**Career Advice #218 Matthew Cool \*\*\***

**BComm Student | 13 July 2019**

**University of Calgary**

**Via LinkedIn Career Advice Portal \*\*\***

*I would like career advice specifically regarding how to network and gain exposure in the finance field as an undergraduate still in school with few to no contacts in the industry?*

Hi Matthew,

I graduated some time ago from U of C from the Faculty of Management. I am also a Canadian Chartered Accountant (now CPA) that spent the last 10 years in the Middle East. Oil prices have not been favorable to my employment over that period. In 2017, I started researching emerging technologies. In 2018, I started listening to Gary Vaynerchuk. In fact, after listening to him for a while, you will begin to understand why I am responding to you. His recent podcast call with a College Graduate may be a good introduction for you:

YouTube Link: <http://bit.ly/2Vylgmd>

Podcast link: [https://apple.co/2E9K49d](https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/the-garyvee-audio-experience/id928159684?i=1000)

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Why do I think listening to Gary Vee is relevant? I lived in Doha, Qatar for 3 years and it was virtually impossible to discuss emerging technologies with my past employer or any potential employers. In addition, in 2017, I had co-founded a blockchain project with my mate who lived in Cayman Islands. We could not find any coders or IT guys in Qatar and certainly investors were not readily available.

Listening to Gary Vaynerchuk opened my eyes to the benefits of using the various platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to create awareness of our project and to find like-minded folks across the globe. This awareness also transcended into creating awareness for my newly found skills in emerging technologies.

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Outreach on LinkedIn

Back in the day, I used LinkedIn to primarily connect with recruiters and fellow work colleagues. Those contacts remained primarily dormant unless I took initiative to contact the recruiters to update my employment situation or reach out to my former colleagues to see if they were aware of any potential CFO roles.

Over the past year, I came to realize that because of the crowed landscape on the various social media platforms, simply “connecting” with any one on LinkedIn was not sufficient. Many people automatically “accept” the connection request no matter how you try to personalize it. Likewise, simply sending the standard LinkedIn message “Allen wants to connect with you” has little or no impact if you do not take initiative to follow-up.

Some suggestions for you to expand your network:

IDEA#1: Companies of interest

Find the companies you are interested in learning more about in connection with your field of study: International business/trade/commerce. Follow them on LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Subscribe to their company newsletter. Follow the CEO and other key management on LinkedIn.

IDEA #2. Posting articles of interest

Following on from the list of companies of interest, you will come across articles from time to time that may be relevant to their key management. This is where the Gary Vaynerchuk principles come in handy. He often speaks about ensuring social media posts are relevant and contextual. So, you do not need permission to “tag” the CEO of an article of interest. For example, if you find an article that you think is relevant to Grant Fagerheim, the CEO of Whitecap Resources Inc in Calgary, you do not need his permission to tag him on LinkedIn. Likewise, if he writes or posts an article that you happen to read, rather than simply responding with a “Like” on his article, I would recommend adding a relevant comment like

“This article is connected with the study the University of Calgary recently released which you can find in the following link…”

IDEA #3. Posting articles on Social Media

In order to draw attention to your skills and areas of study at University of Calgary, there is nothing to stop you from simply posting links to articles related to your field. You may or may not find people to tag. You do not need permission. Again, it will come in handy to listen to Gary Vaynerchuk to understand which medium works best for you: Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook. You may want to consider downloading his book “Crushing It” using the free app, Audible. The book may cost you $10 to download.

IDEA #4. Personal connection request for specific reason (applying for a job, internship, or seeking to learn more about their company):

Step 1: Use **LinkedIn**

(a): Prepare 300-character introduction. This can be a template you create and then modify for each intended recipient. You have to be brief and concise. Here is an example of a recent outreach I made for a potential CFO role:

Hi Douglas, while CFO at Qatar Solar, I took a deep dive into emerging technologies. Current advisory roles w/ 2 blockchain startups, India B2C startup & Singapore fintech SaaS. Add 2 decades energy sector & tech co-founder. Keen to chat CFO role w/ Fun Train; relocated from Qatar; avail immediately

(b): Use LinkedIn “Personalized Message” to copy and paste this 300-character invitation. Most people allow you to send such a note. Sometimes you will find an individual that will modify their LinkedIn settings so that an email is required to connect. I just simply try and find another person in their organization who is open to receiving such personalized invites.

(c): When they accept your connection, thank them & request permission to send your resume (or other reason that you are reaching out). Ask them to confirm the email included on their LinkedIn profile. Remember, many people automatically “accept” such invitations so this second step is necessary to ensure they are switched on and tuned to you.

Step 2: Use email to send your resume & cover letter

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One final note. If you are really adventurous and want to try to draw attention to your LinkedIn profile, try creating your CV (or business card) using augmented reality. You could post the completed version to your contacts and including a link on your LinkedIn profile:

**AR Business Card:** [**http://bit.ly/2GSsS8R**](%22http:/)

**If you want to have fun in social setting, this link to create your own Augmented Reality app is also pretty cool:**

**AR App creation: http://bit.ly/2LjOkco**

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Have fun