

# Making your first contact on NCL Spark

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## Contacting mentors

You can contact mentors through NCL Spark to ask a quick question, or to build a longer term mentoring relationship.

Before you do:

- think carefully about what you want to know and how best to make use of their valuable time. Your initial email approach is very important as mentors are generally busy professionals
- do some background research on their role and organisation and tell them what you already know to help them tailor their advice to your needs
- personalise your request and keep it concise and polite. Remember the importance of making a good first impression: you never know, you could find yourself working together in the future!

## Example email to a mentor requesting a longer term mentoring relationship

Dear...

I found your details on NCL Spark. I am in my final year of my BA in Marketing at Newcastle University and I am really interested in a career in digital marketing. I've completed a summer internship with X and am currently volunteering at Y charity, managing their social media. I am starting to research graduate roles in marketing and I'm looking for some on-going support from a mentor with the graduate recruitment process.

I read on your profile that you have worked in a variety of marketing roles and that you are currently working at Z Agency as the Digital Marketing Manager. Given your experience I would be really keen to get your insight and advice on sourcing vacancies and making applications for graduate roles in marketing.

I would be happy to discuss arrangements, such as frequency of contact and the length of the mentoring relationship.

Many thanks for your help.

Your name

## Example email to a mentor for a quick query

Dear...

I found your details on NCL Spark. I am currently undertaking a BA in Marketing at Newcastle University and I am really interested in a career in digital marketing. I've completed a summer internship with X and am currently volunteering at Y charity, managing their social media.

I read on your profile that you have worked in a variety of marketing roles and I'd be really keen to get your advice on the following:

- Question 1
- Question 2

I really appreciate your help with this.

Your name

## What could I ask?

Try to avoid asking general questions which you could easily find the answer to from their profile or the company website. Use this opportunity to ask specific questions - perhaps two or three initially.

To help you get started, here are some examples:

- What's the typical career path to get into X career?
- What skills and experience are employers looking for in this field?
- What skills do you have that make you good at this job/do you use a lot of in this job?
- What did you learn in your course that has really helped you to do your job?
- What was the recruitment process for your job?
- What advice would you give me for an effective job search in this sector? What techniques worked for you?
- Where are vacancies advertised? Are there particular recruitment agencies I could sign up with?
- Are there things I could do to strengthen my chances? (mention any relevant activities you already do)
- Does your organisation offer any work shadowing or project opportunities that would allow me to broaden my experience?

- Are there other career areas that my strengths and attributes make me suitable for that I might not have thought of?
- How is your performance at work assessed?
- What is the typical career progression in this field?
- Which parts of the field are expanding and likely to offer opportunities in the future?
- What are the most important current issues in your sector that are likely to affect your job/organisation?
- Are there any specialist publications I should read? (mention any that you read regularly)
- Are there any professional associations I should join?
- Would you be willing to give some brief feedback on my CV/application?
- Could you recommend anyone else for me to talk to?

## Need more help?

If you'd like more advice on how to use NCL Spark or if you have any problems contacting our mentors, please [visit the Careers Service](#).