

Following the launch of the guide on [using Twitter in university research, teaching, and impact activities](#), we look at some ways that those new to Twitter can build up their followers.

Collective accounts for departments, research projects, and multi-author blogs are the easiest to keep active because there is a constant stream of news and information to tweet about. It is perfectly legitimate to repeat tweets in a rephrased form throughout the day, as not all of your followers will be paying attention all the time.

Individuals might want to decide how often they want to tweet and try to stick to that, once a day is the perfect starting point. The speedy and concise tweets will become a part of your routine and you'll realise that you've become a regular tweeter. Try to send out tweets at a time of day when most people may be looking out for them, usually 10-11am, or 2-3pm for UK readers, but bear in mind that international readers will access at different times.

Individual tweeters rarely repeat tweets, but some respond to comments in ways that help direct attention to the original tweet. Also learn lessons from which style of tweet works best for your audience. Which get retweeted or bring in most readers for your blog or research papers?

Updates from special events like seminars, conferences, research trips can be interesting for your followers. Departments, projects and professional bodies can use also conferences and events to tweet more often. Aim to provide those who could not come in person with details of what is going on, commentary or gossip, links to podcasts or webcasts of the conference, details of where to download papers, and so on.

Hashtags are also used as part of 'backchannel' communication around an event, be it a conference, a TV programme or a global event. An event audience can share comments, questions and links with each other while continuing to follow the formal presentation. Using the main search bar you could do a search for the relevant hashtag, then scroll through the results to see who else is attending and is worth trying to talk to at the end. Others will be flattered that you've seen their tweets, and will no doubt have tips to exchange.

Following other users is an important reciprocal means of growing your followers. If you consider following someone, look through their tweets first to make sure, because being a follower is a kind of endorsement. If you follow them, they are likely to follow you.

Promote your Twitter profile through your email signature, business card, blog posts and presentations, and encourage others to contact you this way if it is appropriate.

Being careful with Twitter

It is important for all those in the public eye to manage their online reputation. Academics and researchers still need to bear in mind the importance of not broadcasting views on Twitter that could radically backfire with their employers, colleagues, students and other university stakeholders. Remember, all tweets are public unless you change your settings.

It is best not to tweet if you're feeling ratty late at night and never when drunk either! If you do happen to tweet anything you regret, you can find the delete button if you run your mouse over the offending tweet.

For more tips on academic tweeting, download our short guide to [using Twitter in university research, teaching, and impact activities](#).

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