Building Your Academic Professional Network

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CRA-W
Computing Research Association
Women
How would you define networking?
Networking is:

Cultivating productive relationships to further one’s career
Why network?
Benefits of a professional network

• Present opportunities that you would not have otherwise, leading to:
  • Internships, job leads, ..
  • Collaborations, inside and outside discipline
  • Invited to talks, program committees, ..

• Direct promotion of yourself and your work, in the form of:
  • Promoting your technical expertise and opinions
  • Introducing/reminding others of your technical work and skills
  • Allow others to nominate you for awards

• Build a supporting community
  • Letter writers, supporters, advocates
  • A sense of belonging
KEY IDEA #1
Networking starts with you!

Build your personal brand
KEY IDEA #2
Networking is a skill

You probably have it!
Practice often!
KEY IDEA #3
Networking is a relationship

Nurture it!
Key Idea #1: Networking starts with you!

Key Idea #2: Networking is a skill

Key Idea #3: Networking is a relationship
Networking starts with you!

Your in-person personal brand

**Appearance:**
Your body language, clothing attire and overall posture

**Communication Skills:**
Confidence, attitudes toward people

**Competencies:**
Your special skills in the current context

**Differentiation:**
What separates you from others and leaves a lasting memory in minds of others

Use your personal brand to differentiate yourself and make a positive impression
Online networking

- Online ➔ your public image
- Remember you are not there to interpret what others view/read
- Remember your presence on Internet is archived and will always be available to anyone, employer or social group, who search for it

Clean up your E-persona
Your E-Persona

E-persona

• How many have a web presence?
  • Facebook
  • Twitter
  • Youtube
  • Blogs
  • Linked-In
  • Wikipedia page
  • Personal Webpage
  • Google scholar …
E-persona-Social

- Twitter
- Youtube
- Blogs
- Facebook

Don’t allow your E-personae to tarnish your image
Use WISELY!
E-persona - Technical

- LinkedIn
- Google +
- Professional Webpage
- Research Gate
- Google scholar

E-resources can be used to advertise your skillset and capabilities
Professional Webpage

- Professional web page
- Publications
- Research interests
- Teaching materials
- Link to CV/bio
- Media coverage
- Photos
- Personal information – choose what you share!

Update incrementally and often!
What’s KEY IDEA #2?
KEY IDEA #2
Networking is a skill

1. Prepare for an event
2. Set networking goals
3. Talk to those around you
4. Elevator Speech
5. Volunteering
1. Prepare for an event: Deliberately target your networking

- Established Researchers
- Alumni
- Business Leaders
- Technical Advisors
- Contemporaries
- People with Possible Job Opportunities

Get to know who they are before you come to the event!!
2. Set networking goals

- **Long-term goals**
  - How do they fit with your career goals?

- **Short-term goals**
  - How do they fit with a specific event?
3. Talk to those around you

- How do we talk to one another?
- where do you start
Activity: Introduce yourself

• Find someone near you that you don’t already know and introduce yourself
  • Let’s use some eye contact and pay attention to body language to figure out who is receptive

“Hi, my name is X. I’m from Y and I work on Z.”

• Practice this activity at least 50 times at GHC!
3. Talk to those around you

• How do we talk to one another?
  • where do you start
• What do you share?
• How do you respond?
• How do you avoid ... the silence?
• How about asking yourself, “what do I want to know about that person” instead?
If talking doesn’t come easy

- Read papers ahead and write down questions you want to ask.
- Join a group that is casually talking and introduce yourself. More than 2 people good because otherwise they might be having private conversation.
- Practice: Meet new people; sit down with people you don’t know
4. Elevator pitch

- An accessible overview of your research/expertise
- Must be tailored to your customer:
  - 2 minutes, 1 minute, vs 30 seconds
  - How technical?
Activity: Practice your 30-second elevator pitch

• Find someone new near you that you don’t already know and practice
5. Expanding your network via volunteering

- Contribute to your community
  - Reviewing papers
  - Sitting at a booth
  - Preparing a web site
  - Contributing to open source

- Naturally follows: your service will give you positive visibility, and open up networking opportunities
KEY IDEA #3: Networking is a relationship

- Establish relationship
  - In person, via email...
- Follow through
  - Deliver what you promised
- Follow up
  - Follow up on business cards and contacts
- Keep in touch
  - Periodic updates –
    - are you going to event X?
    - I just published a new paper related about a discussed topic
- Plan to meet again
At Conferences Specifically
At the conference: DO’s

✓ Be yourself
✓ Wear your badge visibly
✓ Speak! (don’t just stand there)
✓ Use the dreaded microphone
✓ Talk to speakers after their presentations
✓ Make lunch/dinner plans
✓ Attend social activities
✓ A good advisor should be introducing you
✓ Make plans for follow up (write it down!)
✓ Re-connect with people you’ve met before
✓ Be active, be confident
At the Conference “Don’t”

- DON’T hang around with your friends
- DON’T interrupt heavy or private conversations
- DON’T be overly negative/critical
- DON’T hang on to a conversation too long
- DON’T put too much stock in a single, short conversation
- DON’T get discouraged
Homework

• Today and beyond: PRACTICE!
  • Introduce yourself
  • Elevator pitch
• Set a goal of meeting 10 more people today at GHC
• Follow-up with email, Linked-In, or Facebook
Summary

Key Idea #1: Networking starts with you!

Key Idea #2: Networking is a skill

Key Idea #3: Networking is a relationship