

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

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

- Use their name
- Get contact information: business card, LinkedIn, email, text
- Connect Digitally - Include a message with contact - simple context
- Business cards - Make a note on the card
- Prompts to wrap it up
- Let's exchange information.
- I'd like to help you with ... can we follow up?
- Can you help me with ... can we follow up?
- Sad we are out of time, it was great talking, can we chat more later?
- 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

<b>Simple</b> <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>	<b>Feeling intimidated</b> <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>	<b>When you want something</b> <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>
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<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 xxxx 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

Status #	Contact Frequency	Definition									
LinkedIn Recency	Name	Status #	Last contact	Next contact	How can I help this person?	How did we meet? Notes from interactions	Following on Twitter?	Following on LinkedIn?	Industry	City	Added to favorites on my phone?
1						I'm actively involved with the person, whether it's a friend or a new business associate. I swap between various contact methods: calls/emails/texts. With new relationships, a "1" generally means I have yet to solidify the relationship with at least three different forms of communication.					
2						30 Each time I reach out to a person, I like to include a very short note next to their name telling me the last time I contacted them and how. Touch base people. Casual acquaintances OR I know them well.					
3						90 I monitor social media updates, like/engage with their content, and try to find opportunities to help					
						365 I don't know these people very well. Don't devote energy to pinging.					
1 Jane Doe		1	3/30/2019	4/29/2019	Introduce to clients	Cold connected with me on LinkedIn, but we're in the same circle. Get intro meeting, otherwise disconnect. Introduction from Jenny Doe. Get to know this person!	Yes	Yes	Chief of Staff	St. Louis	To Do
2 John Doe		1	4/8/2019	5/8/2019	Invite to my networking event Promote his content	Met for coffee 4/15/19 and discussed meeting up in May 2019.	Can't find	Yes	CMO	SF	To Do
3 Jeremy Doe		2	4/25/2019	7/24/2019		Met at networking event at 1871 on 4/1/19, works at XYZ Co.	Yes	Yes	Design	NYC	N/A
4 Jeanette Doe		3	4/25/2019	4/24/2020	tbd	Met at networking event at 1871 on 4/1/19, works at ABC Co.	Yes	Yes	Lawyer	Chicago	N/A
5 Jimmy Doe		3	4/25/2019	4/24/2020	tbd	Coworker at Acme Co.	No	No	Tech	Chicago	N/A

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