



It's all in the Preparation

Once you get approval, you should prepare properly for the conference because you're going to need to demonstrate that you received the benefits that you promised to the person who's paying your way.

Here are some things you can do to prepare for the conference:

1. **Make a list** of people you'd like to meet at the conference and why you want to meet them. Don't be shy about approaching presenters and other "luminaries." They are more accessible than you might think, especially if you make appointments with them in advance.
2. About one to two weeks prior to the conference, **contact the people on your list**. Make a specific plan for a meal, coffee, or a time and place to get together.
3. One week prior to the meeting, **make a personal agenda for yourself** that includes the people you're meeting as well as which sessions you'll be attending. Be sure to include mobile numbers or any other contact information you may need for any last-minute changes to your schedule.
4. When you're at the event, **try to stick to your schedule** as much as possible and take notes during the educational sessions and during your private conversations. However, leave some "white space" on your calendar in case you encounter new people at the event with whom you'd like to spend some time.