

# Building Scholarly Connections: Effective Networking and Follow-Through Strategies

## Connect with the presenters

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## Getting Started:

### Ice Breaker Prompts

- Be authentically you - trigger them to come to you
  - Recognize their authenticity and spark the conversation based on your observation
  - Is that Svaha?
  - Awesome dress!
- What brings you to this event?
- Is this your first SWE Conference?
- That was a great talk
- Are you going to \_\_\_?
- Which food place would you recommend?
- I see you have a \_\_\_ ribbon ...
  - Me too
  - Can you tell me more

### Introductions

- |                |                     |                                   |
|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Present      | • Past              | • Future                          |
| • Hi, I am ... | • I am from ...     | • I'd like to talk more about ... |
|                | • My work is in ... | • What do you think about ...     |
|                | • I like ...        |                                   |

### Tips for closing a conversation to leave open the potential for follow-up

- |                                                                       |                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • Use their name                                                      | • Let's exchange information.                                           |
| • Get contact information: business card, LinkedIn, email, text       | • I'd like to help you with ... can we follow up?                       |
| • Connect Digitally - Include a message with contact - simple context | • Can you help me with ... can we follow up?                            |
| • Business cards - Make a note on the card                            | • Sad we are out of time, it was great talking, can we chat more later? |
| • Prompts to wrap it up                                               | • Escape - it is ok to not proceed, no harm connecting still            |

## Following Up

### Key Communication Tips:

#### **Do**

Be specific • keep it short • add one tiny value • invite easy replies • close the loop.

#### **Don't**

Generic praise • vague asks • walls of text • tagging ten people without a reason.

### Mindset (so it feels natural)

- **Networking = structured generosity.** Lead with a small win for them (info, intro, kudos), then ask.
- **Micro-asks beat big asks.** One precise question or a 20 min meeting
- **Make “no” easy.** Optionality reduces pressure for both sides.

### How to Ask (Without Awkwardness)

#### **Do: Five rules for a smooth ask**

1. **Be specific:** one topic, one decision, one role.
2. **Be small:** ≤90 words; offer **two options** (quick call or async reply).
3. **Show homework:** mention their post/project and why *they* specifically.
4. **Give first:** attach a short resource or offer an intro.
5. **Close the loop:** thank them + share outcome later.

#### **Don't (awkwardness triggers)**

- Vague asks (“pick your brain”)
- Long essays
- Calendar dumps
- Guilt (“I really need this”)

### Follow-Up Prompts

<u>Simple</u>	<u>Feeling intimidated</u>	<u>When you want something</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do you love most about working in [ROLE or INDUSTRY]?</li><li>• How did you become [ROLE] or enter [INDUSTRY]?</li><li>• It was nice meeting you at ____ and great talking about _____. Hope to see you again.</li><li>• I really enjoyed our conversation. I know we had to cut it off due to all the other exciting things happening at the conference.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognize and Tastefully Praise</li><li>• It is really cool that you _____. Can we talk more about that?</li><li>• Interest in learning more</li><li>• Especially for graduate students</li><li>• I find your experience with _____ interesting, can we talk more about that?</li></ul> <p><b>A key transition to leverage:</b> <b>Can we talk more about that?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can you help me with ____<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• getting a guest speaker for my class?</li></ul></li><li>• Do you have time to ____<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• review a grant proposal?</li></ul></li><li>• Do you know of any ____<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• job opportunities.</li></ul></li><li>• By chance do you know ____<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• someone who works in ____ industry to talk to a student?</li></ul></li><li>• Your expertise in this area would be helpful ____<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in my literature review.</li><li>• to apply for a grant.</li><li>• to design a new course.</li></ul></li></ul>

<p>How about we set up a _____ and chat more?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include a next step!</li> </ul>		
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## Following Up the Follow Up

### How to move connections to the next step - following up the follow up

#### **1) Congrats / Change — note a promotion, launch, or move + tiny value add**

**When to use:** A contact's promotion, new role, launch, funding, relocation, or conference award (SWE/WE25). **Company Newsroom/Press:** launches, partnerships, funding. **Team Blog/Newsletter:** roadmap updates, product releases, lessons learned. **Publications & Media:** articles, patents, podcasts, awards.

**Org Moves:** reorgs, new leaders, hiring bursts.

**Anatomy:** congrats + specific detail + tiny value (resource, intro, or question).

**Examples:**

- “Big congrats on your move to xxxx, @Priya! Loved your note on customer-informed roadmaps. If helpful, here's a 1-page TPM cadence I use to keep execs aligned—DM for the editable.”
- “@Aaron—cheers on the Director promo at xxx. Your post on supplier risk resonated. Sharing a 3-line risk roll-up I've used in red rooms (comment has the snippet).”
- “Thrilled to see your SWE Award, @Kara! If you're scouting speakers for Q1, happy to share my networking playbook—15 min or a doc, dealer's choice.”  
**Fill-in template:**  
“Congrats on [event], @[name]! [specific detail]. Sharing [tiny value] if useful—happy to send the editable.”

#### **2) Resource / Insight — short template, checklist, or quick brief**

**When to use:** You solved a problem this week and can distill it into 1 page or a short thread.

**Anatomy:** problem + artifact (template/checklist) + how fast to try + offer the editable via DM/link.

**Examples:**

- “New: 7-step dual-source checklist (pg 2 = quick win). Helped us cut cycle time 18% on a commodity swap.”
- “Thread: 5 mistakes that stall PMO rollouts—and the ‘one slide’ I use to unstick them. Comment has the slide.”

- “Mini-template: 30-60-90 for ‘new PM in a regulated plant.’ One page, built for Monday morning.”

**Fill-in template:**

“Built this for [situation]: [name of resource]—[what it does] (try in [time]). DM for the editable.”

**3) Invite / Access — roundtable, panel, site tour, office hours. Event Agendas (SWE/webinars/conferences):** talks, panels, attendance.

**When to use:** You have a small room, a panel seat, or a shop tour with limited space.

**Anatomy:** who it’s for + date/time + topic/outcome + capacity + how to raise a hand.

**Examples:**

- “Seat open for a SWE ‘career pivots’ roundtable next Thu, 12pm PT (Zoom). Small group, 6 seats—DM ‘PIVOT’ for an invite.”
- “Two spots left for an ops walk-through of our spare-parts war room—Friday 9am in Tempe. Practitioners welcome.”
- “Office hours next week for PMs building analytics dashboards. 20-min slots; link in first comment.”

**Fill-in template:**

“[#] spots for [who] on [date/time] about [topic]. Reply ‘[keyword]’ or DM for details.”

**4) Helpful Intro (double-opt-in) — connect two people with context**

**When to use:** You see a clear overlap and both are likely to benefit (roles, tools, supplier fit).

**Anatomy:** 2-line bridge (who/why) + opt-out + suggested next step (10–15 min chat).

**Examples:**

- “If yes, I’ll intro you to A about X. She led a similar transition last quarter.”
- “Think you and @Diego might compare notes on spare-parts governance—want a short intro?”
- “@Nora, would a warm intro to a PMO lead at xxxxx help? If now’s not ideal, no worries.”

**Fill-in template:**

“If helpful, I’ll intro you to [A] about [X]. They [credibility]. I’ll keep it short; OK to connect?”

**Script for Introducing others on LinkedIn.**

*Hit the + in the Messaging Tab and put in multiple names of folks you know.*

Hi **[Name 1]** and **[Name 2]**,

I wanted to introduce you to each other — I think you'll have a lot in common.

👉 **[Name 1]**, meet **[Name 2]**. [Name 1] is [short description — e.g., “a seasoned program manager with deep experience in aerospace sourcing and PMO leadership”].

👉 **[Name 2]**, meet **[Name 1]**. [Name 2] is [short description — e.g., “a Senior Director at Honeywell leading major development programs”].

You both **[reason for intro — e.g., “work in adjacent spaces and are both passionate about operational excellence” / “are exploring similar opportunities” / “might enjoy exchanging perspectives on scaling programs”]**.

I'll let you two take it from here!

Best,  
**[Your Name]**

Other introduction options

- \_\_\_ is a great person I know from SWE, they are interested in \_\_\_, would you be willing to chat with them?
- \_\_\_ is looking for a position, do you know of any in your company?
- \_\_\_ applied for a job, any chance you could forward their CV to the reviewer as well?

## 5) Micro-ask + Close-the-loop — one precise question, then report back

**When to use:** You need a fast decision or benchmark—and you can share the result back with value.

**Anatomy:** A-or-B style question + minimal context + promise to share results + close the loop.

**Examples:**

- “Quick poll for PMO leads: A or B for intake scoring? I'll summarize the results Friday.”
- “Two options for vendor scorecards—weighted or MoSCoW? I'll post the template that wins.”

- “Phoenix folks: best land surveyor recs? I'll compile the top three with notes.”

**Fill-in template:**

“A or B for [decision]? Context: [one line]. I'll share the results/templates by [day].”

## Other Asks

- Can you help me with \_\_\_\_
  - getting a guest speaker for my class?
  - finding someone that could be a fit for \_\_\_\_ position at my company?
- Do you have time to \_\_\_\_
  - review a grant proposal?
  - discuss my idea for an assignment?
- Do you know of any \_\_\_\_
  - job opportunities?
  - article recommendations on \_\_\_\_ ?
- By chance do you know \_\_\_\_
  - someone who works in \_\_ industry to talk to a student?
- Your expertise in this area would be helpful \_\_\_\_
  - in my literature review.
  - to apply for a grant.
  - to design a new course.

## Research Interest

Script for students to break the ice with faculty about research opportunities.

Hi **[Professor]**,

I saw that you do work related to **[topic/project]**. That sounds really interesting. Can we set up a time to talk more about that?

Best,  
**[Your Name]**

## Key tips

- Use proper salutation when initially contacting a professor. If you are unsure what to use, use **Professor [Last Name]**
- Do not attach your resume unless you saw on their website they are looking for students and they want your resume
- Do not say you want to work with them until you meet with them
  - Unless you are contacting that professor about a posted position
- Do your homework, make sure they are still doing work in that area
- This works for asking about their experiences as well
  - Instead of topic/project you could ask about:
    - Their involvement with SWE
    - Their experience with working in \_\_\_\_ industry
    - Their experience working abroad

### Prompts to help respond when someone follows up with you

- The SWE conference was great, are you going to any of the 2026 WE Local Conferences
- Thank you for the email, things are a bit crazy right now, can you please send me another email in a week or so if you don't hear back from me.
- Thank you for contacting me about this
- Let's set up a time to talk more
- It was nice meeting you, all the best with things.
- I'm glad you reached out about this; I'd love to help!
- Good to hear from you; of course, I can review your proposal!
- Thanks! I'd appreciate the opportunity to get involved. Can you send details?

## Tracking Follow Up

[illegible]