

Building Your Professional Network

How to create interesting conversations

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America Truth

- I don't enjoy networking!
- I've come to enjoy meeting and talking to people and as I have progressed in my career



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Defining Networking

How would you define networking?



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Networking is ...

Cultivating productive relationships: interacting with other people to exchange information and develop contacts especially to further one's career



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The Context

- Large social gatherings
 - professional colleagues
 - random conversations
- High expectations
 - common interests
 - joint projects, collaborations
- Why do this?
 - new inspirations
 - source of next professional endeavor
 - get to know people in your area; horizontally or vertically

Networking is a Relationship

Write down
next Steps

Keep in
Touch!

Exchange
giving talks

- Follow through
- Follow up
- Keep in touch
- Meet them again

Networking is a skill

Elevator
Speech

Offer to
Help

Talk to those around
you

Prepare for an event

Set Goals

**Practice those
muscles!!!**

Networking is *not* ...

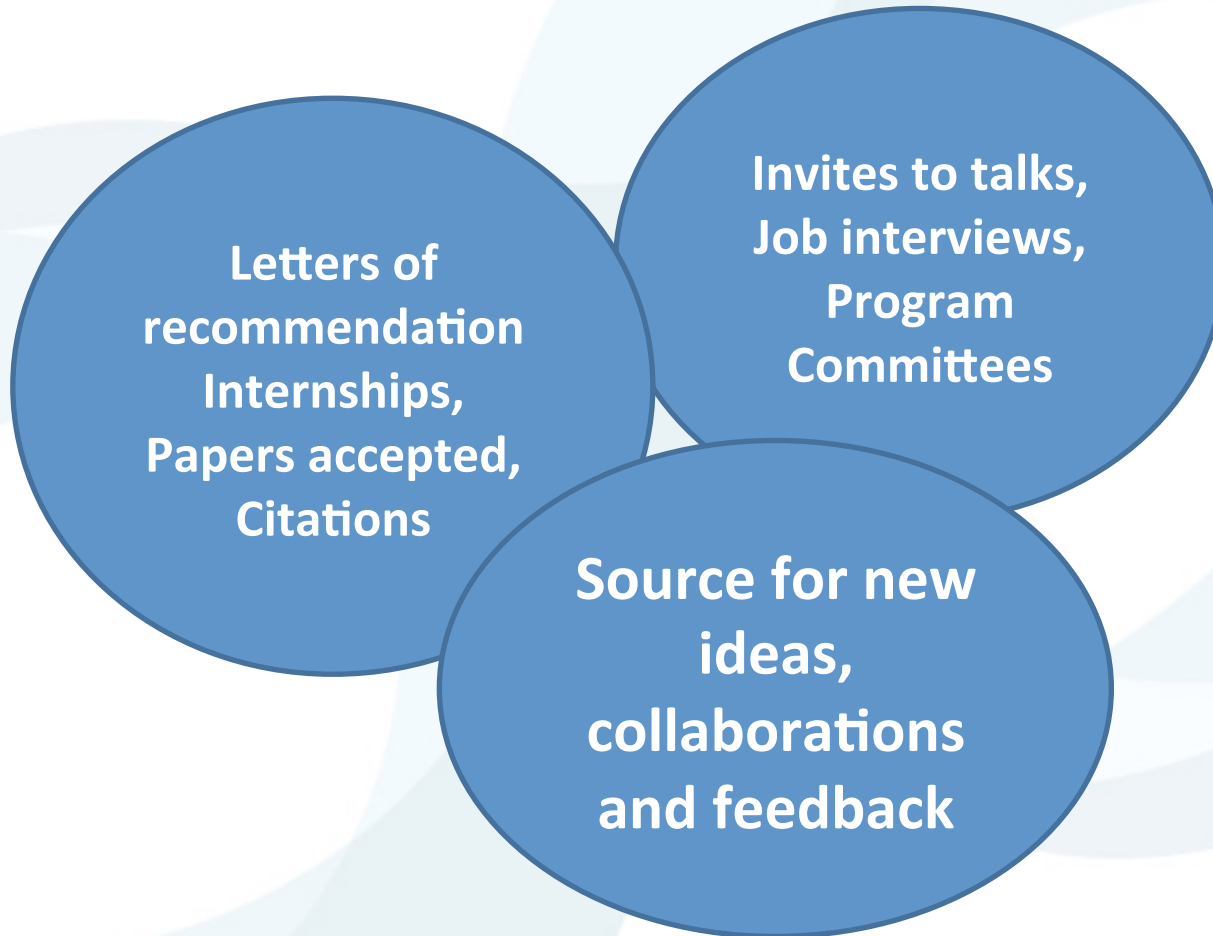
- A substitute for quality work
- Using people



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Benefits of a Professional Network



Taking care of the relationships you have created!!

Costs of a Professional Network

Networking is reciprocal

Time and energy: be careful of overcommitting!



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Outdated Assumptions

“If you do good research or work, fame, funding, promotions, and graduate students follow”

Today's functional idea: Networking is about relationships and nurturing them. Benefits will follow.

How to Network

Networking happens naturally when...

You simply take the opportunities already offered you

Conferences

- Volunteer

- Find someone alone and start a conversation

Talks

- Ask a question

Grad school

- Eat and hangout with your labmates

- Sign up to meet with visitors coming to campus



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Networking happens naturally when..

*You are **passionate** about something*

The future of your research field
The importance of your research
The state of ...
The need for...

Your country
Your children
A sport
The courses you're teaching

*And you can **communicate** this passion to others*



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If networking doesn't come easy

- Give yourself a goal for an event.
 - Some advisors will give challenges, get your picture with 5 authors or top people
- 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.
- Sit down with people you don't know at tables.
- Be friendly but not too persistent



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Big Questions

- How do we talk to one another?
 - how do you start
 - what do you say
- 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?

Activity

- Find someone near you that you don't already know and introduce yourself.
- If you don't already have the 30 second intro/elevator pitch this is a good time to practice.

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

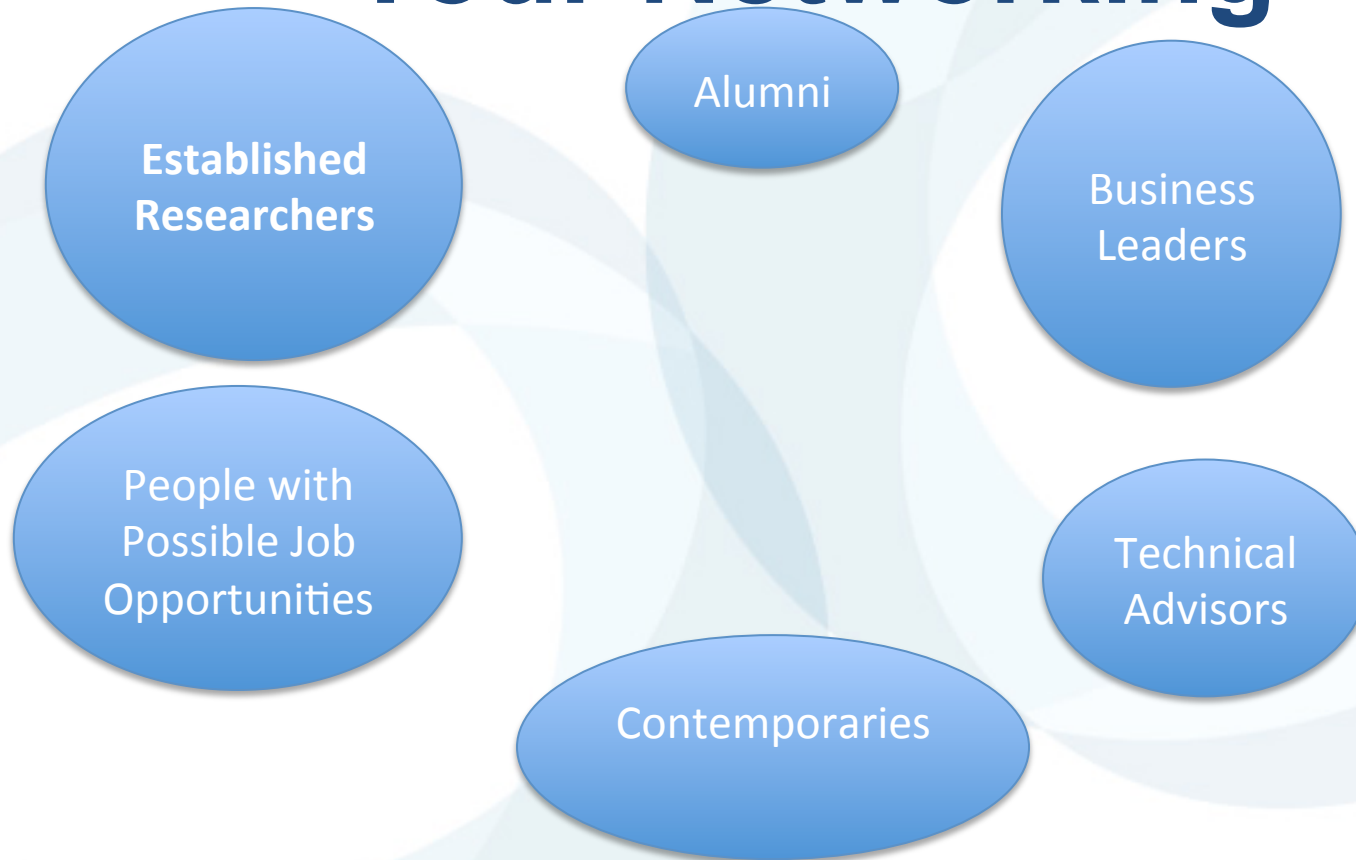


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Who to network with

Deliberately Target Your Networking



Get to know who they are before you come to the event!!

Peer Networks & Peer+

- Peers:
 - Super important!
 - Same challenges, same stage
- Peer+ (person at next stage)
 - They can help you know what's coming



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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
- ✓ Talk to the person next to you
- ✓ Look people in the eyes
- ✓ Make lunch/dinner plans
- ✓ Attend social activities
- ✓ Get your friends/advisor to introduce you
- ✓ Make plans for follow up (write it down!)
- ✓ Re-connect with people you've met before
- ✓ Smile!
- ✓ Be active, **be confident**



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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



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Networking Musical Chairs

What you need

pad of paper, a pen, your brain,
and a SMILE!

put everything else away

6 minute rounds



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The Basics

- ✓ Quick Intros
 - Shake hands (cultural caveat),
 - Look person in eye, and smile
 - “My name is **Tracy** ...Happy to meet you, **Hermione**”
 - Write down person’s name on your paper
- ✓ 2 minutes
 - Speaker talks about herself
 - Listener listens **actively**, makes eye contact
 - Listener **mirrors** what she has heard
- ✓ Swap Roles. Lather, Rinse, Repeat!



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What to Talk About

Where are you from?

What are you passionate about?

How far along are you in your program?

What research problem are you working on right now?

What do you enjoy doing outside of CS?

What is your greatest challenge right now?

How do you enjoy working? Alone? A single partner? A big group?

What is your biggest concern about graduate school?

What kind of career path do you want to pursue?



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Round 1

Even rows, sit tight

Odd rows, turn your chair around.

If you are not facing a lovely woman whom
you do not already know, move to a seat
where you are.

LISTEN FOR CLAP!



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Round 2

Odd rows, sit tight

Even rows, move one chair to YOUR right.

If at end of row, go to row behind you (on left).

Person in back right → front left.

If you are not facing a lovely woman
whom you do not already know,
move to a seat where you are.

LISTEN FOR CLAP!



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Homework

Practice today/tomorrow and beyond

Meet at least 10 people at Grad Cohort

Sit with different people at each meal

Introduce yourself with

handshake (caveat), smile, and your name

Write down their names

Network Forward – network your network

Follow-up with email, Linked-In, or Facebook



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What to talk about

Where are you from?

Where are you in graduate school? undergraduate studies?

Why are you studying CS?

What is your research area? What attracts you to this subject area?

What research problem(s) are you working on right now?

How do you enjoy working (alone, one partner, small or big group)?

What is your greatest (professional or personal) challenge right now?

What is your biggest concern about graduate school?

What kind of career path do you want to pursue?

What do you hope to get out of this weekend?

What do you enjoy doing when you're **not** doing CS? What are you **passionate** about?



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Activity

Turn to your neighbor

- Make a plan for networking at this event
- Make a plan for networking at your next conference or event at home institution.



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