NETWORKING IN ACADEMIA

By: Nonna Martinov-Bennie
Macquarie University, Faculty of Business and Economics
HDR EXPO – Master Class
12 November 2012
Meaning of “networking”

- Approaches (Addams, Woodbury and Addams (2010): **self promoting** (using people) v. **partnership based upon mutual benefit** (a two-way street)
- Positive relationship-building mindset*
- Building friendships that endure
- Built on trust and honest communication
- Relationship building: a week, a month, several years
Networking in academia

- Keeping up with the literature, doing innovative work and presenting research at conferences as well as in publications with other academics of the same interest (Maack and Passet, 1993)
- A mechanism to build a sense of community among scholars in a specific field (Fetzer, 2003)
- Provides continuity and multiple academic contexts and experiences necessary for development of academic scholarship
Networking in academia cont.

- Intellectual, social, personal and political ties that act as one of the career supportive relationships (Travers et al., 1997)
- Increases the power and visibility of the academic by signalling their quality, ability and potential to universities (Nabi, 1999, 2003)
Theories of networking (Ismail and Rasdi, 2007)

- **Signal theory** (Spence, 1973) – intentional or unintentional information signals by individuals reflecting their ability and potential capability

- **Human capital theory** – networking as investment through which one would reap positive rewards due to increased productivity

- **Social capital theory** – networking as an investment because individual would occupy a more advantageous social network position leading to better visibility
Increased need for networking in academia

- Internationalisation of academia (essential for international activities and strategic alliances between universities)
- The ‘new’ academic career – advancement individually determined (individual improvisation and flexibility)
- Time constraints in managing the three fold academic functions (teaching, research and services/admin.)
Formal v. Informal networking (van Emmerik et al., 2006)

- **Informal** – personal, voluntary, fluid boundaries
- **Formal** – prescribed relationships among functionally defined groups with existing purposes
  - public, official, have clear boundaries, identifiable membership and explicit structure

- Participation in formal and informal networks

  greater career satisfaction
Why networking is important  
(adapted from John Pangilinan, 20/12/11)

- Opportunities
- Exposure
- Contacts and relationships
- Common ground
- Learning
Why networking is important (adapted from Jan Vermeiren 1/3/08)

- Maintaining relationships with current colleagues/research collaborators
- Finding a new job
- Finding a new employee or colleague
- Getting to know the right people who can help you with your career
- Attracting the right organisations with which to form partnerships
- Notifications of important changes (e.g. legislation)
- Up-to-date information for work-related topics
- Receiving more visibility
Why networking is important cont.

- Attracting more opportunities
- Getting new ideas, new insights and new wisdom
- Getting another perspective
- Door openings to people you won’t be able to reach on your own
- Enrichment in every possible way
- Doing things with more fun
- Developing as a person
- Attracting the right mentors
- Security net when something happens
Benefits of networking (Ericka Spradley, 2012)

- Enhances your interpersonal skills
- Mutual benefit – increases your efficiency and effectiveness
- Builds confidence
- Establishes your brand
- Provides opportunity for career advancement
Networking – turning colleagues into allies

“A great idea is only a great idea once you can engage other people to support it and generate some action.”

(John Raymond, 7 July 2005)

Assess your networking:

☐ Are you clear on whose support you need to achieve your objectives?

☐ Are you clear on what, specifically, these people need to do to support you to achieve your objectives?

☐ Do these people know this?

☐ Do these people have all the required resources to support you to achieve your objectives?

What is your score out of 10?
Opportunities for networking: PhD candidates and early career academics

- Department/Faculty/University
- Seminars and workshops
- VISA visitors
- PhD colloquiums
- Conferences
How to build a successful network

- **Foundation: making a good connection**
  - genuine desire to learn about the other person
  - determine what you have in common
  - to connect meaningfully with others you have to first connect with yourself
  - be open and authentic, know who you are
Suggestions for connecting with others
(adapted from Randy Hain, September 2007)

Effective networking isn’t a result of luck – it requires hard work and persistence (Lewis Howes, 1 November 2012; Geoff Pritchard, 9 October 2012)

- Be a great listener – ‘learn their story’
- Ask questions
- Compare interests
- Share history and/or share a memorable fact
- Use humour (not jokes)
- Connect through technology, be proactive about staying in touch, ‘add value’ and deliver on promises
- Invest selflessly – it is more about giving than receiving
People to include in your diverse network (Tai Goodwin, 5 August 2010)

- Mentor
- Coach
- Industry insider
- Connector
- Idealist
- Realist
- Visionary
- Partner
- Wanna-be
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentoring Relationships</th>
<th>Peer Relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Career-Enhancing Functions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Career-Enhancing Functions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sponsorship</td>
<td>• Information sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coaching</td>
<td>• Career strategising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exposure and visibility</td>
<td>• Job-related feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Protection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Challenging work assignments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychosocial Functions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Psychosocial Functions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Acceptance and confirmation</td>
<td>• Confirmation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Counselling</td>
<td>• Emotional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Role modelling</td>
<td>• Personal feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Friendship</td>
<td>• Friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Attribute</strong></td>
<td><strong>Special Attribute</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complementarity</td>
<td>• Mutuality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Networking in academia: concluding comments

*It is never too early to start thinking about your academic trajectory — where you want to be and how you are going to get there*

- Publish your research
- Be strategic about the choice of your PhD topic
- Position yourself in academic circles
- Develop into an independent researcher and own your research project

*In academia, it is about your scholarship and its impact on society*