

Getting The Most Out Of Conferences*

Panelists:

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(*) Video recording available [here](#), thanks to Todd Holden



How to get the most?

- Why bother?
- Before, During & After
- Jobs & Industry
- Women in CS

Why bother?

- Why go to a conference?
- Which conference(s) to go to?
- What if I have nothing to present?

Highlights (0:00:00 – 0:12:00)

- Reasons to attend
 - Learn about current status and trends
 - Get ideas
 - See what it takes to publish, possibly get a sense of confidence that you can do it
 - Meet people in your community & socialize
 - Get more insights by listening to talks rather than reading papers, get introduced to new topics
 - Mentioned in “How to have a bad career” [1]

Before

- What should my objectives be?
- Who am I going to meet there?
- What to talk about?
- Logistics ..

Highlights (0:12:00 – 0:16:00)

- Planning for a conference
 - People you want to meet or collaborate with
 - Study the conference program in advance
 - Doctoral symposia, PhD panels, receptions
 - Consider skipping few talks to save energy
 - Leisure time while there
 - Valid travel documents, visas, processing times

Highlights (0:16:00 – 0:19:00)

- If you will be presenting:
 - Finish your presentation early to have more time to engage at the conference
 - Advertise your talk to people you talk to
 - Anticipate questions you might be asked
- Be ready to present yourself
 - Few sentences to get conversations started
 - “30-second interview” or “elevator pitch” [2, 3]

During

- Meet new people: profs, students ..
- Which talks to attend? Ask questions?
- Coffee breaks, dinners and outings
- Etiquette

Highlights (0:23:00 – 0:49:00)

- Asking questions
 - Don't be shy
 - Avoid self-serving or confrontational questions
 - Write down the question to help deliver it clearly
 - May prepare early by skimming through the paper
 - More questions bring you more attention. Can be good or bad, play it safe.
- Check mic and projector settings if presenting

After

- Things you have learned, e.g. problems
- Keeping in touch with people
- Service?

Highlights (0:49:00 – 0:57:00)

- Ideas to keep in touch
 - Write down the names of new people you meet
 - Short follow-up emails, possibly a link to a paper
 - Thoughts on social media
- Report back to your group
 - Helps decompress the information you took in
 - Discuss relevant papers and other highlights
- Reviewing papers

More

- Jobs & Industry
- Women in CS Conferences
- From the audience?

Highlights (0:57:00 – 1:01:30)

- If you're going on the market
 - Let the session chair know
 - Be ready for this type of discussions
 - Follow-up with people who show interest
- Help create a more inclusive environment
 - Keep things professional
 - Plan events and outings that suit everyone
 - Appreciate different perspectives, e.g., [4]

Questions?

Thanks to our Panelists!

Links

[1] How to have a bad career by David Patterson

<http://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzis5MXW83vCVUpIMDRVtm5CcHc/view>

[2] A nice introduction to the concept of a 30-second interview

<http://www.job-hunt.org/fired-to-hired/30-second-elevator-speech.shtml>

[3] Tips on preparing an effective 30-second interview

<http://sfp.ucdavis.edu/files/163926.pdf>

[4] Brave essay by an anonymous female student

<http://windowsontheory.org/2013/04/15/on-intellectual-passion-and-its-unfortunate-confusion-with-sexual-passion-and-how-it-may-relate-to-issues-of-gender/>