

The 3-Step Networking System

A simple framework for starting better conversations, building useful relationships and avoiding awkward networking messages.

USE THIS RESOURCE TO

Find relevant people, write messages that feel personal, and make the first next step easy to say yes to.

Practical. Minimal. Built to be used.

aarushchoubey.com/resources

Why Most Networking Messages Fail

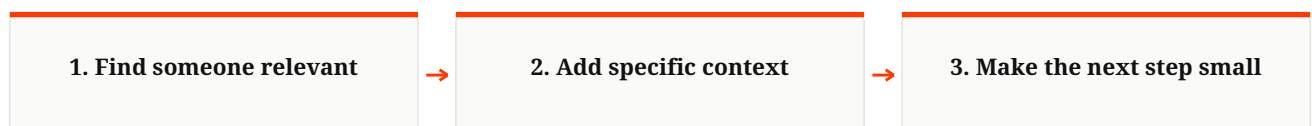
Networking usually becomes awkward when the message is built around **getting something** instead of starting a useful conversation. The goal of a first message is not to prove how impressive you are. It is to make the reason for speaking clear and give the other person an easy way to respond.

- **Generic introductions.** "I love your work" gives the person nothing specific to respond to.
- **Asking for too much immediately.** Mentorship, long meetings or large favours create friction before trust exists.
- **"Can I pick your brain?"** It is vague and often sounds like an open-ended request for unpaid time.
- **Copy-paste messages.** If the same message could be sent to 100 people, it rarely feels worth answering.
- **Making it entirely about yourself.** A long biography is not a reason for someone else to engage.
- **Contacting irrelevant people.** Fame is not relevance. The best person may be only a few steps ahead of you.
- **Trying to impress instead of connect.** Specific curiosity is usually more useful than exaggerated praise.

THE TEST

A strong first message answers three questions quickly: Why this person? Why now? What small response are you asking for?

The framework below keeps those three questions simple.



Step 1 - Find Someone Genuinely Relevant

Start with relevance, not status. Look for people whose work connects directly to the skill you are learning, the industry you want to enter, a project you are building, or a problem you are trying to understand.

Someone slightly ahead of you can often be more useful than a famous expert. Their experience is closer to the problem you are facing, and there is usually a more realistic reason for a conversation.

Good reasons to contact someone include:

- They are using a skill you are actively learning.
- They work in an industry or role you are seriously exploring.
- They have solved a problem similar to one in your current project.
- They published something that changed how you are thinking about a specific issue.
- They are a few steps ahead on a path you are genuinely considering.

RELEVANCE CHECK

Before messaging, be able to finish this sentence:

"I am contacting this person specifically because..."

If your answer is vague, keep looking.

Good person to contact if:

- Their work directly relates to my goal.
- I genuinely know why I am contacting them.
- I have something specific to mention.
- There is a realistic reason for a conversation.

Step 2 - Specific Context Before the Ask

Your first lines should make it obvious that the message was written for that person. You do not need to write an essay. One specific observation is enough.



Weak	Stronger
"Hey, I love your content. Can I ask you some questions?"	"I watched your breakdown on [specific subject]. I am currently working on [relevant thing], and your point about [specific idea] made me reconsider how I am approaching it."
"You are really inspiring."	"Your point about keeping the first version deliberately simple stood out because I am overcomplicating my own first launch."

Why the stronger version works:

- It proves you paid attention.
- It gives the other person context without telling your entire story.
- It creates a natural topic they can respond to.
- It avoids fake praise and focuses on a real idea.

Specific beats impressive. You are not trying to sound important. You are trying to make the conversation real.

Step 3 - Make the Next Step Small

The easiest way to kill a good first message is to make the ask too large. The first interaction should reduce pressure, not create an obligation.

Avoid opening with requests for:

- A mentorship.
- A long meeting.
- Free consulting.
- A huge favour.
- An introduction to someone important.

Better first asks:

- One specific question.
- A quick opinion on a clearly defined choice.
- A short piece of feedback.
- Where they would start if they were in your position.
- A 10-15 minute conversation, only when there is a clear reason that text is not enough.

CORE PRINCIPLE

Make saying yes easy.

The smaller and clearer the next step, the less work the other person has to do just to understand what you want.

The Message Builder

FILL-IN STRUCTURE

Hi [NAME],

I came across [SPECIFIC WORK / POST / PROJECT].

[ONE GENUINE OBSERVATION].

I am currently [RELEVANT CONTEXT].

I wanted to ask [SMALL, SPECIFIC QUESTION / REQUEST].

Thanks,
[NAME]

Use this as a structure, not a script. Rewrite it in your own voice and remove any line that does not add useful context.

Three Natural Example Messages

These are examples of the structure in use. Adapt the tone, detail and ask to the actual relationship.

EXAMPLE 1 - ANOTHER CREATOR

Hi Maya,

I watched your video on turning one long-form idea into a week of short content. The part about choosing clips around one clear audience problem was useful because I have been trying to fit too much into each Short.

I am building my own content system at the moment. If you were improving one thing first - the hook or the clarity of the payoff - which would you prioritise?

Thanks,
Aarush

EXAMPLE 2 - SOMEONE IN BUSINESS

Hi Daniel,

I came across your post about getting early service clients through focused outreach instead of sending hundreds of generic messages. I liked the point about researching the business before making the offer.

I am learning how to make outreach more relevant for a small service project. When you were starting, what was the first signal you looked for to decide a company was actually worth contacting?

Thanks,
Aarush

EXAMPLE 3 - LEARNING A CAREER OR SKILL

Hi Priya,

I read your breakdown of how you moved from basic frontend work into building full products. Your point about learning by shipping small projects rather than endlessly following tutorials stood out.

I am still early in learning software development. If you were starting again, what kind of first project would you build to expose the biggest gaps quickly?

Thanks,
Aarush

Networking Message Checklist

Run this check before you press send. If several answers are "no", improve the message instead of sending it faster.

Is this person genuinely relevant?

Did I mention something specific?

Does the message sound like me?

Am I asking for something reasonable?

Is the message concise?

Have I given them a reason to respond?

Would I personally reply to this?

Stop trying to "network." Start trying to have better conversations.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Today: Find one genuinely relevant person and send one thoughtful message. Do not optimise for replies. Optimise for sending something you would be comfortable receiving yourself.