



## ***Engagement in a Box*** © **Reaching Academia**

If your ACP Chapter has decided to participate in the EPCR series, this document offers guidelines for connecting with local colleges and universities.

**Initial contact:** It will be easier to make initial contact at a school if someone in the Chapter knows someone there. Even if that someone isn't connected directly to an office or function that can help, it is good to be able to drop a name. Example: "My name is X, and Ed Goldberg in your IT department suggested I contact you with potential career information for your students."

**Whom to contact:** Most schools have marketing functions and career centers. It's generally easier to connect in one of those areas because it's a win-win situation; i.e., there's something in it for the school, and they're more likely to be interested. The harder sell will be directly to the academic side of the organization because they are less likely to see a direct benefit. From a class time and curriculum perspective, it may sound like more work and a distraction to them.

**What to say:** Prepare a script you're comfortable with or notes or bullet points – whatever works best for the person making contact.

**Who you are and who you're calling:** Include your professional credentials *first* ("My name is X and I'm the Director of Emergency Preparedness for Eversource") and your ACP connection *second*. Example: "I serve on the board of the local Chapter of the Association of Continuity Professionals, ACP. ACP is a network of professionals in resiliency, continuity, risk management, recovery, emergency management, and related fields."

**Why you're calling:** Example: "Local ACP Chapters are reaching out to nearby colleges and universities to promote awareness of our profession and the many career opportunities for students. We've prepared a series of free, short webinars that provide an overview of this dynamic field; and as a kickoff, we'd like to host a briefing at your school for your students and faculty to make them aware of the program."

**Engage them:** Example: "Who can we involve to make this happen, and when might we be able to do so?"

**Follow up:** It's not likely that the first person contacted will be the decision maker. The decision may be deferred to a committee. Schools are often bureaucratic and not open to "outsiders" on a routine basis. Be patient, but stay in touch and be sure to ask for additional contacts, even in that first call. We're offering a great product that can mean a huge benefit for the school, increasing value to their stakeholders by making career options available and promoting possible education enhancements going forward.

**Need help?** The Engagement committee is eager to help. Don't hesitate to reach out if there's anything at all we can do to help make you and your Chapter successful.