

TIPS & TRICKS FOR CONFERENCES

Read through the agenda ahead of time and figure out what sessions you want to attend. Prioritize the sessions you want to attend most. If you are attending with a friend, classmate, or co-worker, divide up and attend different sessions so that you cover more sessions.

Ask questions in the sessions you attend. Be engaged! Speakers enjoy answering questions, so don't be afraid to ask.

Practice introducing yourself in one sentence. You will be doing this a lot, so be sure to have your introduction ready!

Bring business cards. Business cards are exchanged left and right at conferences, so be sure collect them from the people you meet, and be willing to hand your card out. Even students can have cards with their name and contact information on them! Try to take notes on the back of the cards you receive so that you may remember what you talked about with that person.

Be approachable. Don't be afraid to strike up conversations with other conference attendees! Put down your phone and actually talk. Consider targeting several people you hope to meet with.

Be comfortable. Conferences may seem like a lot of sitting in sessions, but there is often a lot of walking that also occurs, so wear professional, but comfortable, shoes and clothing. Temperatures can also be unpredictable, so wear layers!

Attend evening events. Be open to continuing to engage with colleagues after the conference sessions end. A great deal of networking happens spontaneously in the evenings, so be willing to connect in those later hours.

Bring snacks and drink water. You're always jealous of that person in the session who is able to whip out a snack at 4:30. Be that person.

Be professional. Remember you are representing an organization, office, or institution, so always keep that in mind when engaging with others.

Follow up with people you met at the conference. Email or send personal hand-written thank you notes to colleagues or presenters you met at the conference. (Those notes on the back of their business cards come in handy when you do this!)

Share what you learned with your peers. An important aspect of conferences is sharing what you learned with your friends, colleagues, and co-workers. Be sure to debrief with them following the conference and develop a plan to use and/or implement what you learned in your work.

What to Bring

- Notebook
- Pens and Pencils
- Business Cards
- Light sweater or jacket for cool conference rooms
- Snacks and water
- Painkillers or other medication, just in case
- A positive attitude!

