

Description

Many researchers believe that carrying out high-quality studies and having a good publication record is important to have a successful career. While these are indeed the main ingredients for success, networking is becoming increasingly important.

There is no discrepancy at all that communicating with others can enrich your work in many ways. This can be either at conferences, through cooperation and discussions, or via social media. This allows you to exchange thoughts with your peers and learn more about their views on different subjects. Having friendly relationships with other researchers can also open the door to successful job interviews or fruitful collaborations. Therefore, the sooner you start building a network, the better.

But how much do you know about effective networking? These five tips could help you make the right connections in the right way:

Tip 1!

Get Started—Now!

The best time to start growing your network is now. Most of you are busy enough with daily work. Hence, you might wonder how to find enough time to do this. However, believe me, it's well-invested time that will pay off soon.

Conferences are a great place to make new connections, so look for meetings in your area and attend them. At the beginning, you will need some courage to speak with people you don't know, but the more you do it, the easier it gets. You will be surprised how simple it is to get a conversation going after taking the first steps. An easy way to start a chat is to ask people questions about their work. Most academics enjoy talking about what they are doing and feel comfortable with the subject. This usually works—and it also shows that you're interested, which is always good.

Besides conferences, there are many other ways to start building a solid network. You can also attend courses and events or join organizations and discussions on different subjects. You may also establish new contacts by e-mail or social media. Taking the first step to start new research collaborations is also an excellent way to introduce yourself to other academics and let them know about your work and

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interests.

Tip 2!

Be Open and Friendly

Networking involves meeting other people and exchanging your ideas with them, so being friendly and open is essential to making a good impression and creating lasting relationships. When communicating with others, it is important to understand their needs—and to be able to listen to them carefully. You should speak about yourself too because your peers should get to know you as well (that's the main idea of networking). Showing a genuine interest in the other person and avoiding arrogant behavior can usually take you a long way.

However, your goal is to make other academics see you as a colleague, not a fan—even if they are currently at a higher level in their career than you. To achieve this, it is important that you show them respect without showing reverence. Most people will not connect with someone they consider to be significantly inferior to them, so you must always keep a good portion of self-confidence when communicating with others.

Tip 3!

Give Your Network Time to Grow

An effective network does not happen overnight. It takes a lot of dedication to create one. That's the reason why some academics are reluctant to spend their (limited) time in joining commissions at their university, making face-to-face appointments with their collaborators, stopping by for a short chat with their colleagues, or signing up for Twitter or LinkedIn. But every second you spend in developing and maintaining a good professional network could give you many benefits, so you should better start right away.

Tip 4!

Use Online Tools

Another way to create an international network of collaborators is to start using social media. Many researchers are already involved, and it is never too late, so you can start now too. Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook are some of the platforms you can use to communicate with peer experts, track research related to your work, and support or follow the impact of your publications. Even if you do not want to post yourself, you can still use social media tools to stay up-to-date with recent advances in your field and find out what others are doing. These digital tools can also help you keep track of current research in your area.

Tip 5!

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Be Persistent

Don’t be disappointed if things don’t work out fast. It takes time to build an effective network and sometimes you will not get a quick reply (some of your contacts will probably not reply at all), but don’t let that put you down. As you advance in your career, your good work will open new opportunities and networking will become easier.

Category

1. Promoting Research
2. Using Social Networks

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