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# **Connect, Network, and Find Mentorship**

**In the Remote Environment**

**Aaron Kesler - June 12, 2021**

**“If you’re not making someone else’s life better, then you’re wasting your time. Your life will become better by making other lives better.”**

**Will Smith AKA The Fresh Prince**

# Connect Network and Find Mentorship

What are we going to cover?



Why do you want to connect?



Finding your mentor



How to form a connection



You connected. Now what?

# Why do you want to connect?

## Create a persona

- Take some time to reflect on what it is you hope to gain by expanding your network, finding a mentor or connecting with other people
  - Do you want to hone a skill?
  - Product Manager and Product Ops?
  - Senior to Principle or Director?
- This is not selfish!
- Your mentor/connection won't know how to help you if you can't articulate your needs

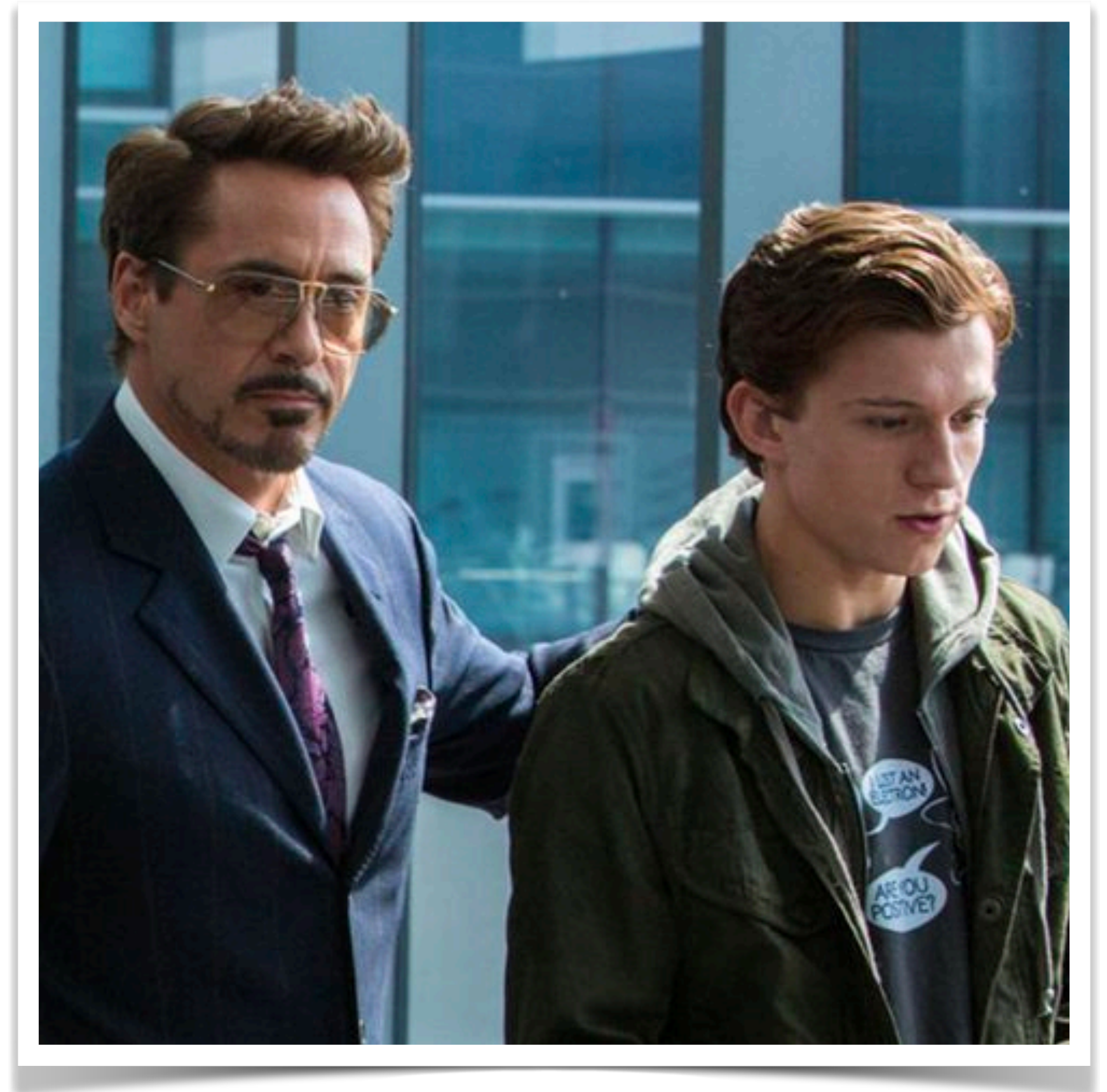




# Why do you want to connect


## Persona I used when I started







- In Product Management or Sales Engineering at least 5 years
- Rose through the ranks to be Senior/Principle or Director or Head
- Works at a product focused company or start-up
- Has a technical degree and worked as some type of developer



# Finding your mentor

## Using LinkedIn Efficiently



 Home My Network Jobs Messaging Notifications (3) Me

People

2nd 1

Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill Area 1

Keywords 1

Current company

All filters

About 1,700 results

First name

Last name

Title

product


Company

School

Reset

Show results

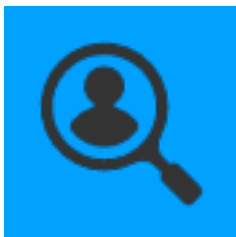
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# Finding your mentor

## LinkedIn Stalking 101


- Comb through their LinkedIn profile to figure out if they have a career trajectory you're interested in.
- This guy has a similar background in technology and founded his own company
- Software Engineer to Product Manager. Maybe I want to know how?
- I've already begun to create a conversation with him

NOTE: View their profile in public mode. Let them know who you are.


### Experience

**Solutions Engineer**  
Quantum Metric · Full-time  
Jan 2021 – Present · 6 mos  
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill Area  

Building better digital products faster through Continuous Product Design (CPD) for business, product, and technical teams. Discovering customer intent and friction helps product leaders test, learn, and iterate faster by providing a single view of customer truth. This enables teams to agree more quickly on priorities, release with confidence, and work faster.


**Solutions Engineer**  
ProcessMaker · Full-time  
Oct 2019 – Jan 2021 · 1 yr 4 mos  
Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina Area  

Involved in pre-sales process to demonstrate the power of low-code platforms in solving business problems. Working with Solutions Engineers & Professional Services to build and deliver out-of-the-box templates for Higher Education and Banking organizations.


**Product Manager**  
Scoutr · Full-time  
Dec 2018 – Sep 2019 · 10 mos  
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill Area  

At Scoutr curated hundreds of personality tests into a simple 10 question culture survey to create a long-term match between employee and employer.


As a product evangelist, I brought in over 70% of the company's new reven ...see more

**Adjunct Instructor - Web Development**  
Wake Technical Community College · Part-time  
Apr 2018 – Jun 2019 · 1 yr 3 mos  
Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina Area  


Taught front-end section of the Development Bootcamp during nights and weekends. Coursework included HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and React. Structured classes to have brief instruction followed by multiple coding exercises.

**Software Engineer**  
Foster Moore - The registry people ® · Full-time  
Mar 2018 – Nov 2018 · 9 mos  
Cary, North Carolina, United States  

Built and deployed a business registry 3 months ahead of schedule as part of an agile team.


**Co-Founder**  
Prendus  
Oct 2015 – Mar 2018 · 2 yrs 6 mos  
Provo, Utah Area  


Led a team to research, design, and develop a collaborative online assessment generator. We used JavaScript, GraphQL, and Google Polymer as our tech stack. Over 3000 students used the platform in higher education courses.

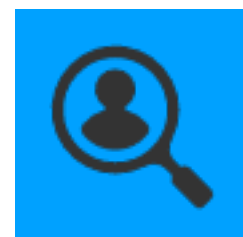
**Data Analyst**  
Mozy by Carbonite  
Jan 2015 – Oct 2015 · 10 mos  
Pleasant Grove, UT  

Used database skills to assist Finance department in migrating their payment system. Also reconciled thousands of dollars in payment irregularities from hundreds of thousands of transactions using SQL.

### Education

**Brigham Young University**  
Masters, Educational/Instructional Technology

**Brigham Young University**  
Bachelor's degree, Management Information Systems, General





# How to form a connection

## The 3 forms of connecting digitally

- Cold connecting: reaching out to someone without having any connections in common
- Warm connecting: reaching out to someone via someone you already know.
- Internal: Using your colleagues and calendar to connect with someone at your organization.




# How to form a connection








## Cold Connecting Rules

1. Look through their LinkedIn profile thoroughly to find a reason to connect with them
2. Include a note in the connection request saying why you're connecting
3. Make sure to get across that you're not selling anything
4. Show that you've actually taken time to look at their profile.




OCT 26, 2020

 **Aaron Kesler** · 9:59 AM 




Hey Mr. Crabs thanks for the connection. Your career path seems to be exactly what I'm looking to do as well. Would you be up for a chat sometime?

 **Mr. Crabs** (He/Him) · 9:18 PM

Yes. Send me an invite with your phone to [crab@thecrustycrab.com](mailto:crab@thecrustycrab.com) 9amET Thur 29th for 30 mins if that time works?


OCT 29, 2020








 **Aaron Kesler** · 11:56 AM

Hey Spongebob  
I see that you started in sales and then moved to sales engineering. I have been thinking about heading into sales myself, but still want to be able to utilize my technical knowledge somehow. Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

Thanks,

Aaron

 **Spongebob Squarepants** · 11:57 AM 

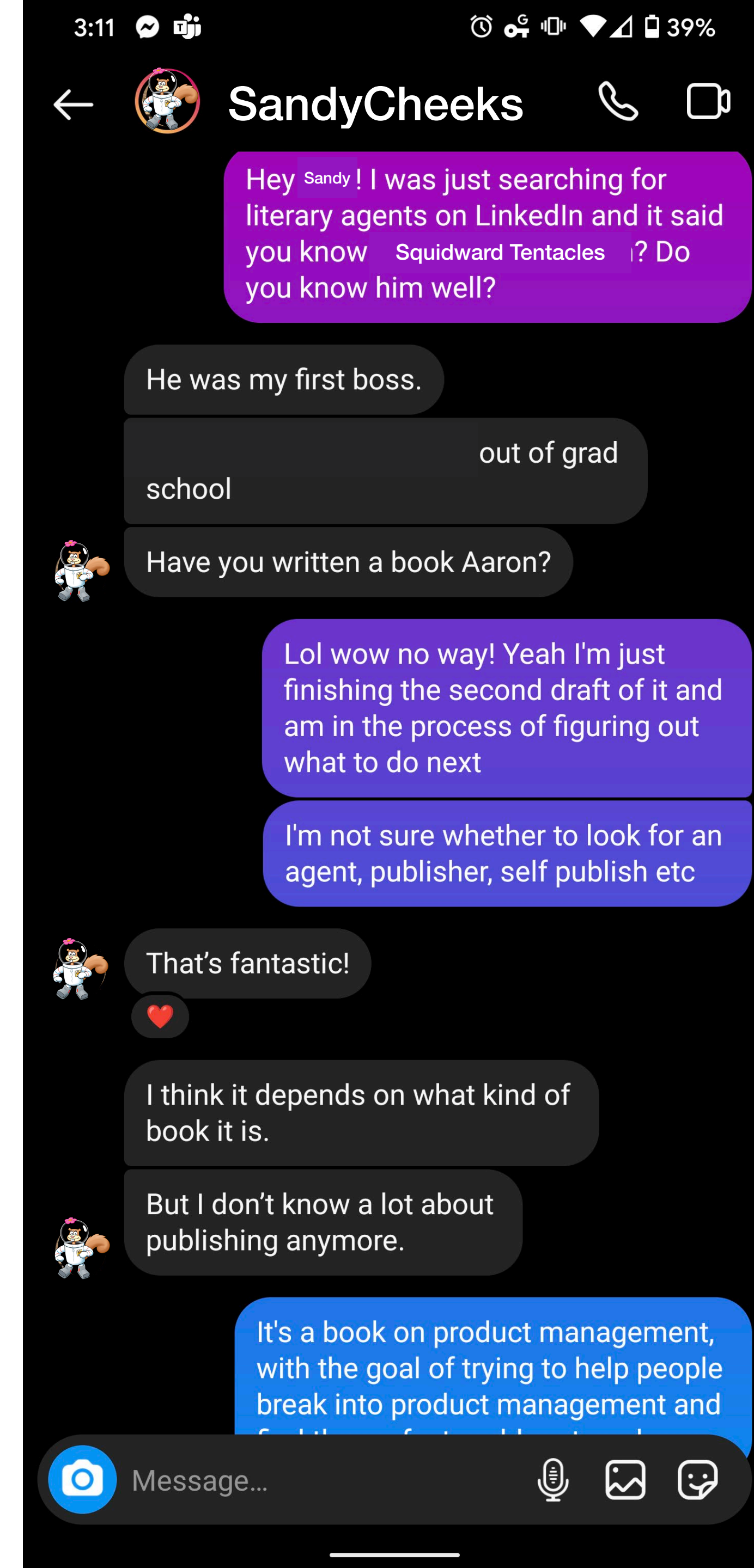
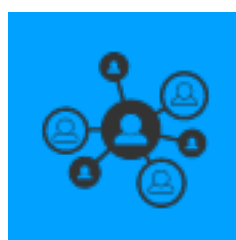


Hey Aaron. I'd be happy to discuss. Today is a little busy so feel free to ask on here or we can set up some time to chat on the phone at some point.

# How to form a connection

## Warm connecting rules

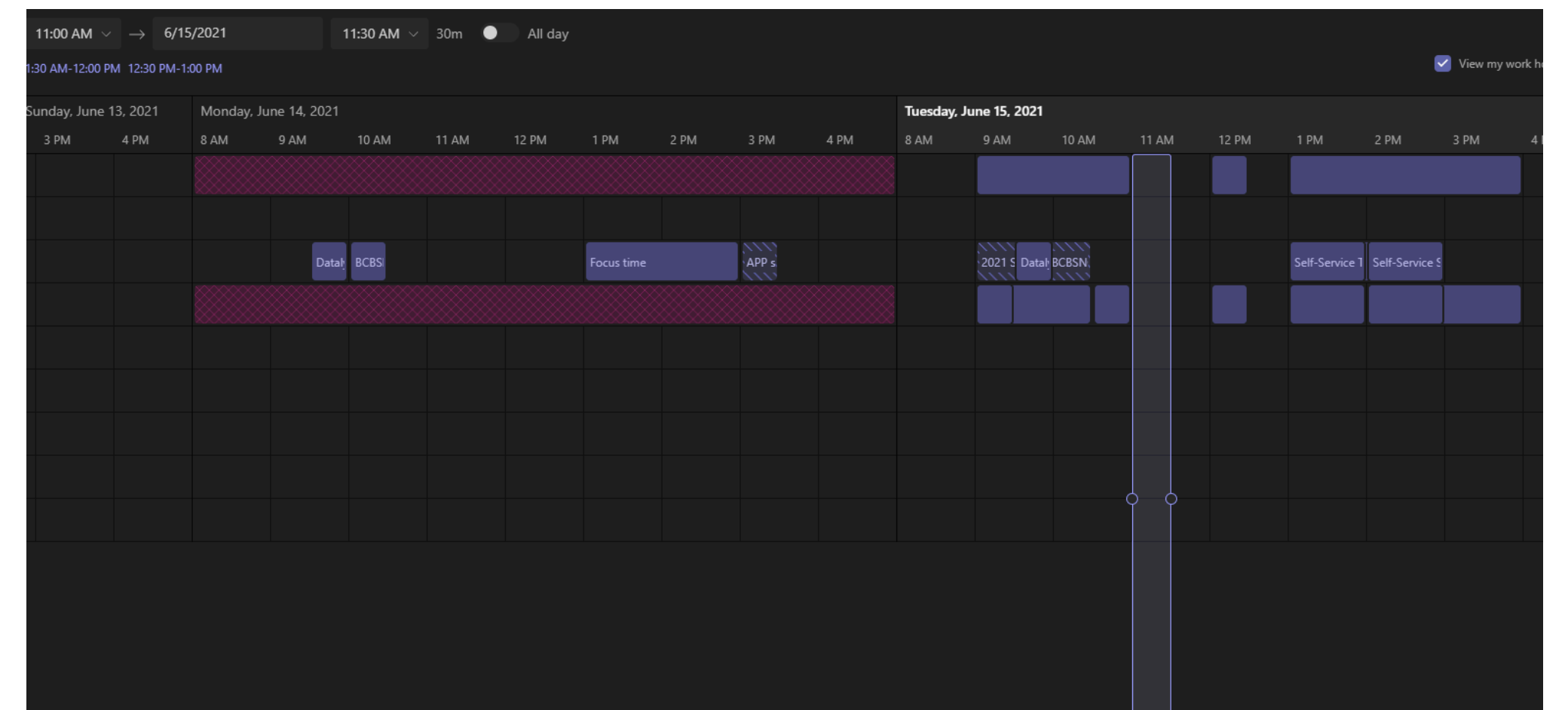
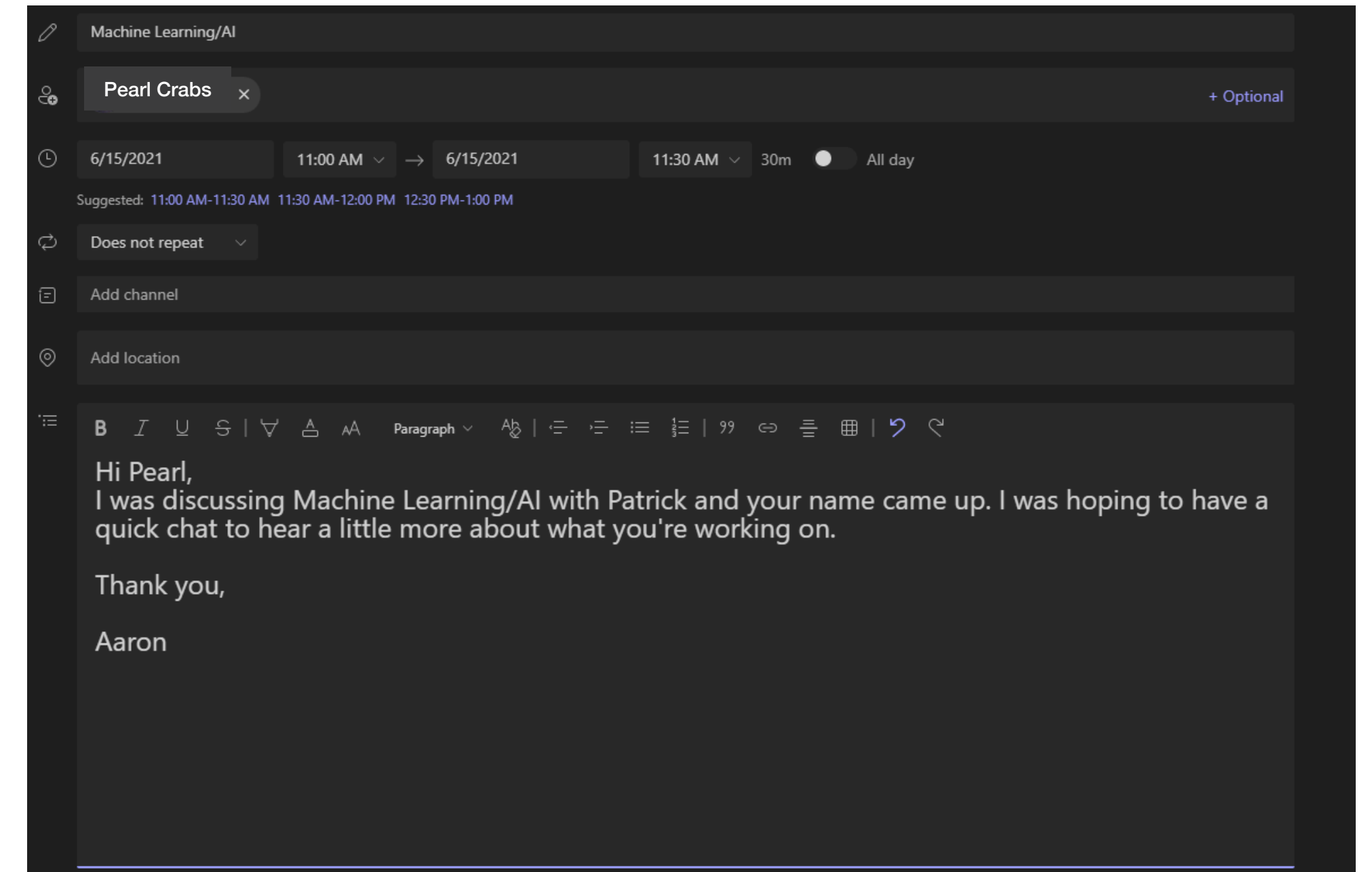
1. Stalk on LinkedIn to find a reason to connect with them
2. Reach out to your second degree connection and ask how they know that person
3. See if they can give you a warm introduction to the person if they feel comfortable
4. If not, no problem! Just mention you know them in your note when you connect
5. Make sure to get across that you're not selling anything





# Internal connection rules

1. Ask colleagues who they might recommend you talk to? Or who they've met in the past who might be doing some cool work
2. If they name drop anyone that's the only thing you need.
3. Their calendar is available to you! Throw a meeting on it explaining the reason you're reaching out.

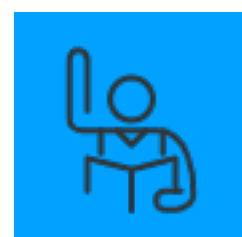




# You connected. Now what?

## Get them on the phone!

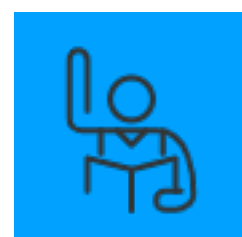
1. Ask them about themselves, their journey, how they got there. Do they even like it?
2. Tell them about what you're struggling with and why you reached out.
3. Ask them about their problems, what is the biggest problem they're struggling with right now? What are they doing to solve it?
4. What books are they currently reading or what is one of their favorites?
5. What podcasts do they listen to?
6. **Be genuinely interested in them**



# You connected. Now what?

## Interview tactics

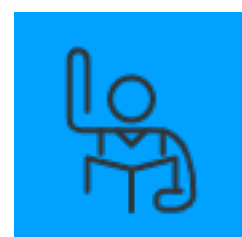
1. Tell me more...
2. Go on...
3. What have you done to try and solve x....?
4. What software or tools do you currently use/love?
5. Silence is golden!



# You connected. Now what?

## Ending the call

1. Thank them profusely for their time.
2. Schedule a follow up
3. If they gave you advice or a book to read try to use it or start reading the book before the next call
4. Ask them if there's anyone they might recommend you speak with as well. They are also likely well connected.



# You connected. Now what?

## Pay it forward

- You likely will get contacted the same way.
- Take the call. Mentor others.
- You will grow this way as well!

Dear Aaron,

Hope all is well. I came across your profile and was very impressed with your background. I've recently moved to the area and am thinking about making the jump to product management. I've been a developer for the past 5 years and would love to get your perspective on how to make the leap. Do you have time for a 15 minute call today or tomorrow?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Patrick Star

NOV 8, 2018



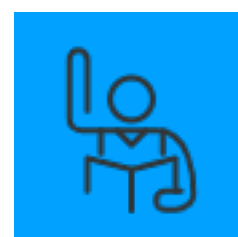
**Aaron Kesler** • 10:38 AM

...

Hey Patrick

I'd be happy to hop on a call today. How does noon work for you?  
My number is 617-869-1880.

Aaron

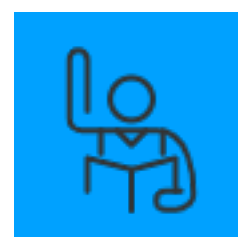




# Get in touch

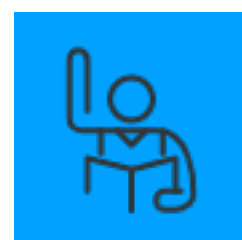
## Pay it forward

- If you're nervous or this is out of your comfort zone. Test it out by emailing me. I'll give you feedback [Aaron@Kesler.io](mailto:Aaron@Kesler.io)
- LinkedIn:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/aaron-kesler/>



**“If you’re not making someone else’s life better, then you’re wasting your time. Your life will become better by making other lives better.”**

**Will Smith AKA The Fresh Prince**



**Questions?**