



**UK Research
and Innovation**

Future Leaders Fellows Development Network

Building Research Networks

15th June 2021 10am-11.30am

In this focussed and interactive webinar, through discussion, some simple models and ideas and peer support we'll explore:

- how you might build a stronger network,
- how you might raise your profile in a way that aligns with your research vision and values
- how you could establish and foster new research connections – even without face-to-face conferences and events.

Whatever your level of networking expertise and comfort, this is a session designed to make you think and offer productive strategies as to how your 'net' might 'work' better.

Prethink

Before the webinar, there is a small amount of pre-work that would be helpful for you to engage with. **There is nothing difficult or time consuming here.**

1) Think about the 'BEST' networked people that you know. (You may wish to think about what 'BEST' in this context actually means.) They don't have to be from academia. What do these people DO that makes them so effective?

(If you can, contact this 'best networked' person and ask them what tips they'd offer you about building and maintaining a network.)

Come to the session with advice to share.

2) Think about what sort of impacts you want your work to have? What difference will your research activities actually make to the world? In order to have these impacts, **WHO needs to know you better?** What sort of collaborators do you seek?



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“Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much”

Helen Keller

“In the longer run and for wide-reaching issues, more creative solutions tend to come from imaginative interdisciplinary collaboration.”

Robert J. Shiller

Hutchinson
TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

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“NETWORKING”

What do you believe about NETWORKING and how does that actually help you?

Does your 'NET' 'WORK'?

Think...PIE and Sweets!

(See The Organizational Game - Harvey Coleman)

The standard of your work

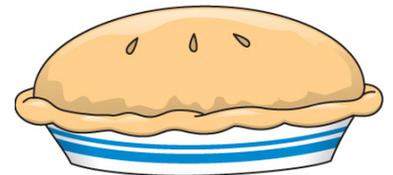
The impression that you give

Do people know of you?

Performance – 10%

Image – 30%

Exposure – 60%



It's much easier to say
“Would you like a sweet?”
than it is to say
“Can I have one of yours?”

Networking Approaches (That Actually Work...)

(Ref: Building a Net that Works - in 53 Interesting Ways to Communicate Your Research)

[Think] “What **DO we have in common?”**

[Think] “How could I **HELP this person?”**

[Think] “How could we collaborate?”

1) Use your existing ‘Net’

Who is the “best” networked person that you know? (Real and Virtual)

(NB – They’re in your network! And if they’re genuinely the “best” at networking – then they’ll probably help you out! (Good gardeners take cuttings...))

2) Look for similarities and overlaps. (Field / Values / Positional / Linguistic) (This is how you build rapport and trust with people.)

3) Be Concise and **Distinctive about who you are / what you do?**

What’s your USP? What do you WANT people to remember about you?
(Sentence/Paragraph/Page)

4) Consider the **VALUE that your work adds and identify how you can **HELP** them.** You do this by ASKING QUESTIONS! (Yes, networking is transactional, but this way it’s not rampantly selfish and it takes all the pressure off (introverted) you!)

5) It’s the **FOLLOW UP that makes a **NET** that **WORKS**. (People remember what you **DO** and how you make them feel. Not what you say.)**

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

Maya Angelou

Strategic Networking

Strategic doesn't mean selfish.

**Add Value (Potential Collaborations)
Offer Help
(Find Compatibilities)**

<p style="text-align: center;">MAXIM “X for the Purpose of Y”</p>

1) Values – first be clear about what really matters to **you**. What's the RIGHT way to behave / treat people? What's GOOD research?

2) Vision – understand your purpose. (Start with Why?) What sort of difference do you want to make in this world?

3) Horizon Scanning - Make time to THINK.

- What is the question that will keep you in funding for the next 5-10 years?
- What's the agenda of the strategic decision makers and funders in your area?
- How can your work add VALUE in a changing landscape? To whom?
- How can you SHAPE agendas (instead of responding)? (if not YOU then WHO?? And if not NOW then WHEN??)
- What are your stakeholder relationships like? Where must they be stronger?

**Links with Funders? Health Trusts? Governments? Companies?
NGOs? Philanthropic Organisations?
(Local/Regional/National/International)**

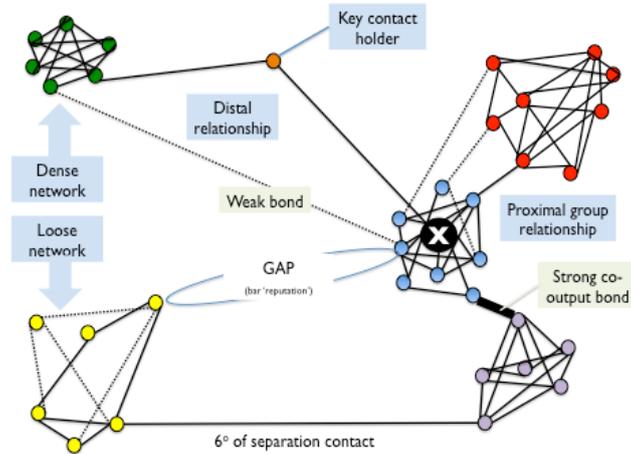
How close is your ear to the ground?

- News (ResearchResearch / Research Connect etc)
- Mailing Lists (JiscMail etc) / Blogs / Media / Social Media
- Think Tanks / Government Consultation Hubs / Policy 'influencers' / advisors
- Networks (personal / professional)
- Professional Bodies and Organisations (Active Membership?)
- Links with funding agencies (eZines/web links / RSS feeds)
- Industrial Bodies and Societies
- Internal Policy Units / Experts (e.g. WHO)
- Public interest groups (local / regional / national)

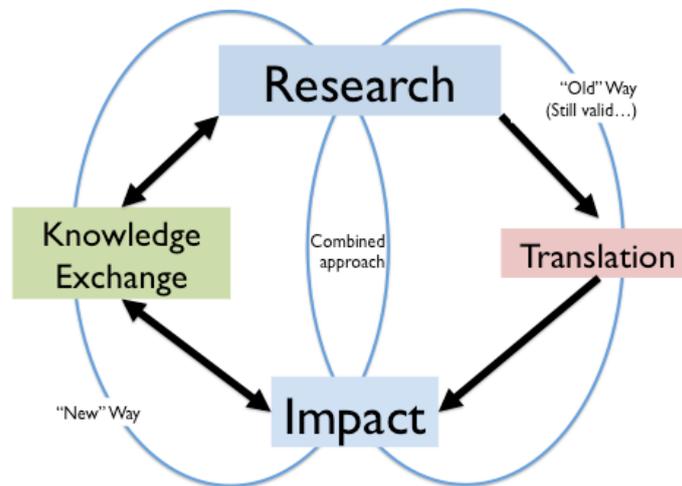
WHO NEEDS TO KNOW YOU BETTER???
HOW DO YOU NEED TO BE BETTER INFORMED?

Be Systematic

- (Tied to research purpose...) Map your universe – where are the strong ties and weak ties already? Where are the ‘6 degrees of separation’ contacts? It can even be a friend or someone collecting dust on your contact list.



- Capture your systematic approach: Create a spreadsheet of all the relevant people in your sphere, along with a column for their contact details and another for your contact history.
- Have a (numerical) target. (e.g. One contact a day for a month etc.)

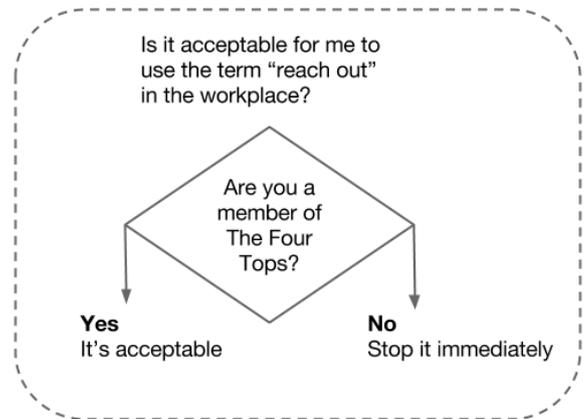


Thanks to Christopher Charlton-Matthews (York)

**Can you COLLABORATE / CODESIGN/ COPRODUCE?
(NB Funders LOVE ‘CO’ Prefixes....)**

¹ Interesting read: Brian Uzzi (2019) - Men and Women Need Different Kinds of Networks to Succeed <https://hbr.org/2019/02/research-men-and-women-need-different-kinds-of-networks-to-succeed>

Online / Remote Networking



Warm Connections

Look back and reconnect with your existing collaborators, contacts, colleagues etc. (A simple 'how are you?' is all it takes...) Start with these types:

I really enjoyed working with...

I always get great advice from...

A role model I have is...

I've met, but wish I could be closer to...

The best-networked person I know is....

Do your research on them ("I noticed XYZ") and think about how you can **HELP** them (otherwise it seems a little, well, mercenary...)

Ask contacts for 'cuttings' and introductions.

Involve them in the reasons why. ("I'm trying to find someone at Organisation X. Do you know anyone?")

Systematic Thinking and Habits

Build your networking habit. One approach per day for the next month. Set yourself a quantity target (in keeping with your values).

Keep records. Update your database.

Make networking a 'graze' activity, not a 'binge' one.

Values-Driven Behaviour

Are you looking for people at the right 'level' (especially outside of academia)?

Connect with the RIGHT people. Who are the good people at your institution? (They're not always the powerful people...)

Be culturally² polite

If in doubt... →

- a) A polite culturally appropriate greeting and your name
- b) Relevant personal link (e.g. X suggested that I approach you)
- c) Manage expectations (e.g. I wanted to make contact because...)



Use the Right Tools

Network Online with Social Media (Lots of tools here on top of the obvious – LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, ResearchGate etc) Lots of them are very, very U.S. 'business' focused (e.g. Shapr and Invitly)

Are you already visible to your contacts? What's your personal 'brand' (vision and values) (Research, Teaching, Communication, Citizenship)

Be easier to find - Build Your Following – Search Engine Optimization

Blog / Vlog / Graphical Abstract / Infographics / Podcast interviews / Youtube animations Clever / curation of previous outputs etc

Social media, Mailing lists and forums – choose the right ones for your stakeholders.

Email Footer – 'Sent from my iPhone' or something valuable?

e-Newsletters – better for a collective or research group

Ensure inbound traffic. The things that you ping out need to have a way to return to you. (Tweets that link to your website etc)

² e.g. first name or professional title?

Online Events

Online conference? Go to the SpatialChat / Kumospace networking space. It's frightful at first, but gets easier. Attend the meets and greets. Ask questions in the chat-bars. Be present. (This applies to live events too.)

Live event? Research the venue / city etc. Be the person who knows where the good restaurant etc is...

Arrive early. Then it's your space, and it's easier to talk to individuals that arrive.

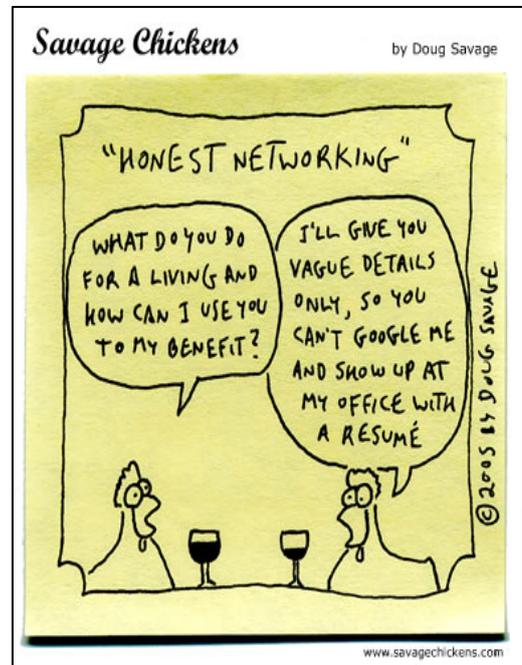
Plant seeds – then follow up later.

Ensure a Net That Works

Be a Hub Keep up-to-date with networks' needs / strengths and then introduce people whose needs match another person's strengths.

Tend the garden – where have you let a good relationship wilt? Networks require tending...

... and occasionally pruning. (unless you're being utterly altruistic, there are some relationships that you've just left too long.)



Be Courageous

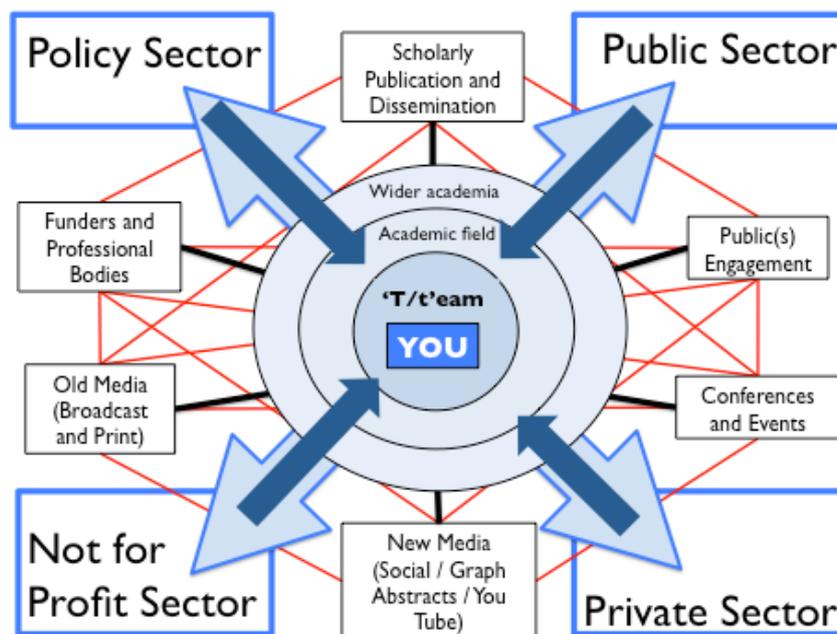
Remind yourself of the value of your outputs to others and take a chance.

(Provided you're respectful, and protect your IP initially, what do you have to lose?)

Everyone has found the last year difficult. Be the hub that connects others. LEAD!

Indicators of Wider Socio-Economic Impact (Predictors and Potentials)³

1. Academic experience and credibility (citations linked to wider socio-impact)
2. Track record of 'successful work' (success is determined by stakeholder perspective)
3. Systematic approach – strong sense of research purpose from first principle
4. Systematic networking (locally, nationally, internationally)
5. Personal communication capacity (quick soc med / articles / blog posts)
6. External profile and reputation (Exposure>Reputation>Performance)
7. Working with intermediaries (think tanks / health trusts etc)



**Who do you know?
But more importantly, who knows you?**

³ Adapted from **Maximising the Impacts of Your Research – LSE** - <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/the-handbook/>

THE MAGIC 8 – Who do you know and who knows you?

- ⑧ People with Influence (Don't confuse influence with 'reputation')
- ⑧ People who know lots of people ("Hubs")
- ⑧ People who care about the things you care about (values)
- ⑧ Experts in Process (How / Admin) and Product (Topic / Research)
- ⑧ Funders (what is their strategic agenda?)
- ⑧ People who will champion and celebrate your work/group/you and aren't all about the power and ego...
- ⑧ Good 'horticultural' networkers...
- ⑧ And Editors , Publishers and Communicators (Disseminators)

Next Steps



Further Reading

In older works, the tech references are dated (myspace anyone?) but the philosophy and approach advice are very sound.

Catt, H. and Scudamore, P. (2000) Thirty minutes to improve your networking skills. (Kogan Page)

D'Souza, S. (2008) Brilliant Networking (Pearson Education)

Fisher, D. and Vilas, S. (2nd Edition 2005) Power Networking (Bard Press)

Van den Berg, G. and Pietersma, P. (2014) The 8 steps for Strategic Success: Unleashing the Power of Engagement. Kogan Page

53 Ways to Enhance Researcher Development – Frontinus (Specifically Chapter 29 – Engagement Beyond the Ivory Tower)

53 Interesting Ways to Communicate Your Research – Frontinus (Specifically Chapter 6 – Building a Net that Works)

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He doesn't do Social Media. Don't ask. The world still turns.

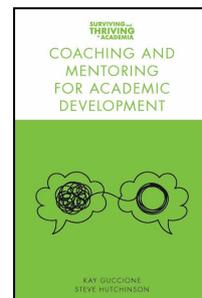
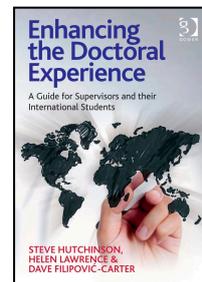
Amongst other publications:

Daley, Guccione and Hutchinson (Eds) (2017). **53 Ways to Enhance Researcher Development**. London: Frontinus.

Hutchinson, Lawrence, & Filipovic-Carter (2014) **Enhancing the Doctoral Experience**. Gower.

Hutchinson and Lawrence (2011) **Playing With Purpose: How Experiential Learning Can Be More than a Game**. Gower.

Guccione, K., & Hutchinson, S. (2021) **Coaching & Mentoring for Academic Development**. Emerald Education.



“The richest people in the world look for and build networks. Everyone else looks for work.”

Robert Kiyosaki