4 weeks so they don’t forget about you. Offer to grab coffee and check-in to provide updates on how things are going and ask any ongoing questions you might have.
   g) Most importantly, be very appreciative of their time and effort.