



Asking Your Network For a Referral or Introduction

Your network is the key to getting in touch with people inside your target companies. One of the main reasons you've thoughtfully and carefully been building out your network is to earn the right to ask for a favor one day. That day will come. Either one of your contacts knows someone you really want to meet or your contact works for a company that just posted a job you're really interested in.

Warm referrals happen when you are able to name drop a mutual connection. Requests that come from a warm referral are much more likely to win a response than a cold email or outreach. Similarly, you are much more likely to get a response to a job you apply to if you use a referral, either an employee or someone the decision maker knows.

Learn why you need to be referred either for a job or to a new contact and how to ask your network for help making this happen.

Referred Candidates Are the Top Source of Hires

Over 30 percent of new hires come from employee referrals according to SilkRoad's Source of Hire 2017 study. Companies report that employee referrals beat out the other hiring methods including applications from Indeed, current employees, candidates sourced by company recruiters, company career website, CareerBuilder and LinkedIn.

Companies Have Referral Programs

More than three quarters of U.S. workers say that their company has an employee referral program reports iCIMS, a talent acquisition solution provider. This means there is an incentive for employees to refer candidates for job opportunities. But financial incentives aren't the only reason employees refer people for openings in their company. Believe it or not, people want to help you and help their company. It doesn't take much effort for an employee to refer you for a job. All you have to do is ask.

Two Ways to Get Referred

There are two ways to get referred – a proactive approach and a reactive approach.

Networking

The proactive approach happens before a job is posted. You are asking for an introduction or referral. One reason you've been networking with people inside companies you are interested in, classmates, and alumni is to learn from them but also to build relationships. You've also been nurturing relationships with people you haven't kept in touch with. An important part of the message you've shared while networking is letting your contacts know the types of roles and companies you are interested in, just in case something comes up. Ultimately, you want to speak with someone who has the potential to hire you, perhaps a department head. You probably don't know many people at this level so you will need your network to introduce you. When you do find a job posted at one of your target companies, it is easier and faster to reach out to the people you've recently been in touch with and ask them to refer you for the job.

Getting Referred

The reactive approach happens after you've found a job opportunity. You ask your in-person network, LinkedIn, Twitter, and even Facebook to identify friends or friends of friends inside the company with the opportunity. It doesn't matter what role your contact holds. What is important is that you reach out and ask for if they will refer you to the job. ►



LinkedIn Makes it Easier

The best way to get your resume to the top of the stack is to leverage the power of your connections inside the company. LinkedIn makes it easy to identify company insiders and keep track of where past colleagues currently work. Not only can you search for people you know inside a company using LinkedIn, you can now use LinkedIn's new job search filter to search for jobs where you have connections.

From the desktop version of LinkedIn, go to the jobs tab. You will see a section that says "jobs where you can get referred." This allows you to first focus on jobs where you have connections. View the job and the people you know inside the company and identify the best person to refer you. Choose either someone you know well or someone who is familiar with your work. Asking someone you don't know very well to refer you can be awkward and may not get the desired results. Once you find the best connection to refer you, LinkedIn allows you to send a message directly from the job posting. The recipient will also receive a link to the job posting.

LinkedIn supplies a basic message which you can edit. Here's what the message says when you ask for a referral.

Hope all is well with you! I came across the [job title] role at [company name] and am interested in applying. Would you be open to sharing my LinkedIn profile with the hiring team so they know about my interest in this role?

Happy to chat more if you have the time as well. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Craft Your Own Message

If you prefer to bypass LinkedIn and send an email instead or you want to ask someone in your network for an introduction, here's what your message should contain:

- Remind your connection how you know each other
- Reference the job or the person you would like an introduction to
- Explain why you're qualified or include your written pitch is asking for an introduction
- State why you're interested in the job or meeting the person

Asking to be Referred to a Job Template

Subject:

Hello [name of connection]:

I wanted to reach out and ask for your help. There's a job for a [job title] at your company and I'm very interested in applying for it.

You may remember, [state how you know each other].

Based on what I read, I believe I would be a great fit for the role.

- [#1 qualification you meet]
- [#2 qualification you meet]





[#3 qualification you meet]

I have been watching [company] and am excited about [something interesting the company is working on]. Additionally, [company]'s focus on [volunteer projects the company supports] aligns well with the volunteer work I've been doing at [volunteer organization].

If you need more information, I'm happy to have a conversation if that would be easier.

Thank you in advance for your help and support!

Your name
phone number
email address
LinkedIn URL

Sample Referral For a Job Message

Subject:

Dear Mr. Smith,

Nancy Jones of [company name], suggested I contact you regarding the [job title] opening in your organization.

As an editor/writer for Alexandria's city magazine, I've developed my talent and experience as a public relations writer. Because the staff is very small, I've worn a number of hats, including: developing the editorial format and individual story concepts, writing numerous articles, editing copy, laying out the magazine, and supervising production.

Prior to my current position, I was highly involved in the public relations industry, working for Jones & Jones, where I prepared numerous press releases and media guides, as well as managing several major direct mail campaigns.

My high degree of motivation has been recognized by my previous employers who have quickly promoted me to positions of greater responsibility. I was promoted from assistant editor to editor of Alexandria Monthly after only five months.

I am eager to talk with you about the contribution I could make to [company name]. I will call you the week of April 25th to see if we can find a mutual time and date to get together and discuss the possibility.

Your consideration is greatly appreciated.

Cordially,

Jane Doe

phone number
email address
LinkedIn URL





Sample Message Asking For an Introduction

Subject: Following up on your advice

Hello Martin,

We met briefly at SXSW conference last month during the networking session. To refresh your memory, I am changing careers, from accounting to product management. You provided thoughtful advice on companies that might value my background.

Since we last spoke, I've decided it would be helpful to get tech experience. XYZ Tech is one of the companies I am interested in for their diverse suite of productivity products. I noticed you have a first degree connection to Sam Smith, a developer there.

Would you be willing to introduce me to Sam? If you feel uncomfortable making an introduction no worries. Alternatively, I would appreciate any insight you can offer on the best way to approach Sam.

Any help you could provide before the end of the month would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you so much and I hope to hear from you soon.

Your name
phone number
email address
LinkedIn URL