

Networking for Ph.D. Students

Strategies for Academic Networking for Graduate Students

1. Be proactive at conferences and other academic events
2. Introduce yourself
3. Have business cards
4. Discuss the person's panel or presentation
5. Be ready to ask the person questions about their work
6. Have several ready descriptions of your research at various levels, i.e. a 20-second, 1-minute, and 5-minute version
7. Greet everyone and anyone who sits next to you. Make it your goal to meet a new person during each portion of a scheduled event. If at a conference, meet one new person during or after each panel or presentation, during lunch or dinner, and reconnect with that person, briefly, especially if they are conversing with someone you have not yet met
8. Always, always, *always* follow-up with any major connections. A simple email recounting the pleasure you had at making the person's acquaintance will speak volumes and keep the door open for future communications

Networking Questions to Ask

1. What is your research area?
2. What's your next project?
3. What new trends in the field are most interesting to you?
4. Where do you see the field going in the next few years?
5. What advice do you have for a young scholar starting out?
6. What were your takeaways from this panel / workshop?
7. Do you have any recommendations of sources I might use or people who might be interested in my topic?
8. That paper sounds very exciting. Would you mind sending me a copy if I send you an email?
9. How does your project advance your field?
10. How would you describe your department / program?
11. It was very nice meeting you. Might I have a business card so that we can keep in touch?
12. What is faculty life like at your university?

SAMPLE INTRODUCTION & 30-SECOND SPEECH

"Hello, my name is Peter Anteater. It's nice to meet you. What brings you to this event? I'm in the Aerospace Engineering Ph.D. program at the University of California, Irvine. I'm working with Boeing on my current project to develop advanced control techniques to control rotocraft vibrations so we can reduce the vibration helicopters typically experience. I hope to do a flight test soon!"

SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP WITH CONTACT

"Dear _____ ,
It was a pleasure meeting you at the _____ event / conference. I enjoyed your discussion concerning _____. I hope to correspond with you in the future regarding our shared interest and scholarship and look forward to seeing you again at the next event / conference."