But first... Remember the basics!

- Grooming & Appearance
  - Cleanliness
  - Colognes & perfumes
  - Business vs. Business
    - Casual vs. Academic Casual
- Personal Space (& other issues that vary by culture)
- Gender/Sexuality
  - Assumptions
  - Intimate questions/activity
  - Sharing the conversation
- Academic Conferences & Performativity

“Toiling away at a major conference, the grad student gets distracted by carefree senior faculty who are in vacation mode.”

- legogradstudent.tumblr.com
Goals

• Increase your knowledge about El Paso and UTEP
• Develop a great elevator speech and handshake
• Learn some strategies for general networking at conferences and other social events
• Gain confidence in your ability to talk about you, your research, your university, and your community
Does networking feel ... 

Uncomfortable?
Embarrassing?
Intimidating?
Confusing?
Insincere?
Scary?
It can also be ...

Genuine
Useful
Friendly
Easy
Effective
Empowering
Why should you network?

- Learn about career options and jobs
- Make contacts for internships and jobs
- Improve communication skills and confidence
- Practice professional behavior
- Spread the word about UTEP and your program
First Impression – the Handshake

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gK3I_NcXzWc
Professional Conversation Starters

- Be prepared (practice)
- Be positive and confident
- People like to talk about themselves
- Use open ended questions versus yes/no questions
- Firm handshake and eye contact
- Keep it simple
- Keep it you
Things to Watch Out for …

- Constantly checking device
- Rambling / Redundancy
- No eye contact
- Overreliance on notes
- Monotone rather than dynamic
- Distracted / Unfocused
- Verbal fillers – um, uh, like, you know?
- Fidgety or rushed
Exit Strategy

“It’s been great speaking with you but I think I will:

• get something to eat.
• go to my room – it’s been a long travel day.
• check out the city.
• wax my dog.

Do you have a business card? Thank you.”
Elevator Speech

A short speech that effectively describes:

• Who you are
• What you do
• What you’re interested in
• How you bring value
Elevator Speech

Think—Pair—Share
As a Student
• Undergraduates looking for graduate school, internship, or job
• Master’s students looking for Ph.D. programs, internships, or jobs
• Doctoral students looking for postdocs or jobs

As a UTEP Representative
• Make colleagues aware of UTEP
• Give them a piece of UTEP swag
• Say nice things about your program, your university, El Paso to future contacts
What do you gain?

• New contacts
• Better handshake and elevator speech
• Know a little more about UTEP and El Paso
• Line for your CV / Résumé
• Improved Communication Skills and Professional Confidence
Set the Scene ...

- We’re at a networking event on the first night of a national conference.
- The keynote session, panels, and posters all start tomorrow morning.
- This evening is a buffet of hors d’oeurves, drinks, cash bar.
Set the Scene …

- Conversation Starters
- Notes about UTEP and El Paso
- Practice:
  - Eye Contact
  - Handshake
  - Networking
  - Conversation Starters
  - Notes
  - Elevator Speech
  - Exit Strategy
  - Repeat
Did you ...

- Increase your knowledge about El Paso and UTEP?
- Develop a great elevator speech and handshake?
- Learn some strategies for general networking at conferences?
- Gain confidence in your ability to talk about your, your research, and your university?
The University of Texas at El Paso
Graduate School

www.utep.edu/graduate/pd

J. Aaron Waggoner, Ph.D.
jawaggoner@utep.edu