**UCIA: How to Make First Contact with Potential Mentors & Employers**

1. Research your subject. Know as much as you can about whom you’re talking to, their organization and their field.
2. Be concise. At best your email should be about half the length of this How-to-make-first-contact document, and certainly no longer than the length of this document.
3. Briefly introduce yourself.

* Who are you and what’s your main interest?

1. Briefly describe how you found out about the person you’re pursuing.

* Who told you about them?
* How did you get their contact info?

1. Concisely state what you hope to get from them. Be specific.

* What exactly do you hope to get? Most of time first contact is for an informational interview. Your purpose is to interview them to find out a) ***what they do***, b) ***how they got there***, c) ***if they have any advice for someone in your position***, and d) ***if they know of others you should interview***?
* Do you want to meet face-to-face? Phone call? Email? Face-to-face is always best, but if there isn’t a strong connection (they’re not an alum, family, friend or friend of a friend) you may want to only ask for 10 or 15 minutes of their time.

1. Proofread.
2. Run a draft of your email by a CAPS counselor before sending it.
3. There’s a fair chance you won’t hear back.

* Wait a week, no more than two, and then email again stating that you know they’re busy but that you’re just checking in.
* Even more concisely than your first email, remind them of your purpose for contacting them.
* You can email up to three times. For your last email, end by asking that if for some reason they’re unable to help you with your request, might they put you in touch with someone who may be in a better position to speak with you?
* If you don’t hear back from them in another week or two, move on.