



**PhD Career
Consultancy**

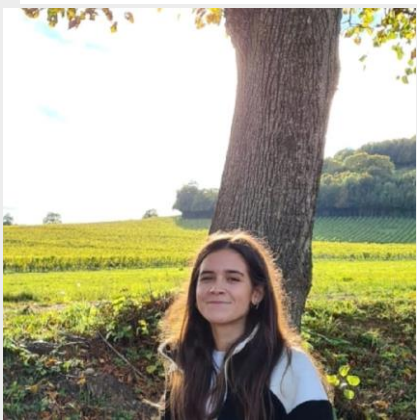
Inspireurope+
Supporting Researchers at Risk

The Power of Networking

Tuesday 17th October, 13.00 – 14.00 (UK time)



LinkedIn



Tutor: **Sarah Blackford**,
Academic Career Specialist
Co:Host: **Lucia Simms**,
Council for At-Risk Academics



Quick introduction ...



Sarah Blackford

PhD Career Specialist | SFHEA | Career education workshops and webinars, 1-2-1 career guidance and coaching | MBTI Practitioner

Greater Wurzberg Area · [Contact info](#)

[500+ connections](#)

 Independent Career Consultancy

 University of Warwick

Experienced PhD Careers Adviser and Coach with a background in bioscience research and communications, providing career education workshops and individual career interviews to PhD students, postdoctoral and academic staff.

With over 25 years' experience and qualified with an MA in Career Guidance and Coaching (Warwick/ Lancaster universities), I deliver career education workshops and offer individual coaching for PhD and postdoctoral researchers to help them to reach informed decisions about their careers. This includes recognising their strengths, capabilities and transferable skills, improving their knowledge of the academic and non-academic job markets, using effective job seeking strategies (including networking, professional presentation), and successful CV writing and interview technique. The majority of my training is conducted as on-line or in person workshops at universities and research institutions (usually by invitation).

Training is inclusive, confidential and interactive with plenty of opportunities for discussion, group exercises and reflection. Feedback is consistently excellent with evaluations showing participants are already taking action to improve their employability and employment prospects, whether within or outside of academia. For a full list of my services see my blog: <https://www.biosciencecareers.org/career-support>

Professional and confidential:

Qualified in career education, guidance and coaching in Higher Education (Warwick & Lancaster) and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA), I am a registered practitioner of two career professional bodies, the Career Development Institute and the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS), and work to an ethical and confidential code of practice. I am also a qualified Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) practitioner.

BLOG: <https://www.biosciencecareers.org>

Other publications: (book, papers, reviews and articles)

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Sarah_Blackford2

Blackford, S (2023)



What is networking ?



What other words describe
networking ?



What is networking ?

Connecting
Engaging
Sharing
Interacting
Communicating

... with a purpose



What is THE PURPOSE OF networking ?

- Build professional relationships
- Give/receive information
- Connect with people – advice/support/referrals
- Access and engage with communities
- Enhance your career opportunities



**PhD Career
Consultancy**

Inspireurope+
Supporting Researchers at Risk

Why is networking good for you and your career ?



Blackford, S (2023)

What does the literature say?

Eby, Butts and Lockwood (2003) hypothesised three competencies as being predictors of career success: ‘**knowing WHY**’, ‘**knowing WHOM**’ and ‘**knowing HOW**’. ‘Knowing whom’ relates to networking and, for the purposes of their study, they identified two key networks which might positively influence career success: one’s developmental network (which includes mentoring), and the extensiveness of one’s network within and outside of an organisation. They state:

*“The major benefits of **KNOWING WHOM** are that they represent a source for **expertise, reputation, development and learning**. ‘Knowing whom’ also provides access to new contacts and possible job opportunities. The result of investing in this career competency is the development of ‘career communities’, networks which provide avenues for career support and personal development.”*

WHAT NETWORKS WORK ?

- Current and former colleagues, alumni, mentors, friends, family
- Meetings, conferences, seminars, symposia, career events (workshops, career talks, job fairs)
- Workshops, summer schools, conference side programmes
- Volunteering – events, committees, collaborations, helping
- Internships, placements, business/industry visits
- Membership – Specialist communities, e.g. learned societies, discussion lists
- Social media – Researchgate, LinkedIn, Twitter

ACADEMIC LEARNED SOCIETIES

What is Social Science?

Policy and Research

Campaign for Social Science

Our Fellows

ACADEMY
of SOCIAL
SCIENCES

Social Science Societies

The Academy has 48 member social science societies.
Each society is an independent organisation

News Events

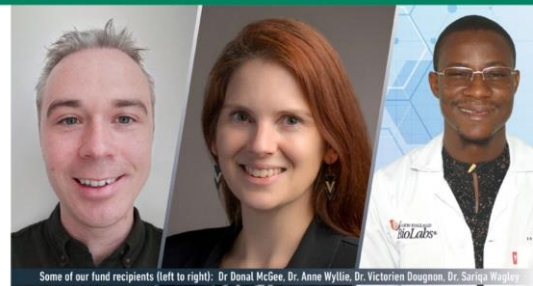


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Royal Society of Chemistry

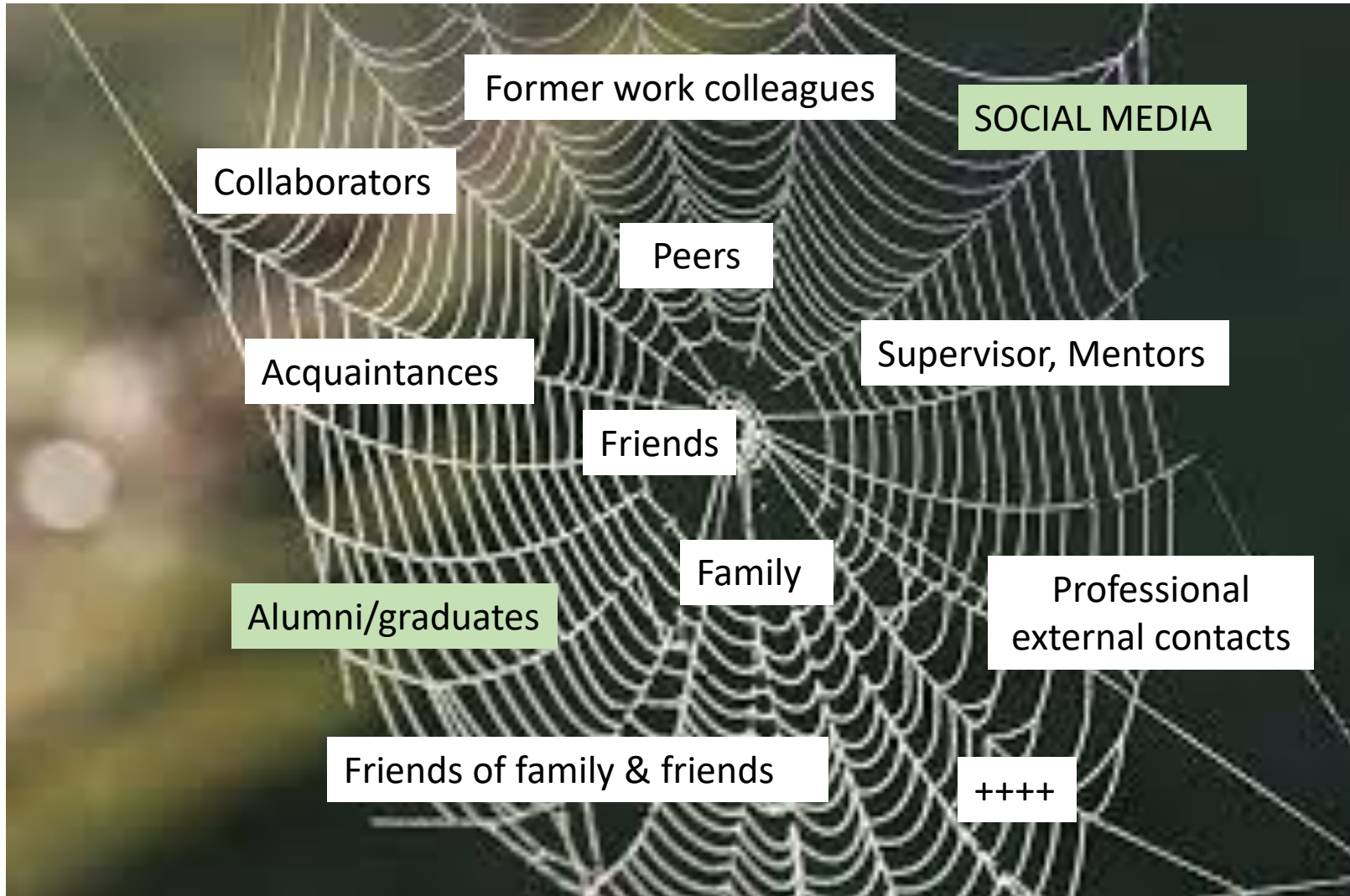
Chemistry is making the world better for all

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Join in



WHAT DOES YOUR CURRENT NETWORK LOOK LIKE ?



Locating people to connect with / follow / contact:

known

- **PEOPLE YOU ALREADY KNOW WHO ARE IN YOUR COMMUNITY**
- **PEOPLE WHO SHARE YOUR INTERESTS** (other researchers, people doing jobs of interest)
- **PEOPLE YOU MEET IN PERSON OR ONLINE** (intentionally or randomly)
- **ALUMNI** – current and previous institutions
- **ORGANISATIONS** – COMPANIES, PROFESSIONAL BODIES
- **PEOPLE OUTSIDE OF YOUR COMMUNITY** – INDUSTRY / BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS / ENTERPRISE / CHARITIES / NGOs
- ???

unknown

“Granovetter (1983) distinguished between **the value of networking with those we already know and with whom we have strong ties, and reaching out to acquaintances and others with whom we have weak ties. He recommended the latter strategy** as a way to extend and develop our networks, a strategy acknowledged more recently by Gladwell (2005) and further supported by Eby, Butts and Lockwood (2003) and Wolff and Moser (2009), whose research indicates that **extending networks both internally and externally can assist with career success.**”

“**The influence of communities on people’s careers is complex**, as noted by Law (2009) in his community interaction theory, in which he states: ‘The way it all works out will depend on what sort of attention a person gives to one person rather than another. Career management, then, becomes a matter, not so much of what you know concerning decisions and transitions, but of **who you pay attention to among the people you know.**’ This observation is particularly powerful when one considers the singular nature of the academic environment and the relatively uniform career paths and types of experiences to which early career researchers and students are exposed.”

With ever-increasing numbers of PhD-qualified scientists entering the academic and non-academic job market, **those who endeavour to make connections and promote personal patronage through networking can gain an advantage over their contemporaries.** As concluded by Forret (2014): ‘. . . networking helps to develop a job-seeker’s career competencies; **this can open both anticipated as well as unexpected job opportunities . . .**’

Exerts from *Blackford (2018)*

How will you network ?



What will you do ?

The Art of Networking

?POSITIVES

- Finding out information
- Meeting people
- Making yourself known to others
- Creating a good impression
- Helpful for getting a job
- Energising

?NEGATIVES

- Feeling scared and uncomfortable
- Worried about being ignored
- Feeling vulnerable and judged
- Creating a bad impression
- Cultural and language barriers
- Can be tiring

What's the difference between F2F networking and E-networking?

- **Less** / more personable
- **More difficult** / easier to approach people
- **Difficult** / easier to do 'casual' networking
- **Fewer** / more networking opportunities
- [Less] **Afraid** to be invading people's space/time
- [Less] **Worried** about being ignored/rejected publicly
- **More difficult** / easier to prepare and present yourself





FOCUS: IN PERSON



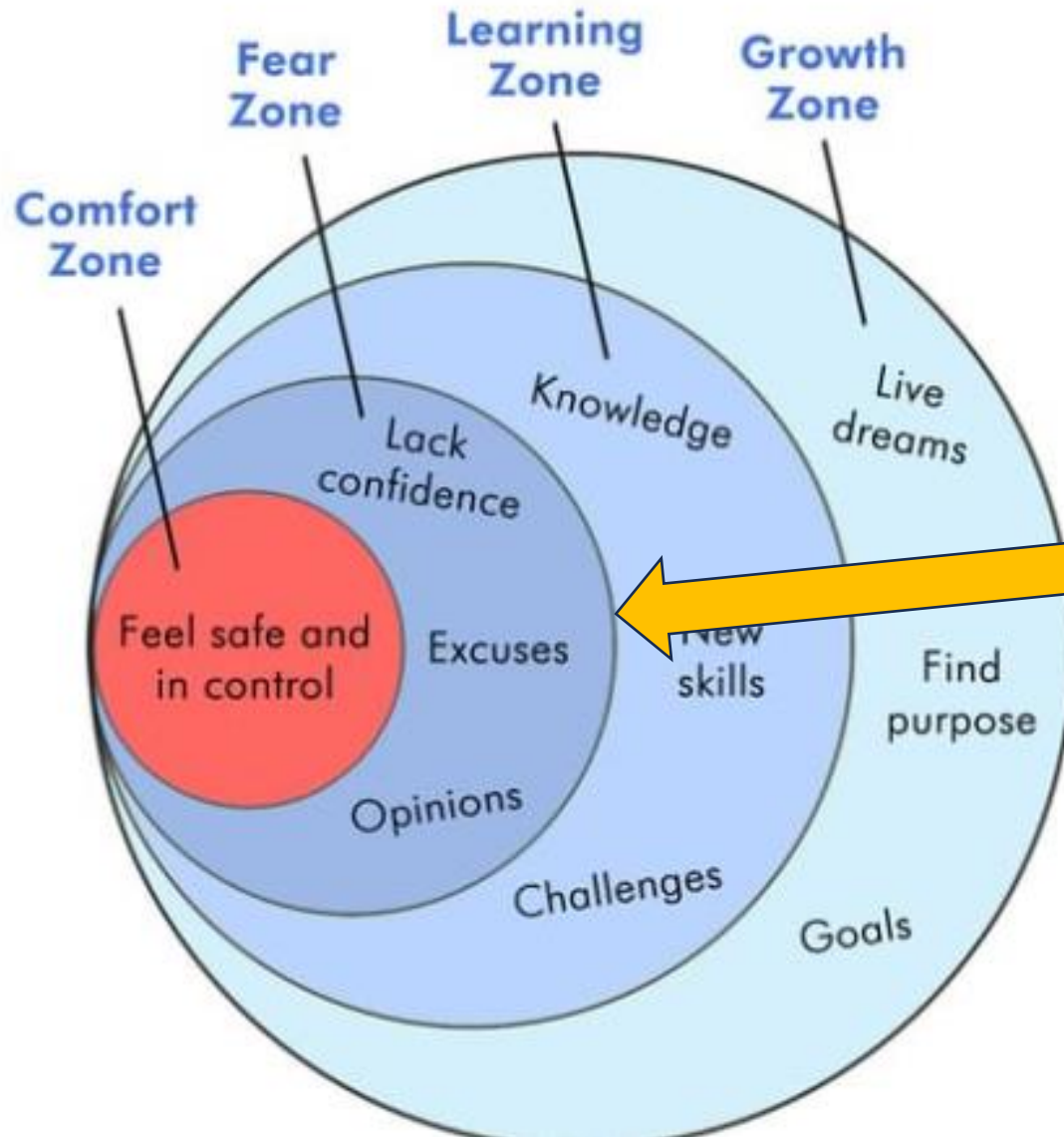
NETWORKING IN PERSON

Can be difficult and stressful !

BUT

Sometimes you have to
s - t - r - e - t - c - h yourself

Comfort Zone Map



- PREPARE !
- Do your research!
- Believe in yourself !

Conference Preparation

- Consider why you are attending this meeting – what do you want to achieve?
- Write a great abstract for your poster / talk !
Use social media
 - what’s the Twitter (X) #hashtag? **#SEBAMMM**
 - any information on Facebook?
- Examine the conference programme + delegate list – who’s going to be there ?
- Who’s speaking?
- Identify people to network with
- Contact people ahead of the meeting
- Have some goals
- Have your own ‘pitch’ ready

Career Fair preparation

- Investigate the programme and exhibitors
- Who will be there? People / companies
- Research who they are, what they do
- Visit company websites
- Identify people to network with
- Use Social Media to find out more
- Reach out and connect ahead of the event
- Have some goals
- Have your own 'pitch' ready

Performance

- Try to be open and engaging
- Have a goal – you don't have to speak with everyone!
- Engage with others too even if they are not directly relevant
- Join in as much as you can
- Have a business card
- Write down what you spoke about
- Follow up with an email or LinkedIn connect request
- Keep in touch (if relevant)

THE PITCH !



What is important to you?
What do you want to be known for?
What is your brand?



PhD ++++++

What are your personal strengths?

- My knowledge and expertise
- My skills and abilities
- My experience and successes
- My network
- My personal characteristics
- My ambitions and passion

PhD ++++++

Which qualities will I emphasise?
How do I want to present myself?



PRESENTING YOURSELF IN PERSON

EXAMPLE/GUIDELINE for Opening PITCH

Hello, it's so good to meet you in person.

I've been following your work and am really interested in your research group

I've been following your company and I'm really interested in what you're doing.....

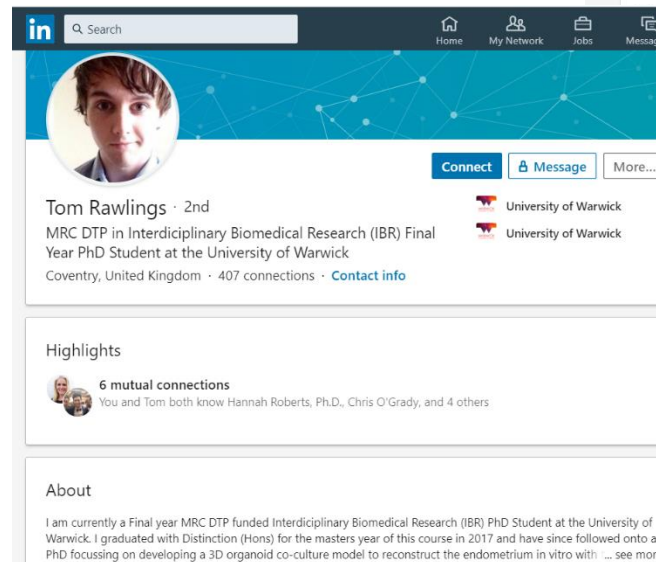
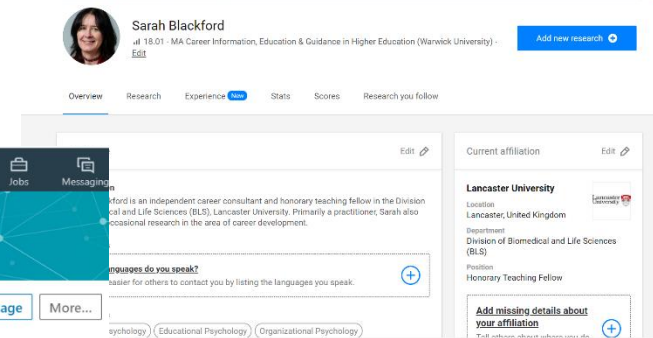
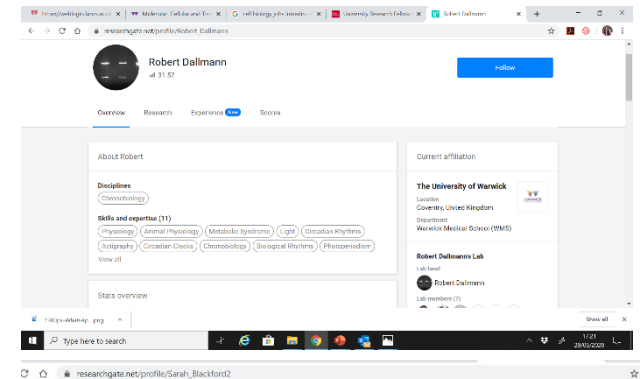
I'm a postdoctoral researcher at XXX focussing on engineering plants for different environmental stress conditions. I've been working on some novel techniques, which I think will fit in with your research interests.

Would you be interested in having a discussion about the possibility of working together?

I'm a senior researcher at XXX where I'm using some really innovative techniques to solve some of our greatest climate change challenges. I think I could contribute to your research programme, for example, where you're investigating ways to adapt plants to reduced water.



FOCUS:
ON LINE

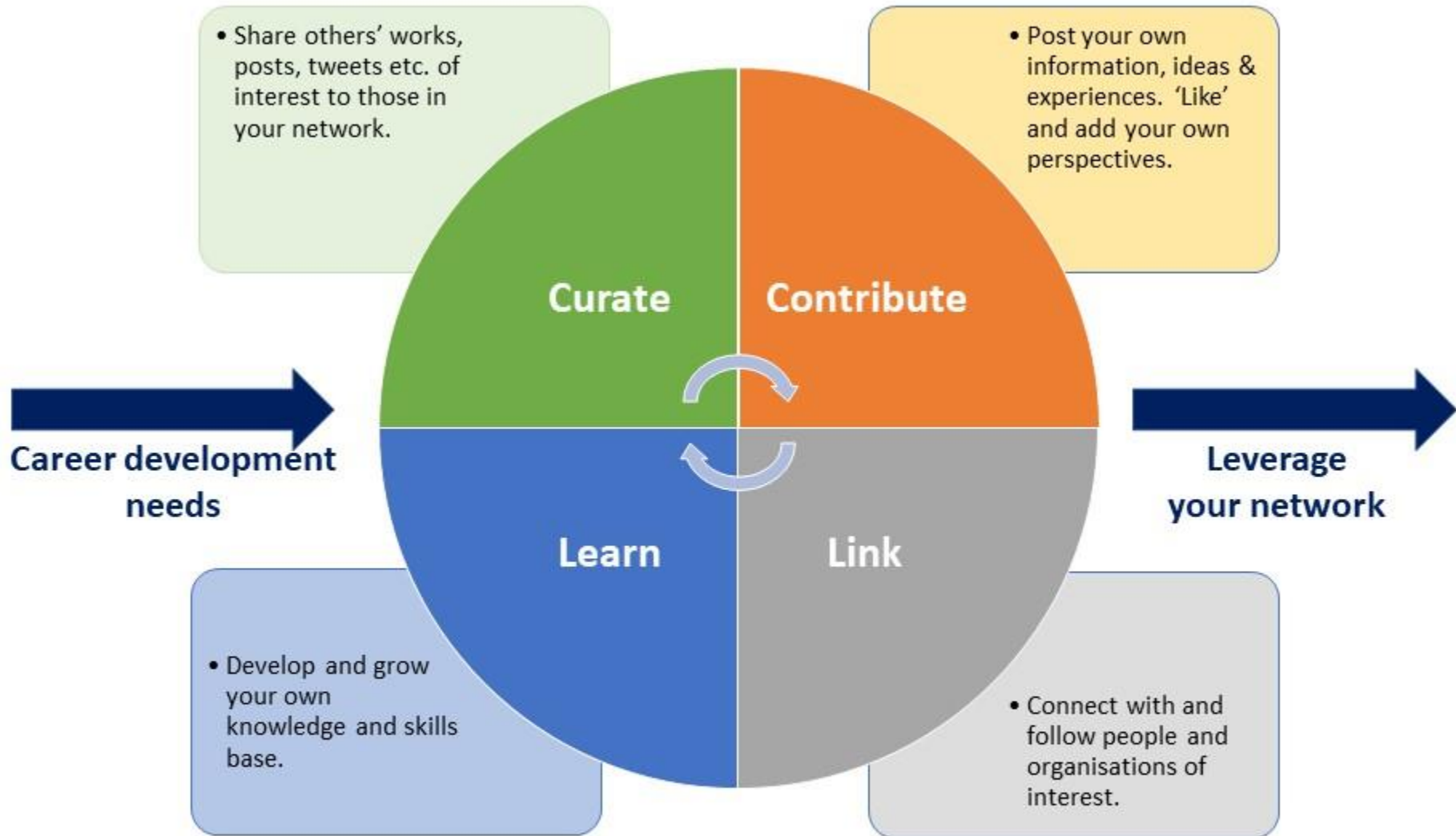


What online social media and other platforms are you currently using ?

- LinkedIn
- Researchgate
- Mendeley
- Github
- X (formerly Twitter)
- Instagram
- Facebook
- Specialist discussion groups
- Other

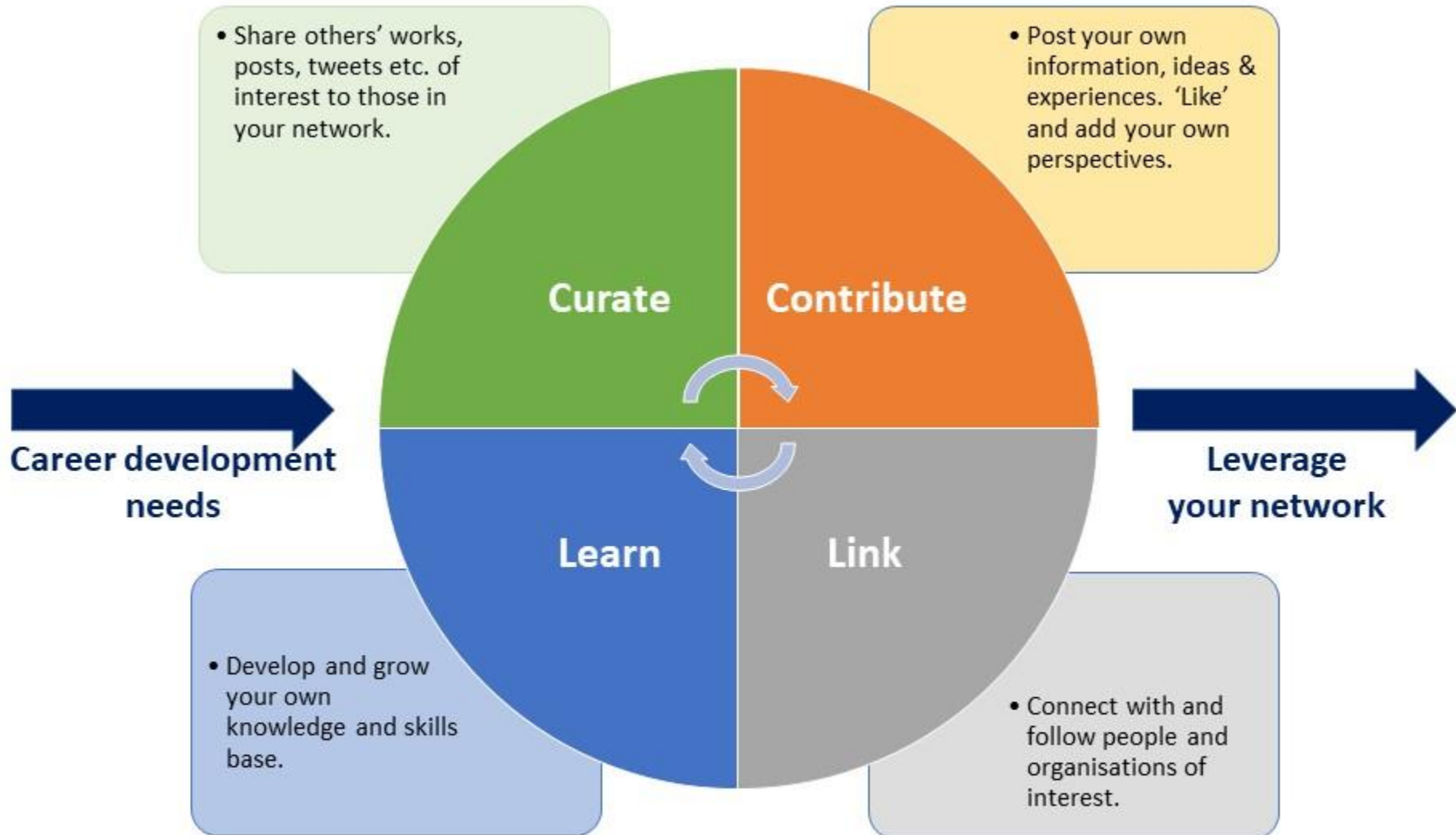


ENGAGING ON LINE



Making the most of your on-line networking

- CONNECTING/FOLLOWING



Link with people you know



Search




Messaging N



Sarah Blackford

PhD Career Specialist | Career education workshops (on-line & in-person), 1-2-1 career guidance and coaching | MBTI Practitioner

Greater Wurzburg Area · [500+ connections](#) · [Contact info](#)

 Independent Career Consultancy

 University of Warwick



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Add profile section ▾

More...

Show recruiters you're open to work — you control who sees this
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Share that you're hiring and attract qualified candidates.
[Get started](#)



About




PhD career development specialist (MA, Career Guidance and Coaching, Warwick/Lancaster) with a background in bioscience research and communications, providing group training and individual career support to PhD students,

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Sarah Blackford SF... @BiosciCareer

←

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3,968 posts

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ECRchat is a Twitter chat about all things Early Career. Current moderators [@elliemackin](#), [@motjewolf](#) and [@walterstrudie](#).

📍 Global 🔗 ecrchat.weebly.com 📅 Joined September 2012

2,308 Following **8,852** Followers

Followed by Happy PhD Supervisor, Natércia Rodrigues Lopes, and 293 others you follow

Posts
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↻
#ECRchat reposted
⋮

Prof Sarah Younie @sarahyounie · Mar 21, 2018

[@meshguides](#) [@ECRchat](#) - had an interesting discussion with [#ECRchat](#) about developing research-informed teaching - see survey for gathering more ideas

🗨️
#ECRchat @ECRchat · Mar 21, 2018

If you enjoyed the chat and would like to support some data collection

Individual Reflection

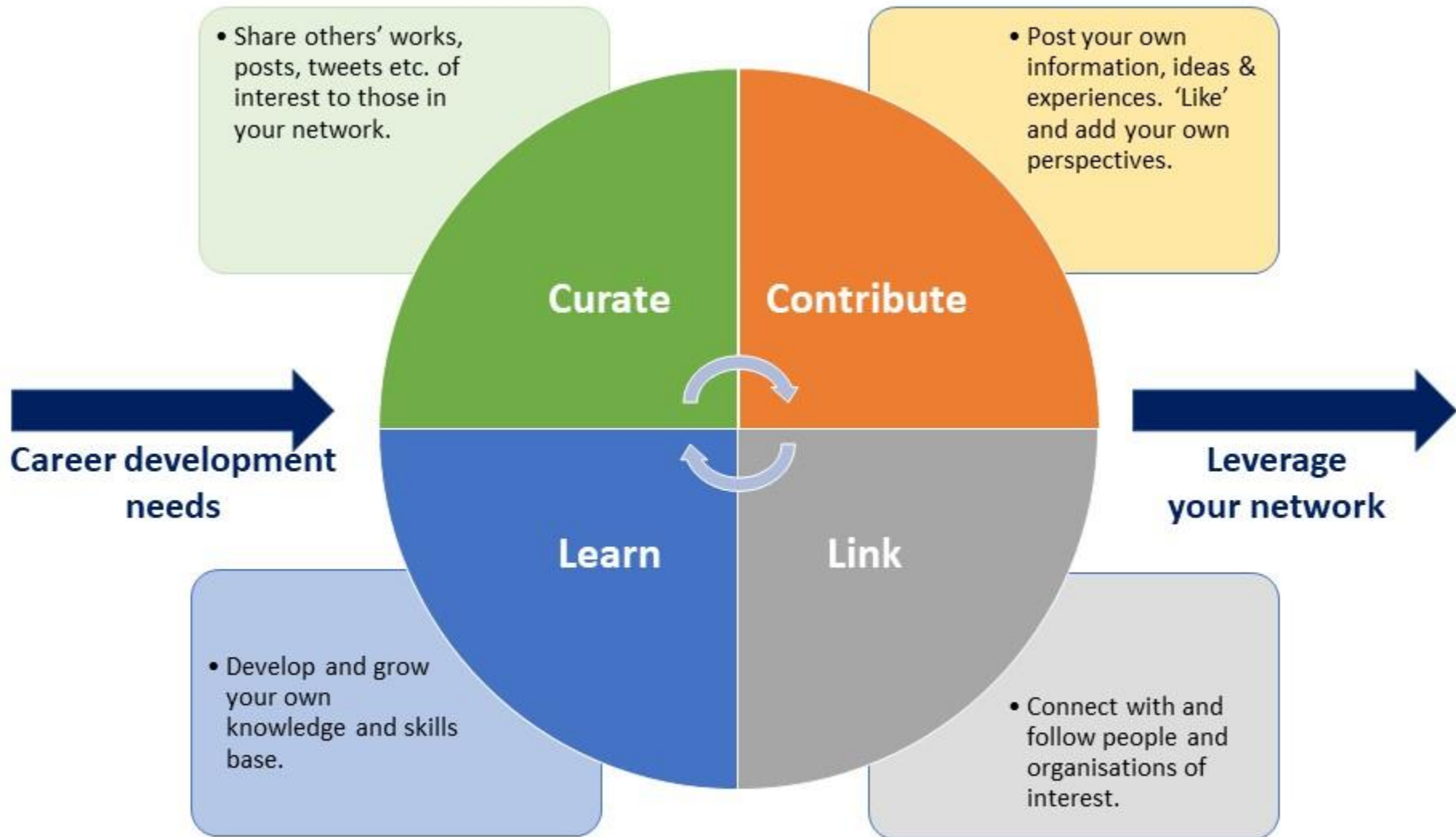
Who do you want to link / connect with ?

Make a note ...

- Could be specific people
- Could be people from a particular field of research or career sector
- Could be research institutions or universities
- Could be organisations or companies

Making the most of your on-line networking

- CURATING/CONTRIBUTING/LEARNING



Post news, like or comments on other posts



Sara Shaheen, Ph.D
Data Science | Artificial Intelligence | Machine Learning

Followers 275

Connect

Message

om/in/simonsinek/

Sara Shaheen, Ph.D likes this



Alex Wang • 2nd
Data Science / Business Algorithms
1w •

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Python For Data Science

-Python Basics, Intermediate

...see more

Python For Data Science Cheat Sheet

Cheat sheet collection • 15 pages

Variables and Data Types

Variable Assignment

```
>>> x=5  
>>> x  
5
```

Calculations With Variables

```
>>> x+2  
7  
>>> x-2  
3  
>>> x*2  
10  
>>> x**2  
25  
>>> x%2  
1  
>>> x/float(2)  
2.5
```

Sum of two variables
Subtraction of two variables
Multiplication of two variables
Exponentiation of a variable
Remainder of a variable
Division of a variable

Types and Type Conversion

str()	'5', '3.14', 'True'	Variables to strings
int()	5, 3, 1	Variables to integers
float()	5.0, 1.0	Variables to floats
bool()	True, True, True	Variables to booleans

String Operations

```
>>> my_string = 'thisstringisawesome'  
>>> my_string  
'thisstringisawesome'  
>>> my_string * 2  
'thisstringisawesomethisstringisawesome'  
>>> my_string + 'inait'  
'thisstringisawesomeinait'  
>>> 'n' in my_string  
True
```

String Operations

```
>>> my_string[3]  
>>> my_string[4:9]
```

String Methods

```
>>> my_string.upper()  
>>> my_string.lower()  
>>> my_string.count('w')  
>>> my_string.replace('o', '*')  
>>> my_string.strip()
```

String to uppercase String to lowercase Count String elements Replace String elements Strip whitespaces

Lists

Selecting List Elements

```
>>> my_list[1]  
>>> my_list[-3]  
>>> my_list[1:3]  
>>> my_list[3:]  
>>> my_list[:3]  
>>> my_list[::]  
>>> my_list2[1][0]  
>>> my_list2[1][1+2]  
my_list[list(itemOfList)]
```

List Operations

```
>>> my_list + my_list  
>>> my_list * 2  
>>> my_list2 + 4
```

List Methods

```
>>> my_list.index(4)  
>>> my_list.count(4)  
>>> my_list.append('')  
>>> my_list.remove('')  
>>> del my_list[0:1]  
>>> my_list.reverse()  
>>> my_list.extend('')  
>>> my_list.pop(-1)  
>>> my_list.insert(0, '')  
>>> my_list.sort()
```

Get the index of an item Count an item Append an item at a time Remove an item Remove an item Reverse the list Append an item Remove an item Insert an item Sort the list

Numpy Arrays

```
>>> my_list = [1, 2, 3, 4]  
>>> my_array = np.array(my_list)  
>>> my_2darray = np.array([[1, 2, 3], [4, 5, 6]])
```

Selecting Numpy Array Elements

```
>>> my_array[1]  
>>> my_array[0:2]  
>>> my_2darray[1, 0]  
>>> my_2darray[rows, columns]
```

Numpy Array Operations

```
>>> my_array > 3  
>>> my_array * 2  
>>> my_array + np.array([5, 6, 7, 8])  
>>> my_array * np.array([5, 6, 7, 8])
```

Numpy Array Functions

```
>>> my_array.shape  
>>> np.append(other_array)  
>>> np.insert(my_array, 1, 5)  
>>> np.delete(my_array, [1])  
>>> np.mean(my_array)  
>>> np.median(my_array)  
>>> my_array.correlcoef()  
>>> np.std(my_array)
```

Get the dimensions of the array Append items to an array Insert items in an array Delete items in an array Mean of the array Median of the array Correlation coefficient Standard deviation

Install Python

ANACONDA
spyder
jupyter

DataCamp

Learn Python for Data Science Interactively

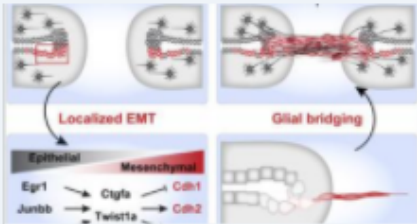
Post news, like or comments on other posts

Georgios Efthymiou and Tomás de Garay, PhD reacted to this



Vishnu Muraleedharan Saraswathy, Ph.D. • 1st
Scientist | Biologist | Sportsman | Polyglot | Autodidact | Traveler
6d •

Extremely happy to share our latest publication identifying cell types and pathways aiding spinal cord regeneration in zebrafish, in comparison to mammals.
[#MokalledLab](#) [#regeneration](#) [#spinalcordinjury](#) [#zebrafish](#)



Localized EMT reprograms glial progenitors to promote spinal cord repair
cell.com • 2 min read

24

Like Comment Share Send

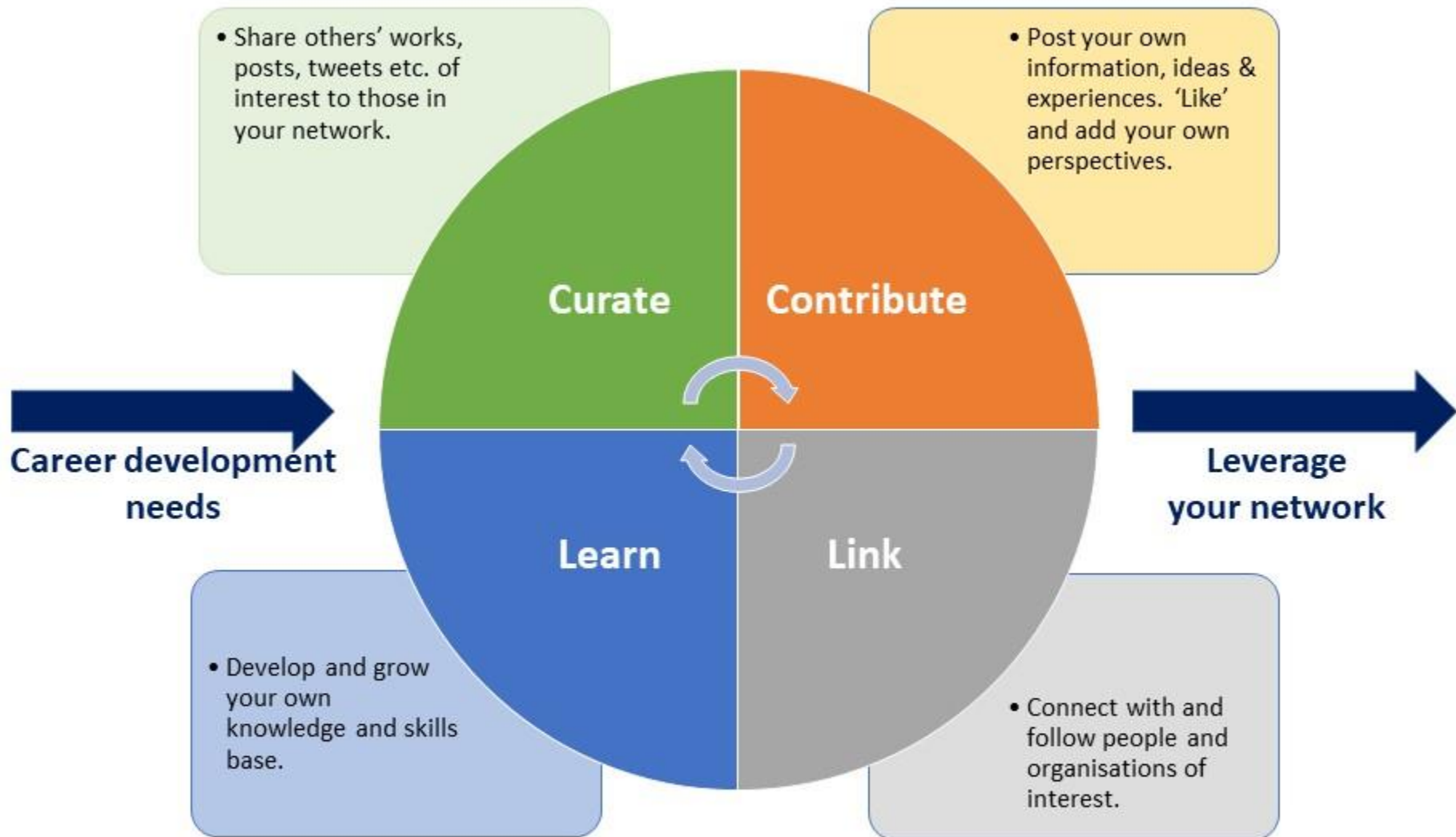
Individual Reflection

What news could you post on Social Media?
Make a note ...

- Some research news?
- A conference you've heard about?
- A more general interest piece of news?
- Re-post or 'like' someone else's post?

Making the most of your on-line networking

- LEVERAGING



GOLDEN RULES FOR NETWORKING

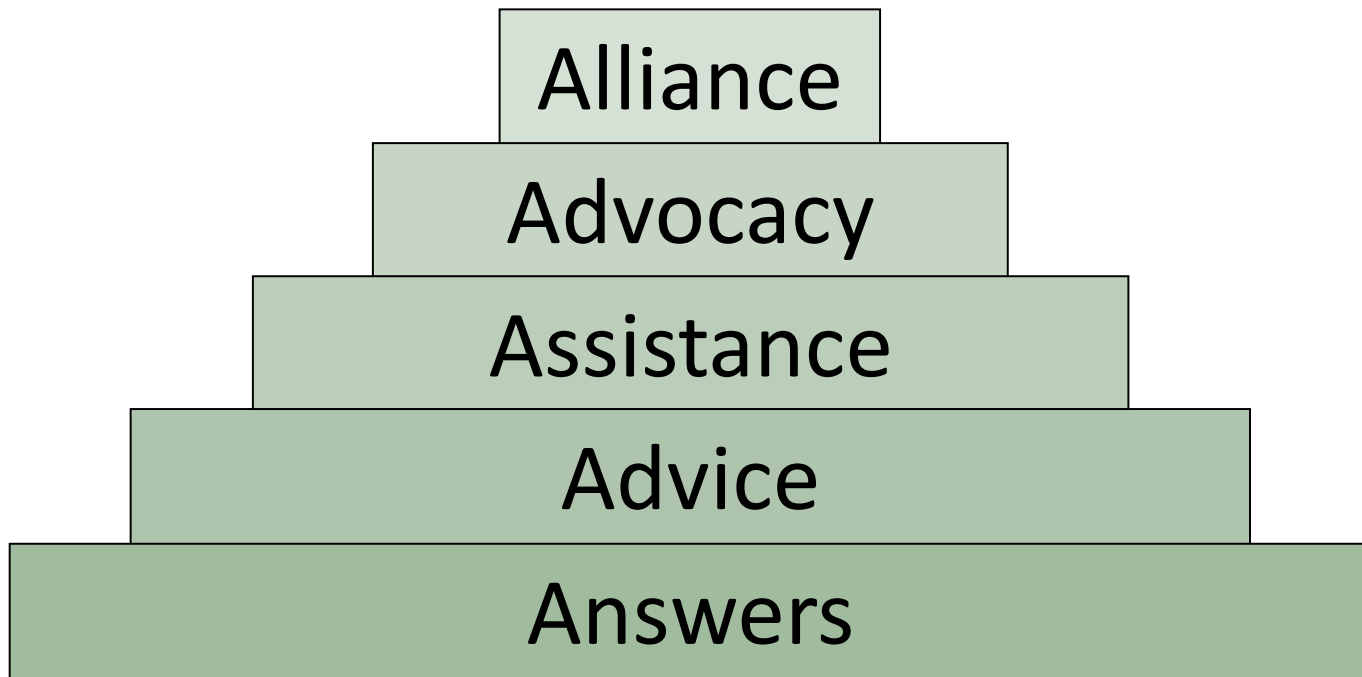
DON'T:

ASK FOR A JOB !

DO:

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Building relationships



Answers

Dear XX

I met you recently at XX conference where we discussed XXX. I would very much like to link with you and stay in touch.

Dear XX

I'm a postdoctoral researcher at XX looking to move into data analytics and would appreciate linking with you.

Dear XX

I see you did your PhD at XX. I wonder if I could link with you as I'm also aiming for a career outside of academia in this sector.

Advice

Dear XX

Many thanks for linking with me. I'm very interested in your research, which I think is very complementary to my own, and wondered if you'd be willing to have a short online discussion with me at your convenience?

Dear XX

Many thanks for linking with me. I've been doing a lot of research on the regulatory affairs career sector and was wondering if you have any advice on getting into this profession from your perspective?

Dear XX

Many thanks for linking with me. I wonder if you'd mind me asking you a few questions about moving into XX company. I've been doing some research and I'm very interested in the role and the company.

Email enquiry

Dear[person],

My name is [name], and I recently finished my PhD in [field] at [school]. [relationship if applicable] I'm interested in transitioning towards non-academic jobs in [broad areas of interest]

Would it be possible to schedule an informational interview with you to learn more about your work at [company] and doing research/analysis in the [field]? I'm also interested in learning more about transitioning from academia to industry. My schedule is very flexible at the moment, so I'm happy to chat whenever is most convenient for you.

Best,
[name]



Dr. Mai Nguyen
@mai_nguyen_phd

PhD friends, I know networking can be super intimidating, but I just got SO MUCH HELP for a fellowship app from basically strangers I cold emailed months ago. In that spirit, I'm sharing my networking template for "cold emails."

[@AcademicChatter](#)
[@FromPhDtoLife](#) #phdlife
#phdchat

9:19 PM · Feb 11, 2021 · Twitter Web App

197 Retweets 19 Quote Tweets



Sarah Blackford
PhD Career Consultant

Inspireurope+
Supporting Researchers at Risk

Use an email signature!

The screenshot shows an email client window titled "Untitled - Message (HTML)". The interface includes a ribbon with tabs for File, Message, Insert, Options, Format Text, and Review. The Message tab is active, showing a ribbon with various options like Cut, Copy, Paste, Format Painter, Clipboard, Basic Text, Names, Include, Assign Policy, Follow Up, High Importance, Low Importance, and My Templates. Below the ribbon are fields for To, Cc, Bcc, and Subject. The main body of the email contains the following signature text:

Sarah Blackford, BSc, MA CIEGHE
Career consultant (Independent)
Honorary Teaching Fellow, Lancaster University
<https://uk.linkedin.com/in/sarahblackford>
www.biosciencecareers.org
+44 7771 765335

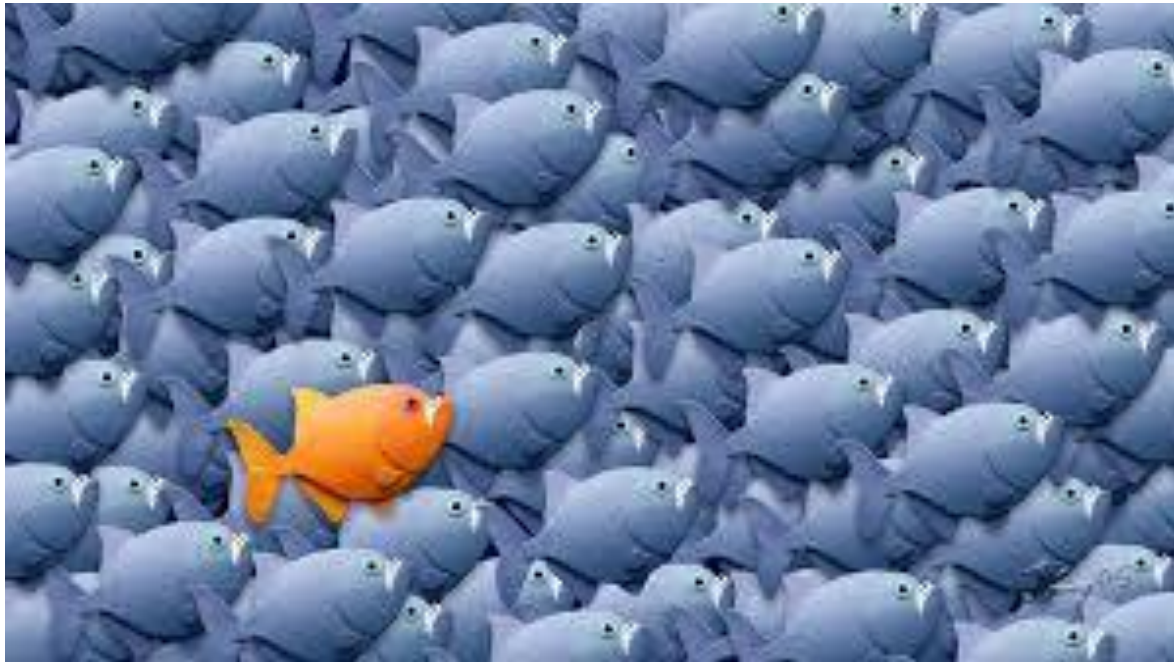
Below the text are four logos: CIEGHE Registered Professional, mbti CERTIFIED, THE ASSOCIATION OF GOOD UNIVERSITY SCARS UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR, and Lancaster University.

The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the date and time as 13:54 on 22/04/2018.

Informational Interview preparation

- **Do your research** – person and company
- **Prepare your ‘opener’** – Thank you so much for agreeing to this interview, I really appreciate it.
- **Ask broader questions first** – What made you move into this role? Company? How did you do it? What was your strategy?
- **More specific questions** about the job/differences/surprises
- **Any extra advice and tips?**
- **They will probably ask you questions** too so prepare as if you were going to be interviewed too !!
- **Prepare your ending** – I think I’ve taken up enough of your time. Thank you again.

PERSONAL PROFILE



“You never get a second chance to make a first impression.”

Career coach

MY KEYWORDS

Educator

Connector

Creative
communicator

Active listener

Empowering researchers

I asked Chat GPT:

“If these are my qualities: Career coach, Connector, Creative communicator, active listener, empowering researchers, educator, what is my Super Power? Please express in the First Person.”

Chat GPT responded with:

Based on the qualities you listed, your superpower is “**Empowering Connector**” - the ability to inspire and empower individuals to reach their full potential. As a career coach, you have a talent for connecting people with opportunities that align with their skills and goals. As a creative communicator and active listener, you can effectively communicate ideas and help individuals find clarity in their career paths. Your empowering approach to research and education allows you to guide individuals towards self-discovery and growth. Overall, your superpower is to inspire, empower and enable others to achieve their dreams and goals.



What three KEYWORDS
will you put into your
PROFILE
?

PRESENTING YOURSELF ON-LINE

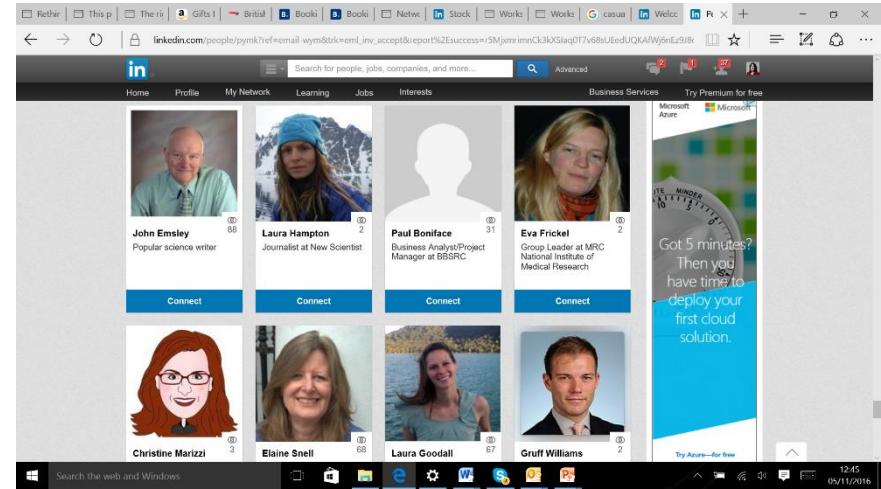
Your picture / background (NB video meetings & interviews)

Your profile

Use keywords according to your 'brand'

Up to 90% completed

Look at other profiles



Your title

(Postdoctoral researcher OR Research Scientist OR Data Analyst OR Physicist OR

Your connections

What you say / comment on / post

How do you look on video ?



What is your background?



Tips for On-line Interviews

- Check the tech is working esp. audio
- Check notifications and any other audibles are switched off
- Check the light – preferably sit facing a window and/or have a light nearby so that you are not silhouetted
- Check your immediate backdrop and surroundings – tidy up!
- Ensure no interruptions
- Have your application documents to hand
- Have the computer at eye level
- Dress professionally commensurate with the type of role/organisation
- Use positive body language, eye contact, tone of voice
- Try to look into the camera
- Don't gesticulate
- Smile and nod at the end (don't wave goodbye) until the meeting closes.
- Adhere to all the other recommended F2F interview [guidelines](#)

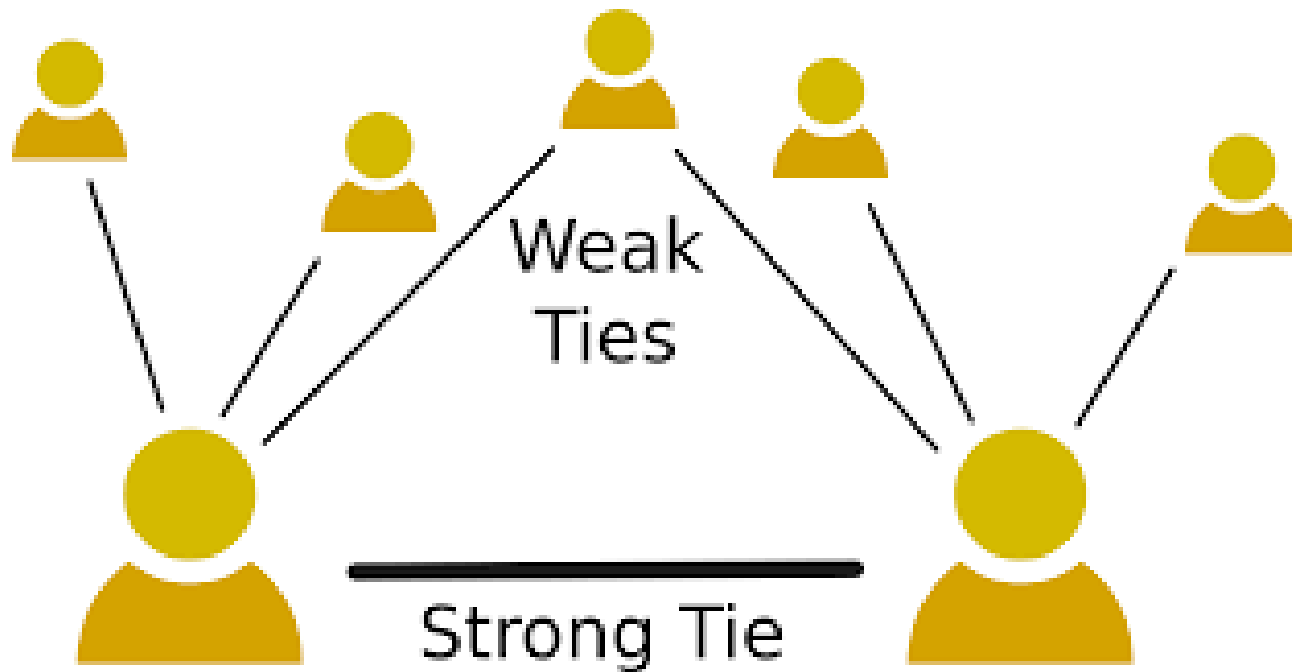


You don't have to have a huge network

You don't need to talk to everyone at a conference

Be discerning

Consider which connections are most valuable to you



You don't have to keep in touch with everyone
You may not speak to someone for a few years before you reach out to them again – that's OK
You can keep loose connections online by 'liking' or commenting on people's posts

A yellow speech bubble with a dark blue outline and a tail pointing downwards and to the left.

Comments

A blue speech bubble with a dark blue outline and a tail pointing downwards and to the right.

??s

An orange thought bubble with a dark blue outline, featuring a large main cloud and two smaller circles at the bottom left.

Thoughts



**PhD Career
Consultancy**

Inspireurope+
Supporting Researchers at Risk

The Power of Networking

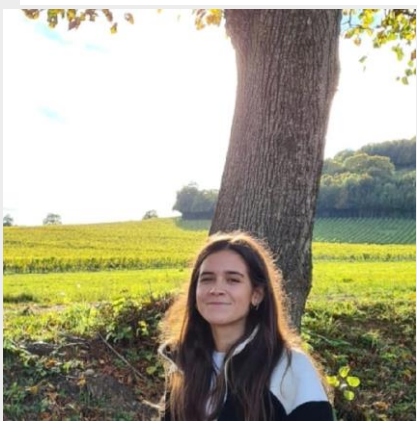
Tuesday 17th October, 13.00 – 14.00 (UK time)



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION
WISHING YOU NETWORKING SUCCESS!**



LinkedIn



Tutor: **Sarah Blackford**,
Academic Career Specialist
Co:Host: **Lucia Simms**,
Council for At-Risk Academics

