



From Silos to Synergy: Building Research Capacity Through Strategic Connections

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Disclosures



- This workshop is presented by the Building Research Capacity (BRC) Curriculum Committee
- The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose



Agenda



- 1:00–1:15: Welcome & Introductions
- 1:15–2:45: Needs & opportunities
- **2:45–3:00: Break**
- 3:00–4:15: Strategies & Methods
- 4:15–4:45: Plan
- 4:45–5:00: Wrap-Up



Needs & Opportunities



How does networking help?



- Do I prioritize networking or focus on independent research?

“Networking is not about just connecting people. It’s about connecting people with people, people with ideas, and people with opportunities.”



Why do we need networking?

- Collaboration and knowledge exchange
 - New ideas and perspectives
 - Collaboration on projects
- Interdisciplinary innovation
 - Combine expertise from different disciplines
 - Ex: combining neurology and psychiatry with primary care
 - Ex: combining public health, biomedical engineering, and health economics



Why do we need networking?

- Support and motivation
 - Combating isolation
 - Share experiences

“Networking with **integrity** creates a greater willingness of all parties to be part of a human conduit to serve as energy and resource to one another”.



Why do we need networking?



“To be successful, you have to be able to **relate** to people; they have to be satisfied with your personality to do business with you and build a relationship based on mutual **trust**.”

Outcomes of networking



- Collaborative networks can:
 - Increase publication **output** and citation **impact**
 - Help researchers advance in academic **rank**
 - Expand visibility **leadership** opportunities
 - Increase grant success and early-career **funding**
 - Yield larger, multi-site awards
 - Improve career **satisfaction**
 - Sustain **productivity** beyond training

Discussion



Why do we need to build successful networking in primary care research?



What do you *need*?



1. Resources

- Grant development
- Funding connections
- Admin support

2. Design & Analysis

- Statistics
- Methods expertise
- Data management

3. Implementation

- PBRN
- Community partners
- Research coordinator

4. Dissemination

- Manuscript editing
- Presenters

5. Career advancement

6. Others?



What do you *have*?



“An essential part of networking is actually about **what you bring to the table**, not just what you want to get out of it. Contribution is a big part of networking success.”

What do you *have*?



1. Resources

- Patients
- Clinicians

2. Design & Analysis

- Clinically relevant questions
- Subject matter expertise

3. Implementation

- Clinical relationships

4. Dissemination

- Professional networks

5. Career advancement

- Mentors/mentees

6. Others?



Significance of networking



“Networking is an **investment** in your business. It takes time, and when done correctly, can yield great results for years to come.”

Discussion



- How will networking help you and your institution professionally?
- How can you contribute to a research relationship?



Opportunities for networking



- Intentional networking programs
- Conferences
- Personal interactions
- What else?
- How do you create opportunities?





Where to look for partners



- The office nextdoor
- Other specialties
- Organizations: STFM, AAFP, NAPCRG, etc.
- Colleges/Universities
- Former teachers
- Authors of research papers
- Opportunistic

Discussion



- What other networking opportunities have you found?



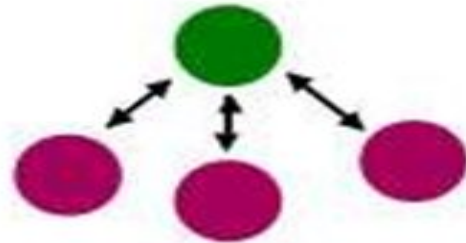


Break



Strategies & Methods

Two Main Types of Networking

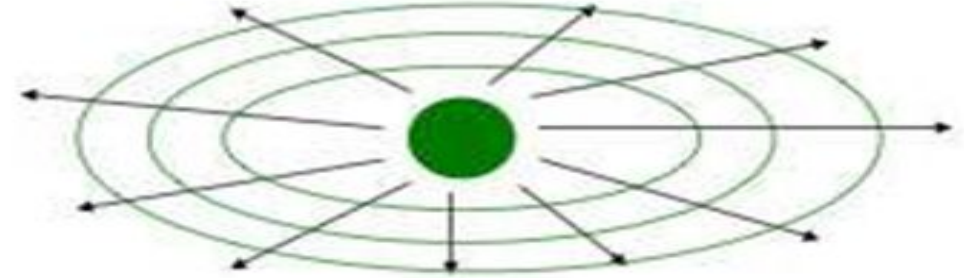


Vertical
(In-depth)

Useful for:

- Getting personal recommendations,
- Getting helped in a difficult situation: borrowing money, crashing on someone's couch,
- Finding mental support,
- Finding long-lasting business partnerships.

You need to pay active effort to build and maintain connections.



Horizontal
(In-breadth)

Useful for:

- Finding the right people and outsourcing your work,
- Finding information,
- Finding inspiration,
- Building impact with your work.

You can build connections semi-passively via social media activity and attending events.

Who to network with?



- Internal vs. external
- Specialty
- Mentor vs. mentee relationship
- Training background
 - Trainee
 - Clinician
 - PhD
 - Research assistant
 - Statistician
 - Etc.



Learners

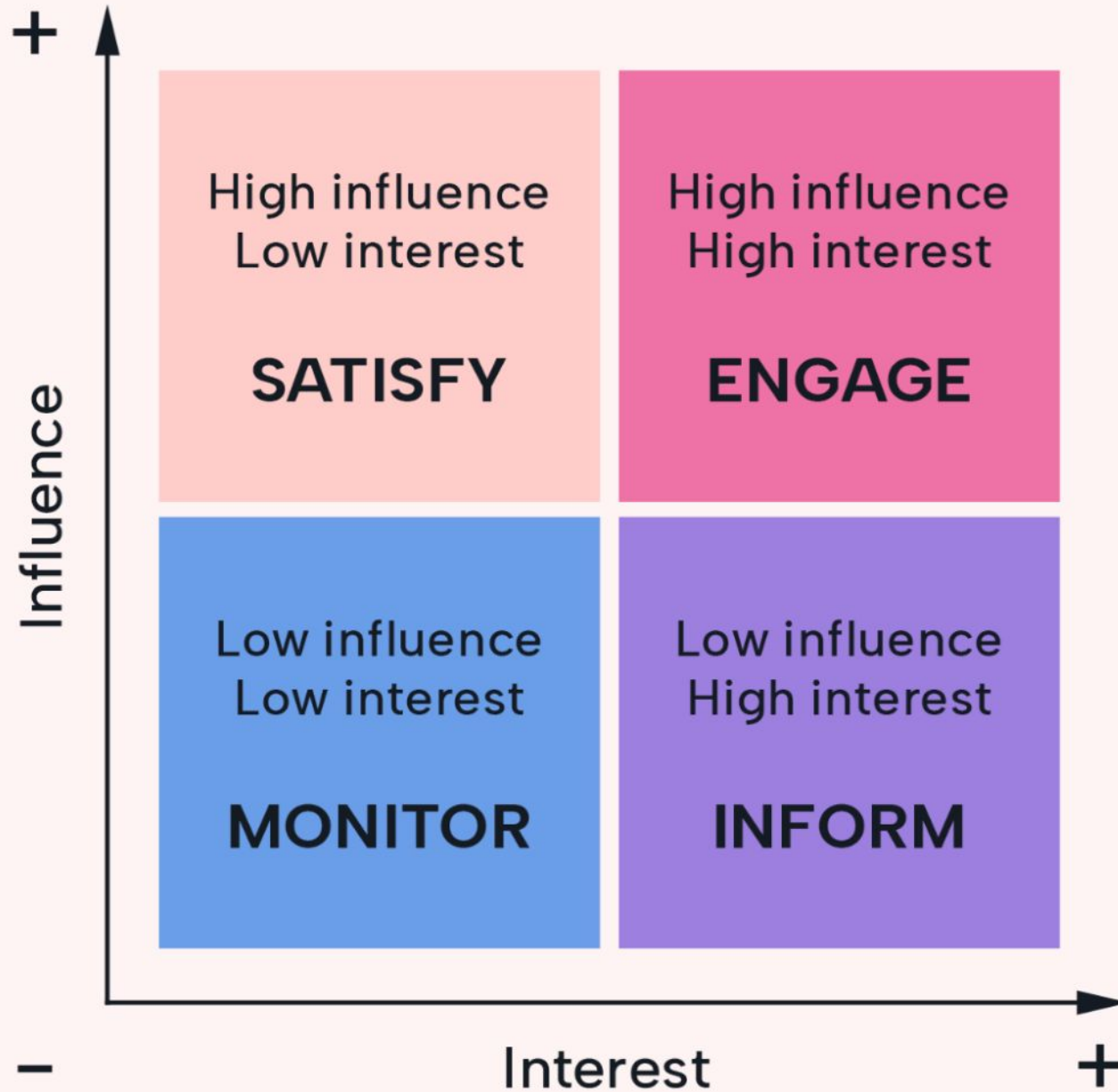


- Extra hands to help get the work done
- They benefit from your mentorship
- Often have their own requirements
- Usually do not require funding
- Bring fresh ideas
- Can become future collaborators

Internal stakeholders vs external stakeholders



Aspect	Internal Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
Relationship	Inside the organization	Outside the organization
Interests	Project objectives, resource allocation, team morale, and performance.	Project impact on community, regulatory compliance, and customer satisfaction.
Influence	Generally higher influence due to direct involvement.	Varied influence levels depending on the stakeholder.
Engagement Approach	Collaboration, consultation, and internal meetings.	Partnership, consultation, and engagement efforts with external parties.
Communication Methods	Internal meetings, department discussions, and internal channels.	Public meetings, workshops, regulatory submissions, surveys, and external communication channels.
Timing	Often ongoing and periodic	Varied timing based on throughout the project, specific engagement needs.





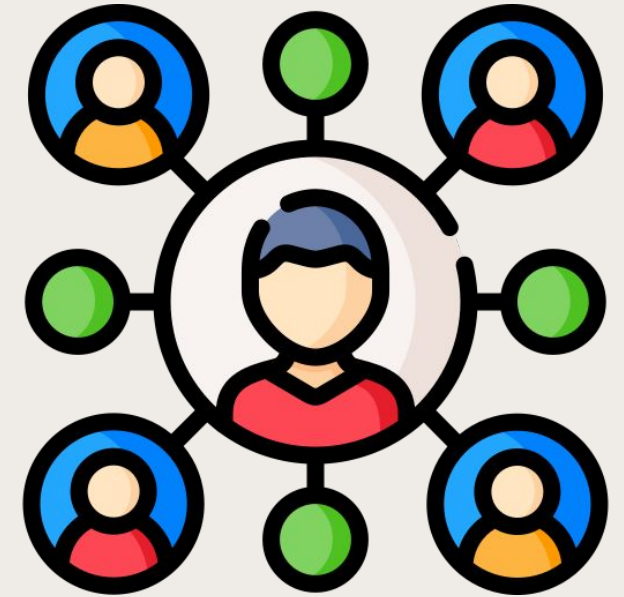
Tracking matrix



Projects	Phase	Co-investigators	Notes
Community health			
SDOH QI project	Execution	Michael, Lindsay, Rita	PDSA cycle 2 2026-01-01
Nutrition survey	Resubmitted	Lucille, Tobias	
BMI chart review	Submitted		Submitted 2025-10-19
Trainee engagement			
FM faculty Delphi study	Planning	Maeby (PI)	
Engagement scoping review	Development	Byron	
CERA engagement survey	Submitted IRB	Gob	
GME survey	Execution	George Michael	

Networking strategies and tools

- What is your project (Needs)?
- Who are the experts (topically and methodologically, access)?
 - Locally within your institution
 - Within your community
 - Other schools/organizations
 - Regional/National/International
- What do you bring to the table?



Example systems



- Healthcare Delivery Research Group
 - Family medicine personnel **meet monthly** to discuss projects derived from a clinician and patient database
 - **Practice-based research questions** with statistical support
 - Example projects:
 - Relationship of social determinants with quality metrics, utilization, and cost of care
 - Impact of Annual Wellness Visits on health care utilization
 - Patient and clinician survey of arsenic in well water
 - ED to Primary Care Today



Example systems



- Family Medicine Innovation Laboratory (iLab)
 - Opportunity to test innovations relevant to primary care in **collaboration with specialty colleagues**
 - 415,000 patients and 575 clinicians
 - Example projects:
 - Gastroenterology (AI Cirrhosis ECG algorithm)
 - Cardiology/Anumana (AIM - EAGLE implementation)
 - Pharmacy (AKI hospital follow up R01 grant application)
 - AI hip fracture prediction algorithm

Example systems

- Residency Research Network Of Texas (RRNeT)
 - Group of ten family medicine residency programs
 - Example projects:
 - Johnson-Esparza Y, Wood R, Cruz I, Palmer R. **Diabetes quality of life, Chemical Intolerance, and generational status in a Latino sample**: an RRNeT study. *J Diabetes Metab Disord*. 2024;23(1):977-985. Published 2024 Feb 14. doi:10.1007/s40200-023-01374-3
 - Buck K, Williamson M, Ogbeide S, Norberg B. **Family Physician Burnout and Resilience: A Cross-Sectional Analysis**. *Fam Med*. 2019;51(8):657-663. doi:10.22454/FamMed.2019.424025

Discussion



- What other networking systems have you seen?
 - How well have they worked?
 - How could you use/have you used them?
 - How could they be improved?



Communication



- Have a specific ask
- Beware of TLDR (right level of detail)
- Be clear upfront about timelines
- Have a backup plan if/when they don't respond

Tips & tricks



- Find out who is in charge of what
- When do you need to involve the “boss”?
- When you get a business card, immediately write on the card what you remember about the encounter and why you took it



Formalizing relationships



- Permission to collaborate
- Data sharing
- Memorandum of understanding (MOU)/memorandum of agreement (MOA)
- Contract

In summary



- Top three take-home points:
 1. Relationships
 2. Relationships
 3. Relationships



Plan

What are you going to do?



- In order to build your network?
 - Internally?
 - Externally?
- In order to assess your needs?
- In order to leverage your opportunities?
- In order to develop and implement a strategy?

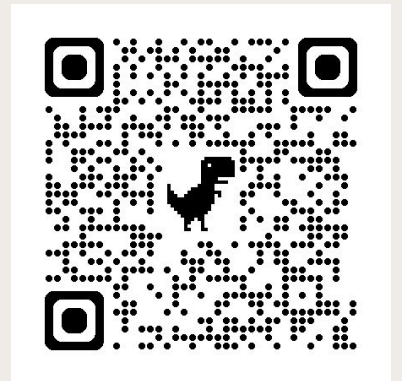


Building Research Capacity (BRC)



BRC provides opportunities for all departments and residency programs to engage family medicine leaders, researchers and each other.

- **BRC learning workshops** at national family medicine meetings. Learn core curricula, meet others with common interests, find resources you may be able to tap into.
- **BRC Consultation Service** for departments or programs to enhance scholarly activity, whether evaluation and improvement of educational and clinical programs or capacity to compete for external grant funding.
- **BRC Fellowship** to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, mentorship and peer support to develop and implement a strategic plan for research capacity building within their own departments, programs or institutions.





Survey





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Why do we need networking?



- Career development and professional growth
 - Mentorship
 - Professional recognition
 - Job opportunities

“To be successful, you have to be able to **relate** to people; they have to be satisfied with your personality to do business with you and build a relationship based on mutual **trust**.”

Why do we need networking?



- Access to resources (Funds and grants)
 - Research facilities, datasets
 - Fundings/grants
- Dissemination of research
 - Enhance credibility
 - Increase citations



Why partner?



- Clear vision
- Shared goals
- Mutual value
 - Career development
 - Mentorship
 - Advancement (promotion)



What do partners bring to a project?



- Funding
- Expertise
- Methods
- Creativity
- Help writing
- Dissemination/Presentation
- Scale
- Helpful hands