

Ask Altis:

The Networking Q&A

Every Job Seeker Needs in 2025

#1 HOW TO AVOID PESTERING

#2 NOT BIG ON SMALL TALK

#3 DONE WITH DULL OPENERS

#4 SHORT ON TIME

#5 CONNECT AND SHARE

#6 PASSIVE NETWORKING

#7 EVENT NETWORKING

#8 AVOID AN ECHO CHAMBER

#9 BRIDGING SENIORITY GAPS

#10 COLD OUTREACH CRINGE

“How do I reach out without feeling like I’m bothering people?”

Dear Quietly Ambitious,

You’re not the only one — reaching out can feel awkward. But when you’re clear on why you chose them and keep the ask small, it won’t come across as bothersome. Most professionals remember being in your shoes and are open to a quick chat if you keep your message warm, specific and respectful of their time.

Try this approach:

- **State the reason.** Why them, why now?
- **Make a small ask.** A focused question or a 10–15 minute chat.
- **Offer an easy way out.** “If it’s not the right time, no worries.”
- **Keep it brief.** Five to seven sentences max. One follow-up, then let it go.

Pocket templates

Warm intro (mutual connection)

Hi [Name], [Mutual contact] suggested I reach out. I admire your work on [topic/project] and am exploring roles in [area]. Could I ask you 2–3 quick questions or book a 15-minute call next week? If your schedule is packed, I can send questions by email. Thanks for considering it.

Cold note (no connection)

Hi [Name], I’ve been following your work on [topic] and found [post/project] especially useful. I’m researching career paths into [area] and would value one piece of advice from someone with [your background]. If a short call isn’t doable, a pointer to a resource would be amazing. Either way, thanks for your time.

Event follow-up

Hi [Name], I enjoyed your comments on [panel/session]. One takeaway I’m applying is [x]. Would you be open to a 10-minute chat so I can sanity-check my next step into [area]? If not, no problem. Appreciate the insight you shared.

Do this, not that

Do be warm and precise: “Hi Sam, I’m exploring data analytics roles and would love to hear how you got started.”	Don’t be vague: “Can I pick your brain?”
Do nudge once after 5–7 days with a shorter note	Don’t follow up more than once
Do personalize one sentence that proves you’ve done your homework	Don’t send your full story on first contact

“Tell me why you reached out, ask one clear question, and make it easy to say no. That reads as respectful, not bothersome.”



By:

Priyanka Chauhan

Senior Recruitment Partner

Dear Altis,

#2

"Help! I'm an introvert. Networking exhausts me. What do I do?"

Dear Recharge Required,

Totally fair, networking can be draining, especially if small talk isn't your thing. The good news: it doesn't have to mean working an entire room. Thoughtful one-on-one connections count just as much, often more. Keep it small, set boundaries and play to your strengths.

Try this approach:

- **Start in writing.** Asynchronous notes give you time to think and others time to respond.
- **Make a tiny ask.** One specific question or a 10-15 minute chat.
- **Set boundaries upfront.** Say what you can do and for how long.
- **Schedule with space.** One conversation a week. Buffer before and after to recharge.
- **Be yourself.** No performance required. Calm and thoughtful lands well.

Pocket templates

Written outreach

Hi [Name], I saw your post about moving from admin to operations and it really resonated. I'm exploring a similar shift and would value hearing about one thing that helped you most. If a quick call isn't ideal, a few tips by message would be amazing. Thanks for considering it.

Boundary-setting

I'm looking for brief guidance, not a big ask — even a couple of pointers by message would help. If now isn't great, no worries at all.

Scheduling with space

I'm usually at my best in the mornings. Would a 15-minute chat next week work for you? Happy to send questions by email if that's easier.

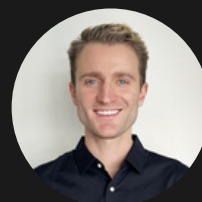
Warm, authentic close

Thanks for reading. I admire the path you've taken and would love to learn in whatever way works best for you.

Do this, not that

Do start by suggesting a low-key virtual chat	Don't assume networking has to be in person or high energy
Do focus on one connection at a time	Don't try to build a huge network all at once
Do set limits to protect your energy	Don't overbook yourself and burn out
Do lead with curiosity and gratitude	Don't apologize for asking; avoid downplaying your value

"One thoughtful message a week, a clear ask and one follow-up — that's sustainable networking."



By:

Spencer Young

Recruitment Partner

"I never know how to start the conversation.
What's an easy opener that isn't, 'So, what do you do?'"

Dear Elevator Pitch Panic,

The first line is often the hardest. But you don't need a clever script. A simple, genuine question beats a stock opener every time. Be curious, not performative, and let the conversation grow from something you can both see or share.

Try this approach:

- **Use the room.** React to the venue, session or host to ease in naturally.
- **Ask about their journey.** Roles change, stories stick.
- **Lean on shared context.** Mutual contacts, a post you read, a podcast you both heard.
- **Default to curiosity.** Why they're here today is an easy, honest start.
- **Follow with one step deeper.** Ask a short "how" or "what" to keep it moving.

Pocket openers

Event or setting

"Have you been to one of these before? Anything you wish you'd known the first time?"
"What stood out to you from the last speaker?"

Journey over job title

"What drew you to this field?"
"What's the most surprising part of your current role?"

Shared context

"I saw your post on [topic] and liked your take. What sparked it?" "We both know [mutual]. How did you two cross paths?"

Gentle follow-ups that keep it flowing

"That's interesting. How did you decide on that approach?"
"What's one thing you're testing next?"
"If someone new asked for a starting point, where would you point them?"

Do this, not that

Do ask open questions that invite a story	Don't dive into personal questions too quickly
Do be curious and conversational	Don't try too hard to sound impressive or scripted
Do leave space — listen, then mirror their tone and body language	Don't stack rapid-fire questions
Do offer a graceful exit if they seem rushed	Don't pivot to a pitch

"Skip, 'What do you do?' One honest question beats a polished pitch every time."



By:

Nav Kamal

Recruitment Partner

"How much time should I realistically spend each week, and what kind of networking events will give me the biggest bang for my buck?"

Dear Strategic But Tired,

Great question. Networking takes time, and not all of it pays off. The goal isn't to say yes to everything; it's to say yes strategically. Just 1-2 hours a week is plenty if you focus on high-value activities, go in with a plan and aim for a few quality connections, not a contact collection.

Try this approach:

- **Set a weekly cap.** 1-2 hours total. Protect it in your calendar.
- **Pick high-yield formats.** Small groups, structured discussions, clear topics.
- **Go in with one mini goal.** Ask one thoughtful question, meet two people, learn one thing about a target company.
- **Follow up.** Within 48 hours with a short note and one small next step.
- **Track and trim.** Keep a simple log and drop anything that isn't paying off.

Pocket picks

Best bang for your time

- Small-group roundtables
- Skills workshops or panels with breakouts
- Alumni or industry-specific meetups
- Recruiter-hosted sessions and office hours

Lower yield (usually)

- Open-ended mixers with no agenda
- Oversized events where you can't hear yourself think

Follow-up lines to borrow

"Great meeting you at [event]. Your point about [topic] stuck with me. Could we keep in touch? If you're open to it, I'd love to ask one quick question about [specific]."

"Thanks for the chat today. I'm going to try [their tip]. If there's someone on your team who could speak with me about [area], I'd love an intro."

Do this, not that

Do choose curated, small-group or topic-driven events	Don't rely on unstructured mixers as your main tactic
Do prep one question and one target company	Don't collect cards without context
Do follow up with 1-2 people you engaged with	Don't wait a week to follow up

"Two focused hours beat 10 scattered ones. Choose small, purposeful rooms, arrive with one question, & follow up once."



By:

Maryna Skobal

Senior Recruitment Partner

"How do I make an ask without it feeling like a one-way street?"

Dear Trying to Keep It Mutual,

That's fair, no one wants to feel like they're always taking. A good ask feels like a conversation, not a transaction. So, keep it clear, light and specific. The key is to show appreciation and, whenever possible, offer something in return, even if it's just a genuine thank you or an update.

Try this approach:

- **Frame it as learning, not a favour.**
People enjoy sharing what they know.
- **Say why them.** One sincere line makes it personal, not random.
- **Offer options and an easy out.** Call, send a quick DM or a resource — and "no pressure."
- **Send something back.** A thank you, a useful link or an update on how you used their advice.

Pocket templates

Learning ask

"Hi [Name], I'm exploring a move into [area] and noticed your path is similar to mine. Could you share what worked best for you early on? Even a few pointers by message would help."

Why-them line

"I've followed your posts on [topic], and your take on [specific] stuck with me. I'd love to hear how you developed that perspective."

Easy out

"I know you're busy, so no pressure — if a call doesn't fit, a quick note or a link you recommend would be amazing."

Post-chat close the loop

"Thanks again for the chat. I tried your tip on [X] and it changed how I'm approaching [Y]. If I can ever share a resource on [topic], happy to."

Do this, not that

Do lead with learning, not "help"	Don't open with "Can I pick your brain?"
Do cap the ask with a time limit	Don't ask for big commitments
Do offer an out and one alternative	Don't guilt someone into saying yes or chase them with multiple messages
Do follow up once with a thoughtful thank you or update	Don't take the call , disappear, then never circle back

"Make it easy to say yes. Most people want to help when approached with respect and sincerity."



By:

Vitalii Moudrak

Recruitment Partner

"What are light-touch ways to stay on people's radar when I'm not actively looking?"

Dear Head Down, Logged In,

Smart question. The best time to nurture your network is before you need it. But that doesn't mean booking back-to-back coffees. Small, consistent actions keep you visible. Aim for genuine, low-lift moments that show you're curious and want to stay connected.

Try this approach:

- **Pick a tiny cadence.** 15-20 minutes a week is enough.
- **Rotate your touch points.** One comment, one message, one congrats.
- **Keep it no-ask.** Be generous, not transactional.
- **Make it specific.** Mention a post, project or moment you noticed.
- **Track it.** Keep a simple list, so you don't go silent for months at a time.

Pocket templates

Thoughtful comment

"Loved your take on onboarding and retention. Curious — did your process change post-pandemic?"

"Thought of you" message

"Saw this employer branding piece and thought of your work at [Company]. No reply needed, just sharing."

Quick congrats

"Just saw your update. Huge congrats — well deserved!"

Quiet connector

"You two came to mind this week. Both of you specialize in operations at growth-stage orgs, so I thought you might appreciate an intro."

Share a helpful resource

"This thread on data storytelling reminded me of your team's dashboards. Flagging in case it's handy."

Do this, not that

Do personalize each touchpoint with one concrete detail	Don't go silent for a year, and then ask for a referral
Do keep most check-ins ask-free	Don't drop "Great post!" with no substance
Do celebrate others' wins	Don't reach out only when job hunting
Do leave thoughtful comments on posts from people in your industry	Don't just post and ghost

"Light touchpoints add up. You're not announcing a job search, you're being a good colleague who stays in the loop."



By:

Thivishika Sasikumar

Recruitment Partner

“What’s the right way to follow up after a networking event?”

Dear Made a Connection, Now What?

You’re right, following up is where the real networking happens. Keep it simple: a short, specific message within 24-48 hours that reminds them who you are, anchors to one detail you discussed and leaves the door open to stay in touch (without asking for anything right away).

Try this approach:

- **Anchor to a detail.** Reference the session, a quote or the moment you met.
- **Share a key takeaway:** Refer to one thing you learned and how it has helped.
- **Offer a light next step.** Only if it fits — a resource, a 10-15 min chat or just to connect on LinkedIn.
- **Keep it short.** 4-6 sentences max.
- **Nudge once.** If no reply after a week, one brief follow-up, then let it rest.

Pocket templates

General event follow-up

Hi [Name], great meeting you at [event] on [day]. I appreciated your insight on [topic], especially your point about [specific]. If you’re open, I’d love to keep in touch. Happy to trade notes over a quick 15-minute chat or swap resources by message.

Speaker or panel follow-up

Thanks for your remarks on [topic] at [session]. Your example about [specific] gave me a new angle. If you have a go-to resource on this, I’d love a pointer. Either way, thanks again for sharing.

Resource promise follow-up

Good to meet you at [event]. Here’s the article I mentioned on [topic]: [link]. If helpful, I can send the checklist I use as well. No pressure — just passing it along.

LinkedIn connection (no contact info swapped)

Hi [Name], I appreciated your perspective during the Q&A at [event]. Would love to connect here and keep learning from your posts.

Do this, not that

Do follow up within 1-2 days while it’s fresh	Don’t wait a week and hope they remember you
Do mention something specific from your conversation	Don’t use a generic “Nice meeting you” with no context
Do close the loop: “Grateful for your time.”	Don’t ask for a referral right away

“Follow-up is about momentum. A timely, thoughtful note keeps the door open.”



By:

Mikaela Solomon

Recruitment Lead

Dear Altis,

#8

"How do I build a network that isn't people just like me?"

Dear Seeking
Broader Perspectives,

Such a thoughtful question. It's natural (and human) to gravitate toward people just like you, but widening your circle can open new doors in your career. Start with awareness, then take small, consistent steps, change who you follow, learn from and message.

Try this approach:

- **Scroll your feed and recent chats.**
If it's one industry or background, note it and set a goal to add some variety.
- **Diversify who you follow.** Seek voices across functions, levels and lived experience, not just titles.
- **Show up where you're not yet known.**
Join groups, events or newsletters outside your usual lane.
- **Spotlight beyond your circle.** Share or invite perspectives you don't hear often.
- **Use one-degree connections.** Ask trusted contacts for intros outside your common circles.

Pocket templates

Find new voices

"I'm following more folks in [adjacent field/community] to learn beyond my lane. Any creators you recommend?"

One-degree intro ask

"I'm working on broadening my network. Is there someone outside our usual circles you think I should follow or connect with?"

Thoughtful engagement

"I appreciated your post on accessibility in hiring. I'm curious, what one change made the biggest difference on your team?"

Spotlight others

"Loved this thread from [Name] on Indigenous leadership in the public sector. Here's what stood out to me: [1 line]."

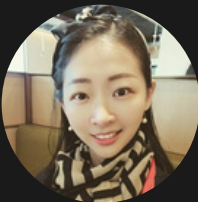
Join new groups

- Industry meetups, ERGs or community events for allies
- Panels on accessibility, anti-racism or neurodiversity
- Local orgs serving newcomer talent, women in tech, Black professionals, Indigenous leaders

Do this, not that

Do follow people from varying backgrounds and paths	Don't only connect with classmates and colleagues
Do ask people in your current network to introduce you to someone they admire outside your shared circles	Don't connect performatively (i.e., without engagement)
Do engage with care. Ask open questions and listen	Don't debate to prove a point

"A diverse network is built through steady, respectful habits that widen your view and your opportunities."



By:

Letae Wu

Senior Recruitment Partner

“How do I approach someone far more senior without feeling out of my league?”

Dear Bridging Seniority Gaps,

Here’s a secret: senior leaders aren’t looking for “perfect and polished” — they’re drawn to interesting questions, fresh perspectives and respect for their time. Instead of seeing yourself as “less than,” think “two professionals trading notes.”

Try this approach:

- **Lead with curiosity.** Reference something they said, built or wrote that genuinely grabbed you.
- **Ask one focused question.** Narrow to a decision, project or turning point.
- **Make a small ask.** A quick pointer, a link or a 10–15-min chat.
- **Offer value in return.** Share a relevant observation or resource, so it’s a two-way exchange.

Pocket templates

Concise opener

Hi [Name], your post on scaling through rapid growth made me rethink how I structure my team. Could I ask one question about how you approached [specific]?

Focused question

When you moved from hands-on contributor to leadership, what signal told you it was the right time?

Two-way share

I tried your onboarding tip from [article], and it cut drop-off by 12%! Happy to share my checklist, if helpful. Curious if you have any recent tips for remote teams?

Post-chat close the loop

Six months ago you suggested I prioritize cross-team visibility. It shifted how I work and helped move my last project ahead faster. Appreciate the nudge.

Do this, not that

Do refer to one concrete thing they’ve said or done	Don’t ask for their whole career story
Do ask one question they can answer in a minute	Don’t request big commitments on first contact
Do share a small insight so it’s not one-way	Don’t treat it like a one-way Q&A
Do follow up once with progress or a thank-you for their time	Don’t let the conversation be the last time you interact

“Lead with one insight and one smart question. Cap it at 15 minutes, say no pressure, and you’ll be surprised how often they say yes.”



By:
Chelsea Kelly
Senior Recruitment Partner

"How can I write a good cold LinkedIn message?"

Dear Warming Up,

Good news, the best cold messages are short, specific and respectful of time. Lead with relevance, say why you're reaching out, make one tiny ask and offer an easy way for them to politely decline. The key is to be clear and sincere, rather than clever or salesy.

Try this approach:

- **Open with context.** Share how you found them or what caught your eye.
- **Say why them.** One sincere line beats a generic compliment.
- **Make a bite-size ask.** One question or a 10-15 min chat.
- **Offer options and an out.** "Totally fine to decline."
- **Keep it tidy.** 4-6 sentences for InMail, about 300 characters for a connection note.
- **Add a proof point.** Include one line of relevant context or result so they can place you.

Pocket templates

Connect request note

Hi [Name], your post on [topic] was a lightbulb moment for me. I'm exploring [area] and would value one pointer on [specific]. If not a fit, no worries — thanks for the insight.

Cold InMail — learning ask

Hi [Name], I've been following your work on [topic] and your take on [specific] stood out. I'm shifting into [area] and would value one piece of advice on [focused question]. If a call isn't ideal, I'd appreciate a link, thanks.

Cold InMail — inquiring about a role

Hi [Name], I noticed your team is hiring for [role]. I've led [relevant result] at [company] and recently [1-line proof]. Could I quickly share how I'd tackle [specific challenge from the job description]? If now's not a good time, I'd be happy to send by message instead.

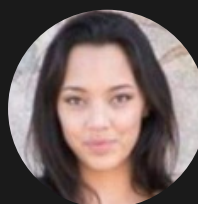
Cold InMail — recruiter outreach

Hi [Name], I'm a [title] focused on [niche]. Recent wins: [result] and [result]. If you hire for [function] this quarter, I'd love to share 4–5 bullets tailored to [company/team]. If your focus is elsewhere, no stress — thanks for connecting.

Do this, not that

Do personalize your note with a specific detail	Don't paste your full CV into the message
Do offer an alternative (e.g., DM answers instead of a call)	Don't drop a calendar link as the first move
Do add one relevant proof point if you're asking about a role	Don't stack five questions in one note
Do tidy your profile so your note has context	Don't send generic blasts or follow up repeatedly

"Make it easy to help you, and people usually will."



By:

Samara Vandersloot

Senior Recruitment Partner

STUCK ON SOMETHING IN YOUR JOB SEARCH?

Ask Altis anything — seriously. From resumés to networking, awkward LinkedIn moments to interview curveballs, no question is too small (or too weird). Your question might be featured in our next guide!

CandidateCommunity@altis.com

APPLY TO JOBS ON OUR PORTAL

Now that you know how to network with recruiters and hiring managers, you can confidently apply to open roles and send a clear, thoughtful follow-up note. Browse available opportunities on our Job Portal at the link below.

[Find my next role](#)

