

5 Tips for Effective Virtual Networking

While networking is challenging under “normal” circumstances, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed everything, including the dynamics of networking at a virtual conference. Here is practical guidance for how to network at a virtual conference and make connections.



1 Set up your virtual space to stay engaged and focus on the sessions.

- Organize your space
- Reduce/remove distractions
- Silence your phone
- Ask your household not to disturb you



2 Plan and prepare before attending the conference.

- Decide which professionals you want to connect with
- Research their backgrounds before the conference
- Come up with a few questions to start the conversation
- Create a 2-3 sentence spiel to introduce yourself virtually
- Update your profile on the conference platform and make sure it includes your headshot and social media profiles (see tip #3)



3 Update your social media accounts.

Social media profiles are your opportunity to make a favorable first impression.

- Update social media profiles you'll share with professional colleagues
- Make sure they are professional
- Include a headshot
- Use the same headshot on the conference platform so people can easily identify you



4 Use the conference platform to your advantage.

- If possible, test access to the conference platform the day BEFORE the event begins
- Familiarize yourself with the schedule and how to access all features of the platform
- Attend networking opportunities and informal coffee chats
- Actively participate in chat rooms during the sessions and follow up with the people who commented on topics of interest to you



5 Take the networking off the platform.

We are all dealing with video fatigue these days, so look for ways to connect with people outside of the conference platform.

- Get the contact information of those you are networking with
- Directly connect with conference attendees over social media
- Change up the pace and reach out over the phone. Some things are easier said than written
- Send an email to someone outside of the virtual conference to make the personal connection
- Follow up shortly after the conference to keep it timely

Learn More

Check out AcademyHealth's blog for more tips on operating in a virtual environment:

- [How to Create Meaningful Connections at the 2020 Virtual Annual Research Meeting](#)
- [Four Tips to Increase Audience Engagement When Presenting Virtually](#)

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