



How Twitter Continues to Help Your Science and Your Career



- February 04, 2021

Love it or loathe it, having a profile on the internet -- and more specifically on a social media platform -- is becoming an important aspect of many scientific careers. Back in 2018, we covered the importance of joining the ever-growing online scientific community (<http://www.simplyblood.org/2018/02/should-scientists-use-twitter-answer-is.html>). Fast forward three years, and this remains true, not only for those who are just beginning to establish their scientific careers, but also for those who remember a time before the internet or social media existed.

The platforms available for your social media presence are increasing and diverse, so navigating which might be useful in a professional setting can be overwhelming. The image below attempts to highlight how each of the major platforms can be used, but the remainder of this post will focus squarely on Twitter:

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR THE SCIENTIST EXPLAINED.

TWITTER: Check out this new study on #Westernblotting

RESEARCHGATE: I have a question on Western Blotting

LINKEDIN: My skills include Western blotting

FACEBOOK: I love Western blotting

INSTAGRAM: Here is a #vintage photo of my #Westernblot
#singleband #equalloading

PARLER: There is a conspiracy against Western blotting

All the early adopters of Twitter will clearly recognize the power of Twitter for connecting and engaging with fellow scientists, and receiving information on new articles and breakthroughs ahead of traditional

online outlets. There is even some more recent debate on whether Twitter can improve your citation metrics (see <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0003497520308602> and <https://www.chemistryworld.com/news/does-tweeting-about-research-attract-more-citations/4012066.article#/>

Nevertheless, if you were not an early adopter or remain skeptical about its place in science, Twitter usage among scientists is moving mainstream as per the Laws of diffusion of Innovation (See great explainer by Simon Sinek talk on Culture Transformation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9d0NqSztWA>). Indeed, I count myself as one of the “late majority,” having joined Twitter in late 2017.

So, as we begin 2021, perhaps now is the time for you to join us on Twitter. Starting can certainly feel overwhelming, but it will be worthwhile in the long run. Fortunately, you have come to the right place to help you begin your journey.

The first place I would start is the website “Twitter 4 Scientists” run by Daniel Quintana (@DSquintana). Quintana has written and published a fantastic and comprehensive free eBook updated in September 2020 on all things Twitter. Check it out here: <https://t4scientists.com/index.html>

A second place to start is a series of articles on Tweeting and Twitter on Nature's website. This includes top 10 tips on how to tweet (<https://www.natureindex.com/news-blog/ten-tips-tweeting-research-academic>), and a recent survey from June 2020 on how others use and benefit from Twitter (<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41592-020-0860-6>)

For my own Twitter journey, I reached out to the amazing @Eden_Robertson who provided me with the following 5 tips for managing a Twitter Account:

- Stay true to your brand (who are you disseminating to on Twitter, what do they want to know). I always advocate for a purely professional twitter account.
- Provide meaningful content (don't just write about an article and say “interesting findings” – it would better to share specifics. For example: “Interesting findings-- this study found >50% of...”
- Use images, videos, hashtags and simple language for “sound bites” of info. Imagine someone is casually scrolling – you want them to quickly notice your tweet and read it.
- Balance your ratio of about 10 following to 7-8 followers (at least).
- When tweeting your own publications, make sure to include the DOI. This can then be included in your Altmetrics score, which you can use to highlight the reach of your work.

You are now on your way with your new Twitter account established and you can begin by following your favourite labs, scientists and journals. This includes our very own Experimental Hematology community (@ISEHSociety), that should of course be at the top of your list!

By following @ISEHSociety, you will receive the updates on the latest manuscripts and reviews in our very own Experimental Hematology journal. You will also find out about exciting job opportunities in ISEH member laboratories; register for ISEH career development programs and ISEH Webinars; and when abstract submissions open for our annual ISEH Conference.

Most importantly, you will also become part of a thriving community of scientists from around the world interested in fundamental discovery science in hematology, immunology, stem cell research, cell and gene therapy.

Hope to see you all online very soon!

Charles de Bock

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Note – if you have your own tips and useful links, please feel free to post in the comments section.

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