

Networking with Confidence

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Networking experiences can help you to build mutually beneficial connections on a professional level and unlock opportunities.

The workshop will help you prepare for these experiences at the conference and help you build confidence in your approach to networking and starting a networking conversation.

The
Focus of
Today

Networking is...

"A supportive system of sharing information and services among individuals and groups having a common interest."

I give you three reasons to Network!

- Gather information and insights about a particular field/industry, company or position and a person's career journey to help you confirm career/ job interest
- Connect with people who can help you build a great network
- Develop academic/ industry advocates



Tips for Successful Networking

Before

- Know who you would like to connect with
- Do your research
- Have an networking objective
e.g. awareness of the career opportunities, connect with a professional from a specific university, institute, organisation.
- Prepare your questions, relate them to your networking objective
- Arrive early to ensure you are more relaxed and not overwhelmed by large groups of people

During

- Smile and make eye contact
- Be ready to share your networking introduction (30 second summary)
- Introduce yourself
- After your introduction, focus your attention on the conversation using active listening skills - facilitate rather than dominate the conversation

After

Follow up – make contact following the event
Send a personalised email or LinkedIn message



Conversation Starters

Open Questions

Help you build interest and achieve your objective

Open questions include:

- What makes a higher degree graduate application stand out?
- What interview tips could you share with me?
- How did networking help you get into your field/line of work?

Closed Questions

Gain specific response, think about the big picture:

Closed questions include:

- Does your organisation advertise PhD internships?
- When is the deadline for applications?
- Can the organisation you mentioned take on higher degree graduates?

Re-framing Networking Road-Blocks

“I don’t have networks who can help me get into my field of expertise/ industry”

Re-frame – How can I build my networks to get into my field of expertise / industry?

- Identify key people to connect with in a particular organisation
- Be introduced to someone with strong networks in your field of expertise/ industry
- Find out how to make contact with the professionals and request to connect with them

“I am unsure of the employment prospects in my field of expertise”

Re-frame – How can I find out about employment prospects in my field of expertise?

- Ask about longer-term prospects, future skill requirements in your field of expertise/ industry
- Learn about future growth areas , company expansion / recruitment campaigns
- Find out whether there is an area of expertise which is in demand

“I am not sure whether the job I am considering is right for me”

Re-frame – How can I understand whether the job I am considering is for me?

- Discover the main challenges and benefits of the job
- Find out what a typical week/ month would involve
- Know what the job would demand of you



How to engage

First Impressions Count

- It takes just one-tenth of a second for us to judge someone and make a first impression. Once formed, first impressions tend to be stable and are difficult to change.

Create a Great First Impression

- Greet the person - Smile and shake hands
- Speak confidently
- Use confident body language
- Have a confident stance
- Avoid fidgeting
- Maintain eye contact
- Be an active listener



Active Listening Techniques

- Pay attention
- Show that you're listening
- Provide Feedback
- Defer Judgement
- Respond Appropriately.



Your PhD Journey



Think about your journey
from deciding to study
your PhD and where you
are today....

Activity



Why did you decide to do a PhD and when have you felt the most energised on your journey so far....

● **Step 1 – In pairs, introduce yourself + share your story.**

You each have 2 mins.



● Step 2 – Add Energy!

Why did you choose your topic and who will benefit from your research?

You each have 1 min



Step 3 – Create suspense!

Add a twist, turn, or unexpected event that took place in your story

You each have 1 min

- **Step 5** - Get your partner to repeat back what you have just told them.
You each have 1 min

In pairs feedback...

- Did you recall the whole story?
- At which point (s) in the story did you want to know more?
Why?
- What did you notice about the body language of your partner as you progressed through the story?
- What did you learn about your partner's approach / attitude / values throughout the story?



Networking Conversation

- Your conversation should be compelling and help you to spark interest in who you are and what you do
- An introduction should last no longer than 30 seconds
- It should be interesting, memorable, and succinct helping you to show what makes you unique

Let's Practice!



The Project of Your Dreams

Your Mission

Imagine at the industry networking event you are told about an industry collaboration project with professionals in your field of interest, who you admire and who inspire you.

It is the project of your dreams.....

You are tasked with introducing yourself to the leader of the project and sharing your knowledge and expertise in this field.

Activity Instructions:



- Everybody form two lines
- Face each other
- Take turns to introduce yourself and share your 30 Second value statement
- Take turns to share 30 second feedback
- When instructed to move to your left, meet new a new candidate and follow the same instructions
- Repeat until we run out of time!

Listeners - Provide Feedback on one aspect that:

- Worked well, captured your interest and made you want to know more

OFF YOU GO!



Activity Instructions:



Next

- Move to your left, meet new a new candidate and follow the same instructions
- Repeat until we run out of time!

OFF YOU GO AGAIN!



Next Steps: Building a Winning Networking Pitch

3. Review and consider:

- Does this highlight my expertise? Does it show credibility?
- Does it reflect how I want to be perceived? Does it explain what I do and how I do it?
- Is it clear what makes me stand out from others who do what I do?
- Will it be clear to employers what the result, benefit, or outcome of what I do is?
- Is your objective clear and achievable?

Building Your Value Statement/ Professional Networking Introduction

Next Steps

Use strengths to build your statement and indicate how you could contribute to the project's success.

Example

"Innovative" – "I enjoy thinking "outside of the box" to create innovative solutions to sometimes complex problems".

Ensure your statement highlights how your strengths are unique to you (USP's) - reel off naturally when asked about yourself

Example

Problem Solving USP

Contribute towards project success

"My research has enabled me to develop my storytelling and digital design skills and the ability to offer solutions to help clients improve their digital strategy".

KEY TAKE AWAYS

Know Your Audience

Networking Re- Frame

Develop a Connection

Know Your Objective

Plan conversation starters

Develop a compelling introduction

Practice Practice Practice!



ANY
QUESTIONS



THANK YOU!