Communicating with Potential Field Sites

Walden University Career Services Center
http://careercenter.waldenu.edu
Agenda

• Gain resources and tools to communicate qualifications and program requirements.
• Learn tips for professional communications.
• Acquire strategies for face-to-face, phone, email, and LinkedIn.
Be Prepared Before You Begin

- Do you know your Field Experience requirements and timelines?
  Visit the School of Counseling Field Experience page to learn more:
  https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/fieldexperience/soc

- Have you maximized Walden Career Services’ Resources for Field Experience students?
  Visit the Career Services Resources for Field Experience page to learn more:
  http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/fieldexperience/careerresources

- Did you use OptimalResume to create your cover letter, resume, and career portfolio?
  Visit the OptimalResume page to learn more:
  https://waldenu.optimalresume.com/

- Have you utilized all available resources to research potential field sites?
  Watch the video, Locating Counseling Field Experience Sites
Communicating with Potential Sites: The Basics

• Research the potential site.
• Be ready to answer questions about your goals, qualifications, experience, and academic knowledge.
• Model professionalism in your appearance, oral communication, and written communication.
Phone Inquiries
Hello ________, my name is ________ and I’m a graduate student pursuing a master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Walden University. I received your name from ________________, who mentioned that you work with______ clients and specialize in ____________. As I prepare for a future career in mental health counseling, I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet with you, learn more about your work, and discuss the possibility of my completing a field experience at your site. Would you have 10-15 minutes to meet with me over the phone or in person?
Communication Strategy: Phone Inquiry (cold)

Hello ________, my name is ________ and I’m a graduate student pursuing a master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Walden University.

As I understand, your agency serves clients with _____ and your specialties include ____________. As I prepare for a future career in mental health counseling, I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to learn more about your agency and discuss the possibility of my completing a field experience at your site.

With my knowledge of ____________, I could bring valuable information to your agency. Would you have 10-15 minutes to meet with me over the phone or in person?
Email Inquiry Tips

• Include a greeting and signature.
• Proof for typos and grammatical errors.
• Review OptimalResume’s LetterBuilder templates.

Refer to the following resources for more information:
• Career Services’ Resumes and CVs tab: http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/careerservices/resumesandcvs
• OptimalResume: https://waldenu.optimalresume.com
Dear Ms. Lund:

I am a graduate student in a CACREP-accredited M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at Walden University, with a specialization in Trauma and Crisis Counseling. I am inquiring about a potential practicum opportunity at your agency to complete my graduate program requirements. I received your name from ______________, who mentioned that you specialize in ______________. Your areas of expertise closely align with my interests in crisis intervention, trauma, group facilitation, and human development.

I would be grateful for an opportunity to meet or talk over the phone about how I could contribute to your agency as an intern. As I work toward the completion of my program requirements and prepare for a career in mental health counseling, I am eager and ready to apply counseling skills under supervision, learn group facilitation strategies, observe counseling interventions, and gain experience with a diverse population of clients. I have enclosed my resume, which highlights my experience and qualifications. If you would like to learn more about Field Experience requirements for my program, I invite you to visit the following page: http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/fieldexperience/soc/sitesupervisors.

I would welcome the opportunity to learn more about your agency’s needs and further discuss my qualifications and program requirements. I appreciate your time and look forward to connecting with you at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Stephanie M. Curtis
Dear Ms. Lund:

I am a graduate student in a CACREP-accredited M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at Walden University, with a specialization in Trauma and Crisis Counseling. I am inquiring about a potential practicum opportunity at your agency to complete my graduate program requirements. The services your agency provides closely align with my interests in crisis intervention, trauma, group facilitation, and human development.

I would be grateful for an opportunity to meet or talk over the phone about how I could contribute to your agency as an intern. As I work toward the completion of my program requirements and prepare for a career in mental health counseling, I am eager and ready to apply counseling skills under supervision, learn group facilitation strategies, observe counseling interventions, and gain experience with a diverse population of clients. I have enclosed my resume, which highlights my experience and qualifications. If you would like to learn more about Field Experience requirements for my program, I invite you to visit the following page: http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/fieldexperience/soc/sitesupervisors.

I would welcome the opportunity to learn more about your agency’s needs and further discuss my qualifications and program requirements. I appreciate your time and look forward to connecting with you at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Stephanie M. Curtis
Face-to-Face Site Visit
Communication Strategy: Site Visit

• Dress in business attire.
• Bring a notebook, pen, copies of your resume, and your career portfolio.
• Exhibit a friendly, professional demeanor.
• Introduce yourself at the front desk:

Hello, my name is _______ and I am a graduate student studying clinical mental health counseling. I am interested in learning more about your agency and speaking to someone about internship or practicum opportunities. Could you suggest someone who may be able to answer my questions?
Making Connections Through LinkedIn

Before you start:

- Do you have an updated and complete LinkedIn profile?

TIP: Watch a LinkedIn webinar on the Walden University Career Services Center website:
http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/careerservices/careerwebinars/cafes#s-lg-box-wrapper-18615019
Communications Strategy: LinkedIn

Invitation to Connect

• Research potential field sites and supervisors using LinkedIn’s Search function.

• Send a custom invitation to connect:

Dr. Jackson,
I am a graduate student enrolled in a clinical mental health counseling program at Walden University. I came across your LinkedIn profile while I was researching counseling professionals in my area. I would like to connect with you through LinkedIn to learn more about your background and experience.

LinkedIn Help: Personalizing Your LinkedIn Invitations: https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/46662/personalizing-invitations-to-connect?lang=en
Dr. Jackson,
Thank you for connecting with me through LinkedIn. From your profile, I learned that you specialize in __________. I have developed a strong interest in this topic during my academic program and I would like to gain your insights into ______________. Would you have a few minutes to share your expertise with me over the phone? I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to learn more about your background. Is there a date or time that would be convenient for you? You can reach me directly at __________. Thank you for your time.
Follow Up Strategies

Always...

• Bring your best!
• Send a thank you email.
• Stay in touch.
Final Thoughts

• Be proactive! Reach out to Agency Directors, Potential Site Supervisors, Walden Alumni, and other contacts directly.

• Consider your communication strengths and use the strategy best suited for you.

• Customize your language—there are many different ways to reach out!
Career Services Resources for Field Experience

Gain Resume and Cover Letter Tips, Find a Field Site, Leverage Networking, and Ace the Interview!

http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/fieldexperience/careerresources
OptimalResume

Build Resumes, Cover Letters, and Career Portfolios; and Practice Interview Skills

https://waldenu.optimalresume.com
School of Counseling Field Experience

Field Experience Requirements and Resources

http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/fieldexperience/soc