

Benefits of the EAP Conference

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The Emerging Analytical Professionals (EAP) conference, which was this year held in Knutsford, allowed me to expand on both my current analytical techniques and knowledge, whilst also giving me the opportunity to explore future career aspirations and possibilities.

Upon arrival and having met none of the other professionals before, the staff welcomed me and made me feel at ease by setting aside time for people to have a 'meet and greet' session. The organisers made a real effort to encourage different groups to integrate, setting the whole conference at an ease and making it possible to ask questions without a fear of being judged. The resulting atmosphere was comfortable; people not only had their own work to talk about but were also interested in the work I'd undertaken during my dissertation. This actually made me think that although I have only recently graduated, there is potential for my work to make an impact on other people's careers and thoughts, and that it is not just limited to those who are currently in postgraduate research. This reinforced the EAP message that young scientists are exploring our current day knowledge and breaking boundaries, and by joining together to listen and ask more questions, we can learn and develop more.

Throughout my time at the EAP conference, I learnt that my recently completed university education barely touched on the reality of the career area I want to enter. I was not only educated on techniques I previously knew nothing about, but I was also taught implications, uses and future possibilities. My understanding was deepened and horizons broadened, opening me up to opportunities in careers that I wouldn't have otherwise considered. This allowed me to see the implications of techniques that I want to learn being used not only in Pharmaceuticals, but food, sports, finance and security – aspects of life many of us take for granted. The information provided explored a variety topics, both answering and formulating questions throughout the speech whilst simultaneously providing guidance in the speaker's expertise. Not only did I learn about the speaker's subject, but also gained an appreciation and chance to grasp what keeps an audience attentive and engaged.

Continuing Professional Developments (CPD) workshops gave the opportunities to interactively learn necessary skills, and to look where improvements can be made or processes adapted in day to day work. They also allowed individuals to look at ways to improve their skills, job opportunities, professional status and working techniques, allowing participants to relate their knowledge gained throughout the conference to each of their personal situations.

The overall experience encouraged me to expand my thinking horizons, in both my abilities and career objectives. I have gained professional development skills, and an ability to build rapport which gave me confidence. However, the most important thing that I learnt is that I too am able of not only learning from others, but also capable of becoming someone who teaches them. I enjoyed the conference so much that I am going back next year as a member of the committee.