

This Email Got One Stanford Student A Huge Job At Foursquare

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Two years ago, a [Stanford business school student](#) named [Tristan Walker](#) sent Foursquare cofounders [Dennis Crowley](#) and [Naveen Selvadurai](#) an email out of the blue, asking for a job.

Today, Tristan is Foursquare's director of business development. During his tenure, he's built partnerships between Foursquare and huge brands such as [Bravo](#), [MTV](#), [CNN](#), [New York Times](#), [NBA](#)

and Starbucks.

To celebrate the two year anniversary of the email, [Tristan just published it on his personal blog, along with some notes:](#)

Today marks two years since i sent my very first email to dennis and naveen (wow i was such a nerd! ha). naveen sent a reminder to team foursquare today and i thought i'd share it on my blog. Man, how times have changed:

Hey Dennis and Naveen

How's it going? Hope all is well!

My name is Tristan Walker and Im a first year student (going into my second year) at Stanford Business School (originally from New York). Im a huge fan of what you both have built and excited about what you guys have planned for FourSquare. It is an awesome , awesome service.

I would love to chat with you guys at some point, if you're available, about FourSquare. This year, I'm looking to help out and work extremely hard for a startup with guys I can learn a ton from. Dennis, with your experience at Google and the Dodgeball product, and Naveen, with your experience at Sun and engineering in general, I know I could learn a great deal from you both!

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Before business school, I was an oil trader on Wall Street for about two years and hated it! Moved out to the Bay/Stanford to pursue my passion for entrepreneurship and the startup world. This past spring I had the opportunity to work for Twitter as an intern and learned a ton. Solidified my commitment to working at a startup that I'm passionate about, and FourSquare is one of those startups that I believe in.

I know you guys are probably getting inundated with internship-type requests, but thought it'd be worth a shot! I can assure you I'm humble and I'm hungry! Let me know if you'd be interested in chatting further. I definitely look forward to hearing from you.

Stay awesome!
Tristan
@tristanwalker

tristan j. walker | mba class of 2010
stanford graduate school of business

A few things to note here:

i spelled foursquare "FourSquare"...capital F and capital S....TWICE! (so taboo these days) ha. Talk about green...and who says "stay awesome!" (hilarity!) i sent this email after really thinking hard about this [post](#) from Jenn Van Grove at Mashable (thx jenn!). After reading, i IMMEDIATELY started to think about the potential for merchants and brands to start interacting with customers in ways that have never been done before. I read that post in May of that year I believe and signed up that same day

After my using foursquare everyday for about two months I knew i had to work for the company. On July 16th i scoured the internets, found Dennis and Naveen's emails (#crazytristan) and shot them an email right away. This was before they even had @foursquare.com email addresses (and well before our series A round).

This is the first of 8 emails i sent Dennis/Naveen. They both must have thought I was crazy. On the 8th email Dennis replied

"you know what, i just may take you up on some of this, are you ever in nyc?"

-dennis

You could tell he was a bit annoyed (sorry dennis! oh well...ha) I thought on it for a little bit, and replied back (something along the lines of...):

hey dennis, yeh I was planning on being in ny tomorrow [i was in LA at the time!...and no, i definitely had zero plans to be in NYC] how about we meet up live at your offices?

-tristan

then i booked my flight that night, flew out the following morning, hung out with him and naveen for a week and one month later I was full time at good ol foursquare

which brings me to the last point. a lot of folks ask me how Ive been able to secure some pretty cool spots at awesome companies and my answer is always the same. "be so enamored with the product that you would work for the company even if they didnt hire you....more importantly find where the needs are within the organization and be willing to do whatever it takes to help them fill the need (work for free even!)...and **MOST** importantly make sure that youre filling a need that the organization doesnt have the resources to fill on its own. If a company is not willing to let a hungry, passionate, smart, unpaid advocate of the product help the organization to fill that need (when it doesnt have the resources to do it itself) then you probably shouldnt be working at the company anyway. They're just being arrogant"...Dennis and Naveen made pretty clear that their passion was with product (and theyre the best in the world at it). I knew i could help them (without much guidance and hand holding) to think through the business opportunities / potential for foursquare. And i did it for free (for 30 days at least :)). I gained their trust, which was most important.

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The past two years for me have been nothing short of amazing. Dennis/Naveen didnt have to but they gave me a shot and really did change my life. I owe those guys a ton and im truly appreciative of it all. Now, back to work.... :)

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