



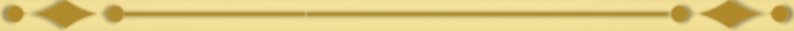
Powering Your Career - The Informational Interview

March 2012

- Phil Snare



**SWITCHING JOBS...
SEEKING JOBS**

- 
- ✦ Stalled
 - ✦ Changing careers
 - ✦ Good time to start looking
 - ✦ Unfocused... been searching a while
 - ✦ Overwhelmed—where to start?
 - ✦ Confidence waning
 - ✦ Networks kind of sparse
 - ✦ Not the networking type

every

see
appear open things

constantly
moment

new opportunity

expect next present way greater way

involve explore fantastic day opportunities knocks interesting wealth universe express

today act life endless advantage possibilities

comes take turn seize

prospects abundance

Purpose Today



Share with you **why** you want **USE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS...** to increase the power of your search... **why you'll benefit in the long-term** as you **energize your search in the short-term and build your network**

Objective



Help you **focus... expand your lingo** of the **corporate culture or industry** you're targeting...**increase awareness** about opportunities and the latest trends, while **SPIFFING YOU UP** for the **REAL DEAL!**

We'll Cover:

- ✦ Why this **makes sense**
- ✦ **the COLD CALL and other first time communicating**
- ✦ Age/Experience... how that can drive **YOUR Questions**
- ✦ Communicating... real world examples—**let's see what can happen!**
- ✦ **Keeping track of stuff...**

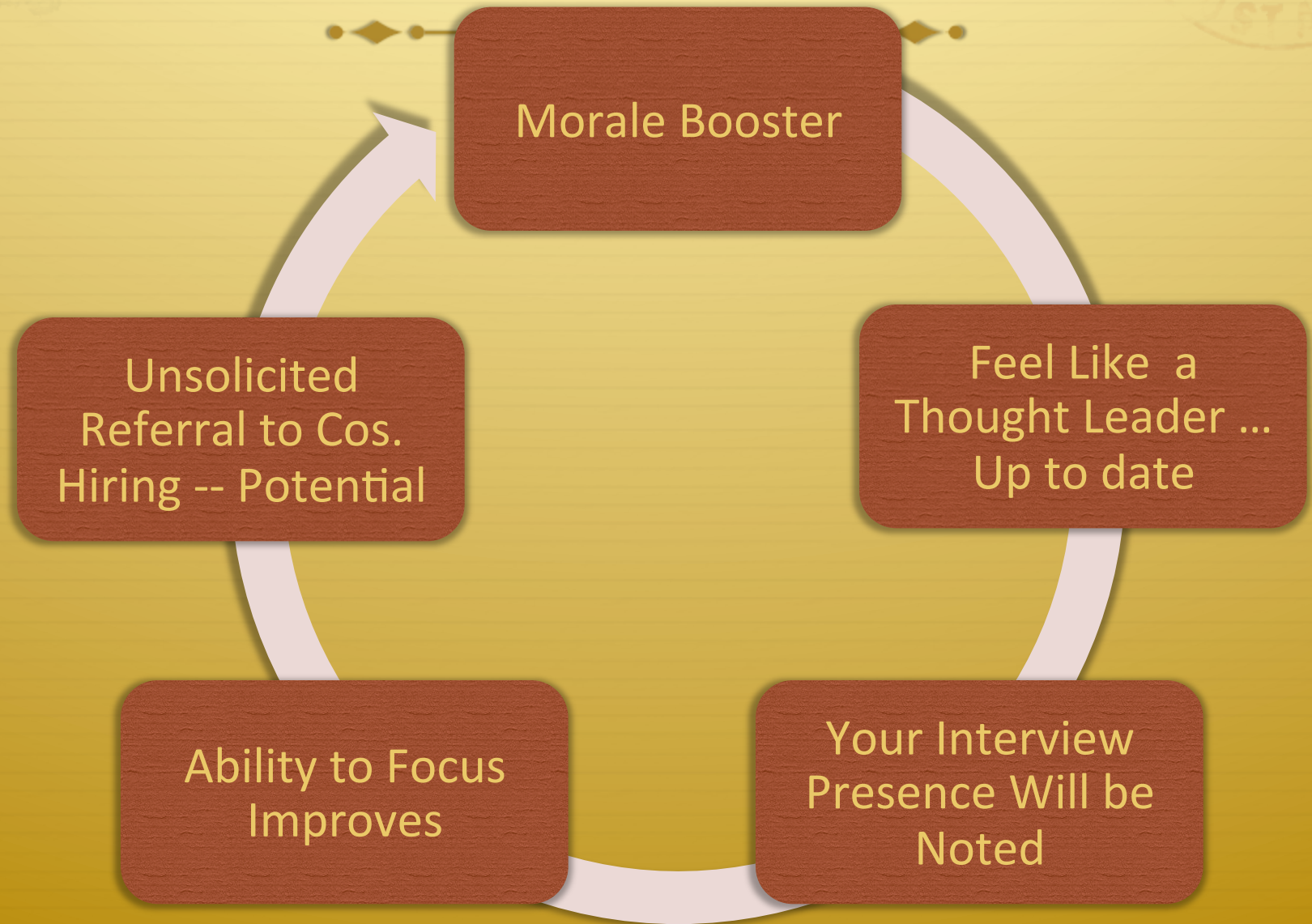


PAR AVION
航空郵便
MADRID
COSTA RICA

◆◆◆◆◆

Why This Makes Sense on Many Levels

Multiple Benefits...



They'll Take the Meeting



- ✦ More often than not... if you've **disarmed** and been **forthright** about your approach—they'll take the meeting or the call
- ✦ Folks **REALLY don't mind talking about themselves**
- ✦ **More SENIOR, the better—even if you're just out of school**

IT'S ALWAYS TOO SOON TO QUIT
- NORMAN VINCENT PEALE



The Focus Thing



An Example : Gov't Contracting...

You're biz dev, sales, RFP specialist, admin, fresh out of school—NET:

Works for most disciplines!

- ✦ What would help your crystal ball?
 - ✦ Translate all the noise on the HILL re: Budget cut posturing... get perspective
 - ✦ DOD... who stands to feel the most pain?
 - ✦ 8 a's : Any change? VET owned? Disabled contractors?



Sessions like this will get you focused!

Emotional / Practical Pay-off

Idea of info Interview may intimidate... remember it's information—not a job

Helps build confidence...

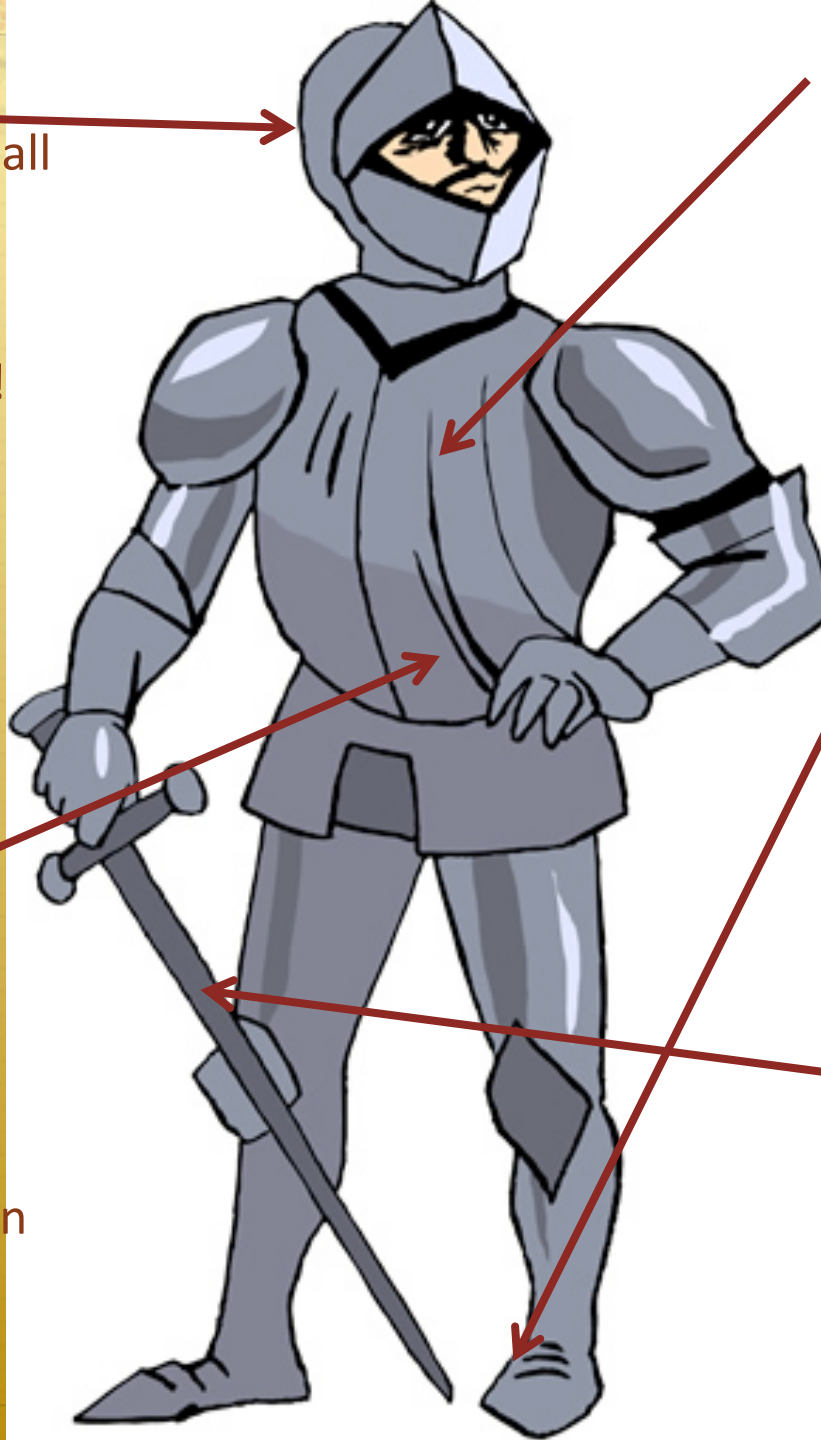
- ✦ Phrasing questions... articulating
- ✦ Pacing... the give and take
- ✦ Putting elevator pitch to use (context only—you're not selling overtly)
- ✦ Energy coming out of a good session feeds the next engagement
 - ✦ Your to-do's have an intentional feel to them
- ✦ Resume will tighten

Smarts

- Objective for each call
- Tactical approach
- Anticipating and overcoming no's
- Know the company!
- Know industry!
- Why you win / lose!
- Right networking
- What's the hook / angle?
- Feeds Fresh ideas

Taking Care of Self

- Rejection... poor hit rate, string of no's...
- No doubts—pushing out
- Always positive
- Purposeful recreation
- Exercise!



Heart

- Impassioned communications
- Belief in self = + impression
- Stamina
- Presentation presence
- Phone presence

Speed

- Call cycles
- Follow-up
- Meetings / week / mo.

Fearless

- Get the no—ask for the interview!
- Go for the in-person interview
- Pepper with humility

Smarts

- Objective for each call
- Using the tools/ system
- Tactical approach
- Anticipating and overcoming no's
- Know your product!
- Know industry!
- Why you win / lose!
- Right networking
- What's the hook / angle?
- Feeds Fresh ideas

Taking Care of Self

- Rejection... poor hit rate, string of no's...
- No doubts—pushing out
- Always positive
- Purposeful recreation
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Heart


- Impassioned communications
- Belief in self = + impression
- Stamina
- Team support—the fam
- Who's got your back?
- Presentation presence
- Phone presence

Speed

- Call cycles
- Follow-up
- Meetings / week / mo.

Fearless

- Get the no—ask for the interview!
- Strike at each call or presentation
- Pepper with humility



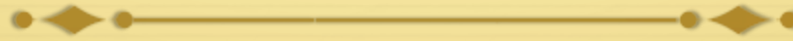
Cold Calling... Protocols & Guidelines



Where do I go for These Interviews?

- ✦ Scope out the sources that makes sense for you...
 - ✦ VC shops, regional chambers of commerce / tech / associations
 - ✦ Wash Post, WSJ, Nation's Business... news and press releases
 - ✦ College / graduate school directories... key in on positions you like
 - ✦ Linked-in almost as good... (caution on your invites)
- ✦ Spill the beans from the start...
 - ✦ “I’m engaged in a job campaign...”
 - ✦ “**Not looking for a job at your company**... just industry perspective, ideas, intell” **disarm, disarm, disarm**
 - ✦ **Say it again...** “not looking to hit you up for a job...”
 - ✦ Web site bios (if person is senior)... play back why you picked that person... alma mater, discipline...
 - ✦ Caught your name in an article, promotion snippet

Getting the Interviews: Some Perspective



- ✦ Develop **the list**... start making the calls, sending the emails
 - ✦ Indicate in you will call on a specific day and time and do so...
full pronged effort gets you these interviews!
- ✦ **Experienced** (35+) = richer perspective + **variety** of disciplines
- ✦ Have resume handy for **context**--helps the discussion
- ✦ **Folks don't mind** talking about themselves... success drivers
- ✦ The hard-to-reach folks... follow-up **within reason** (3-4X over three-four weeks)
 - ✦ **Do not take personally** lack of access! Folks are busy!
 - ✦ Enlist **admin's help--disarm**... it's about info—not a job.

Drilling Down on Contact Vitals

- ✦ It's a cold call... how do I get tel. number or email address?
 - ✦ Most websites have News tab... Press Releases often indicate a contact and give away email approach to names
x.xxxxx@acme.com ; axxxxx@acme.net; g_xxxx@acme.org;
lastname@acme.net; firstname@acme.net; lastname.
 - ✦ Contact tabs provide addresses
 - ✦ Publically traded cos have “about” on consumer sites which steer you to corporate info
 - ✦ About = leadership = bios = context for reaching out

Important protocols



- ✦ If your budget allows... **offer to pay** for breakfast, lunch or coffee
- ✦ If you're squeezed, **angle for coffees** and in-between breakfast / lunch meetings... they might have to be shorter though
- ✦ **Same day**, send out a **thanks** email... still think handwritten is also a nice touch... do both!
- ✦ If you ultimately land something, go back to all the folks that helped you along the way **and let them know you landed**

Overview: Informational Interview




- ✦ **Don't cross the bridge** and ask about jobs—integrity key!
- ✦ **In-person interview better...** about you too! Phone OK.
- ✦ You're still in **job interview mode...**
 - ✦ Dress for success... **be appropriate**
 - ✦ **Don't be late**—not a minute!
 - ✦ **Watch the clock...** if you said 20 minutes indicate, “well, its been 20 minutes... don't want to take any more of your time.” They may tell you they have a few more minutes—take them!
 - ✦ Bring notes to talk about... no pregnant pauses... be **up-to-date** on Fed, business and politics
- ✦ 40-70 something's... biz casual tends to be OK... don't be too eager



NEVER, NEVER, NEVER GIVE UP!

- WINSTON CHURCHILL



Being Age or Experience
Appropriate with the Questions
What Works—What Doesn't

Twenty-something's



- ✦ “OK, I’m not hitting you for a job, but ultimately this is about getting a job... so I want to ask you questions that will improve my perspective about what I’m up against.” **Good intro’s**
- ✦ “What do you think has made you or your colleagues successful?” “What impresses you?” **OK to Flatter**
- ✦ “What role has education played?” Languages? Books?
- ✦ “I noticed in the press recently that one of your company’s main competitors is merging.” “Is the industry consolidating?”
- ✦ Gov’t scenario same deal... success drivers, barrier to entry, typical people employed, how you move up effectively?

Thirty-something's...



- ✦ About companies/industry--not what makes you successful, though questions about success can be unique to all company cultures
- ✦ Insights about the economy, new biz models, competitors... where they see the industry moving... good books... leadership
- ✦ Skill areas... more education (exec MBA, Masters in CS), certifications, languages?
- ✦ Salary ranges tied to X years in the business?
- ✦ Smart lateral moves?
- ✦ Role of recruiters vs. targeting companies on your own?
- ✦ Are you at a disadvantage if unemployed these days?
- ✦ Starting over in new industry... how will that be received?

Forty-Five Plus...



- ✦ An industry change = **license to be a rookie**... don't have to be too *executive*... share why the change in your intro...
- ✦ No apologies / excuses for what you did before—**game face... want a sense** for what you're up against
- ✦ Role of recruiters? Technology? Efficiency drivers...
- ✦ Go for the **most senior execs**
 - ✦ They have done well ... want to feel they are helping out...
 - ✦ Most have soft spots... leverage tendency professionals have to help without making them feel bad if they don't

Questions That Work in Variety of Scenarios

- ✦ Economy... doing more with less... technology?
- ✦ Sustainability cutting across many industries... dedicated effort / person
- ✦ Social media... how used or controlled? Fears? Opportunity?
- ✦ Politics... also doing more with less... role of issue marketing
- ✦ Global economy... language, expats, hot countries, cheaper labor
- ✦ Going from private sector B2C /B2B to B2G
- ✦ Going from B2B to gov't or vice-versa
- ✦ How late is too late for more education or certifications?

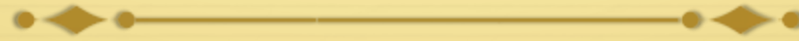
Maintaining an Active Presence



- ✦ There is no shortage of **newsy things** happening in the world which you can URL or cut and paste to share with your network and those gracious folks that granted you the interview
- ✦ Send good candidates... a real service these days



It all takes time, but worth it... drives positives about what you're doing... allows regularity in reaching out to your network



It is not your customer's job to remember you. It is your obligation and responsibility to make sure they don't have the chance to forget you.

- Patricia Fripp



Real World Examples

- Cold calling and sources
- First time emails
- Leveraged contact via multiple sources
- The follow-up... staying engaged

Cold calls via Washington Post Blurbs

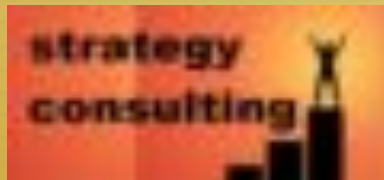


Angle: Call Bill Bernback, a senior dude at a venture capital firm... they know a lot of companies

Why? Article in today's Post...

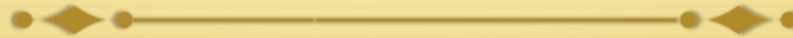
Legislation to relax federal oversight so small businesses can more easily attract investors was headed for the White House after receiving a strong vote of approval in the House.

Utilizing LinkedIn... general search and joining groups



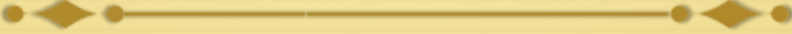
Get in → Post → Request Interview

Cold Call Voice Mail



- ✦ “Hello! My name is Jin Flin... it’s Tuesday about 10AM and this is a 1st time call... I’m not selling—just on a job campaign and hoping to benefit from your perspective about the industry—outlook, etc. ... NOT HITTING YOU UP FOR A JOB! I’d like to schedule a time to meet over coffee... breakfast... whatever your schedule can afford? You can reach me at _____ or email me at _____
- ✦ 2nd attempt... Hello it’s Jin Flin... I had left you a voice mail last week... I know you’re crazy busy... frankly don’t know what you get out of this... I know I’d benefit greatly from your insights about the industry trends as I go about my job campaign... and again, this isn’t a clever way to get a job at your at your company! I’m thinking 15-20 minutes of your time over coffee... by way of background... I’ve worked with _____ I’d really value your input! Thanks. Or I just graduated from U of-----

Timely First Time email off a Known Contact



Hi Jim!

It was timely to bump into you... your name is often mentioned in connection with people looking for their next career opportunity... in this instance... Brian Deadpan was one guy among many that encouraged me to reach out to you and here we are!

I'm sure you're in high demand these days, so I'm hoping for coffee time... bounce some ideas off you and see where where they lead to...

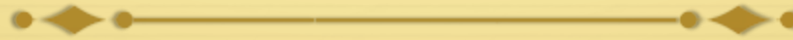
By way of introduction, I have varied interests... Having done.....

Common threads have been biz dev, sales/mrktg and solving team / personnel issues—often distressed situations.

Sorry to have gone on... I hope a coffee can work.

With best wishes, Jin Flin

Cold Call email via Mutual Friend...



Hi Lindsay!

Misplaced your email... thanks to Cheryl, I was able to finally follow-up. I recall your reference to "gifts or calling." That resonated... here are some areas that stoke my business passions:

*** Your top 3 examples...

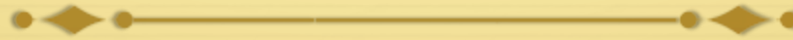
My challenge is to uncover an opportunity where...

In meeting with you, this is not about H&K's needs, but exploring your contacts in the Industry... folks you feel would be appropriate for an Introduction.

How about some dates / times for coffee or lunch that are convenient with you?

With kind regards, Jin Flin

1st Time Linked-In Note Followed by Tel. call



Ken,

I hope this note finds you well. I'd like to add you to my professional network on LinkedIn.

You may recall, I came knocking a few years ago, when you were with the ABC Agency. Since I didn't have entre to Ted Leonsis, I kept on knocking.

I'm currently working an angle to WHAT'S THE ANGLE?

Kind regards, Jin Flin

1st Time email Followed by Reminder... Started with a Church Related Database



Hi Ben,

Forgive my persistence... we had communicated finding an opening on your calendar earlier... recall, I had cherry-picked your name from your roster of emails. By the way, ANY COMMON THREADS?

Glad to work around your schedule... perhaps a few dates and times... breakfast, lunch or something in-between.

Thanks for the consideration, JIN FLIN tel #

Church email database



email address I liked



Eureka!

Invite to Connect Which Came via Contact



Hi Fred,

One of my colleagues, John Banks, passed along your resume and asked that I touch base. He mentioned you are networking at the moment for new opportunities in the marketing arena -- I'd be happy to give you some perspective on ABC or the industry as a whole.

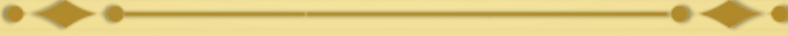
I have time for a call on Friday, say 10:30 or 11am if that works for you. Otherwise, next Tuesday or Wednesday would work as well.

Look forward to talking with you. My direct dial is 555-129-4042.

Thanks, Mike

Friend → **Company contact** → **Info Interview source**

Linked-in email... Leads to Cold Call and Tel. Interview Same day!



Bill,

You're the first I've reached out to on Linked-In without prior contact in my professional life, though, during my time with ABC it's likely my use of your data linked back to you. I'd like to add you to my professional network on LinkedIn... there appear to be several areas that may be of mutual interest.

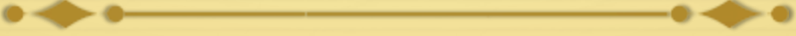
A key common thread might be my interest with the divide that separates IT from so-called classical marketers. Having spent significant time in both camps, I believe There's tremendous upside to bringing them closer together.

Your schedule permitting, I'd like to talk to you in more detail about my passion to better address the "why" of consumer/customer behavior on the

Internet / Migrations.

Thanks—Jin Flin

Linked-In 1st Time... Leads to Invitation to Interview with Start-up Company in 1 Week



Hank,

I caught your upcoming Webinar via Potomac Wire and then took a closer look at your company. What you're doing and how you're doing it is of great interest.

I've been ... **WHY IS THIS CONTACT GOING TO BE INTERESTED?**

I'd like to meet with you to explore your corporate challenges and opportunities and how

.....

Perhaps a few dates and times to meet about this this as a next step?

Sincerely, JIN FLIN Tel #

Keeping tabs on to do's... Here's a Laundry List started From one email/Contact!

Hi Joe! I'm going through my notes and to do's and wanted to get your input on next steps coming out of your generous intros. I've indicated my follow-up in the notes. Contact by contact... here's what I'm looking at:

*** Tommy... intro to Matty and Johnny.. I was following up directly with Steve Busyman

*** Marcus... I didn't see any tangible next steps here, though I've tried unsuccessfully to re-connect with Jim Quiet, originally from Intell Sciences... good guy to keep connected to since he's close

*** Eric Riding... I followed up on his links to Jeremy Stance and Steve Hope which are still alive

*** Mitch Zeeman... I emailed him again to get his feedback on contacts that I have...

*** Gertrude Stein... there were several interesting angles... TTN, contact, Q-Tel, Morris, Alltech / Jan Pressed, Sunny Dream (QSS), and Mao Tse Dong--among others along with his own play at his company

*** Random contacts mostly through Estabon I believe.... Jan Michaels, Bif Collins, Carlyle links and getting plugged in to the Choral Arts Society... he also has my resume regarding their poney express service

*** Mr. IPO... active with one of his contacts at Justeen and the interactive kiosk play... hoping for intro Athletes Inc.

*** Leslie H / /SEO stuff ... I think the thing to do here is stay focused on his deal at ING and connect with him upon his return

*** Greg Dollar... I

Did I miss anything... sorry to tag you like this... trying to be extra careful with these intros... I don't want to jump in too quickly or aggressively yet still maintain some continuity huh?.

Best, JIN

Keeping Track of all the New Activity!



- ✦ A network build will get complicated real soon, particularly if you're asking for additional contacts coming out of your informational interviews...
- ✦ Need to track prospect companies and contacts to maintain momentum
 - ✦ Friendly emails... you noted recently that competitor sold a division or acquired company or your contact's company did something... without being effusive, tell them "congrats!"
- ✦ A grid of some kind...

Keeping Track ...

Prospects / Contacts/Source	Moving Parts (insights)	Status	Next Steps	Timing
ACME / Alice Kind... came via news article... hit while fresh	3/9 Interview... went well... encouraged me to stay in touch	Sent thanks 3/9; see if others on Linked-In know her... like firm!	Research annual report look for angles—contact Alice with insights	Early July
Jim Goodhearted Alumni link	Has key position	5/3 Open to info. interview	5/5 Admin to contact me for dates	w/o July 11
Steve Nicely... Noted promotion in paper	Fast riser... will respect my cold call...	2 nd message with Admin... noted promotion	Give 2 nd message a week... and try again	w/o July 18
Sprokly Sprockets VP Biz Dev	Top 50 co. to work for... I like biz dev	Noted Top 50 and liked my interest...	Breakfast Silver Diner Tyson's Research for mtg.	July 18 7AM
Frank Federal	Heads up Int' l OPIC div.	Took call... mtg set	Research web site... Rehearse questions	July 21 10:30 AM

Another Approach to Keeping Track

Prospects / Contacts/Source	Referral	Status	Next Steps	Timing
ACME / Alice Kind... came via news article... hit while fresh	Daryl Dogood... via Alice—he's a bud and accessible	4/12 mtg was great... good intell on Fed market	Research annual report look for angles—contact Alice with insights	Early July
		Jim Gatsby via Daryl... comm'l side perspective	6/28 met with Jim... impressed w/ my focus... keep track	
			Mary Merry via Jim, actually hiring... 5/2 spk w/ her	Interview set—7/12
			Jasper Jehoshaphat via Jim took my mtg... research guy another angle	7/14 Mtg. set

Get out in front of people!



- ✦ **The informational interview keeps you in the game!**
- ✦ **Helps you stay upbeat and motivated**
- ✦ **Provides practical input to modify the resume**
- ✦ **Arms you with language relevant to the company / industry**
- ✦ **Builds your network.**



Thank you!