

Surviving as a Woman in Science

The BioPark Hertfordshire, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 3AX - 2 November 2007

9:00 – 9:45

Registration

9:45 – 10:00

Introduction by the Chair: Dr Caroline Wheeler-Jones

10:00 – 10:30

The Roles Women Play

Dr Maureen Cooper, Former Director, Scottish Resource Centre for Women in SET, Napier University, Edinburgh
Many of us think that we progress up the career ladder on merit, that being good at the job and working hard will bring their reward. The continuing clustering of women in the lower grades in universities and companies and their absence from the boardrooms show that this can't be true. In fact research shows that promotion is around 80% image and selling yourself and at most 20% performance, has more to do with being politically aware than committed to the good of the organisation. This thought provoking talk will encourage you to look at the different roles in organisations in a new light and may help you to develop a personal career strategy.

10:30 – 11:00

Juggling Lessons for Women: Tips to get the most out of your career and your life.

Bob Ferguson, Confident Communications Ltd, UK

You know what it's like for women - career, partner, children all the things that have to be done, and then what about you! What about the things you want to do for yourself, There must be a time when you feel like your a frantic juggler - and how do you balance all these conflicting demands? In this entertaining session, Bob Ferguson will offer some tips to help you get control of your life, manage your career and feel good about the way you prioritise your time. Bob shows how the keys to control are goals, priorities and balance with simple techniques to help with all three.

11:00 – 11:10

Group photo

11:10 – 11:30

Mid-morning break

11:30 – 12:00

Regenerative Medicine - A personal Experience

Professor Dame Julia Polak, Imperial College, UK

Born in Argentina, qualified as a Physician in 1961 and settled in England 40 years ago. First I developed a method to identify the origin of a putative "hormone". The new endocrinology was born. This technique became a useful tool for localising chemicals in tissues and it is now employed by all pathology departments. Later I discovered these "hormones", to be present in every organ, hence the concept of the "diffuse neuroendocrine system" was proposed. A substance, originally extracted from car exhausts, was found in humans. I discovered it was present in nerves. The substance is the main component of VIAGRA. Twelve years ago, while collecting explanted lungs, from Magdi Yacoub's transplant programme, I was told I had a fatal lung disease that necessitated a heart and lung transplant. Afterwards turned my attention to the emerging field of Regenerative Medicine and set up an International Centre to attempt to grow organs in a dish, combining cells and specially designed materials. The Centre became renown for it productivity and originality. "Intensive Care", a novel by Friedman and a play "Change of Heart" (Hampstead Theatre) are fictional stories, based on what happened to me. Julie Olivier, the daughter of Lawrence Olivier played me. I am happy with what I have achieved, of my husband, my three children and soon a grand child! What else can I ask of life?

12:00 12:30

Effective communication strategies

Margaret Collins, The Royal Veterinary College, UK

Important elements in communication include "what you intended", "what you said", "what they heard" and "what they thought you meant"... Opportunities for mis-communication abound at each step of the process! Achieving effective communication requires you to be clear about your intention, to be congruent in delivering your message and to be flexible in your approach. We usually behave as if people are basically similar to ourselves and in that one assumption lies our downfall. Self-awareness and recognition of the preferred communication style of your listener increase the chances of getting your message across successfully. Come and learn some tips!

- 12:30 – 13:00 **Tour of the BioPark**
- 13:00 – 14:00 **Lunch**
- 14:00 - 14:30 **What does it take to get women back into SET work after a career break?**
Dr Nina Baker, South West Scotland Mentoring Scheme, Glasgow
- 14:30 – 15:00 **Daphne Jackson Fellowships for returners to SET careers**
Dr Katie Perry, The Daphne Jackson Trust, UK & *Dr Pia Ostergaard*, Daphne Jackson Fellow, St Georges Medical School, UK
The Daphne Jackson Trust arranges Fellowships throughout the UK, in university and industrial laboratories, for qualified scientists, engineers, technologists and IT specialists returning to work after a career. We enable returners to retrain and gain the latest knowledge and most up to date skills, mentoring them throughout their Fellowship, providing all the support, encouragement and help they require to enable them to re-establish their professional confidence and credibility thus enabling them to compete for employment on a level playing field with their peers. Fellowships are flexible, paid, and are usually part-time for two years. Fellows undertake a research project and retraining programme.
- 15:00 – 15: 30 **Afternoon Tea/Coffee**
- 15:30 – 16:00 **Fellowship opportunities for women in science**
Dr Sabine Best, UK Grants Officer, The Royal Society, UK
The Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowship scheme has been running since 1995 and has supported more than 150 scientists since. It aims to redress an imbalance that currently exists in the number of male and female scientists progressing to permanent academic positions in the UK. The presentation will describe this and other fellowship schemes of the Royal Society and give general advice on how to submit a successful fellowship application. An overview of other UK fellowship sources will be included
- 16:00 – 16:30 **Creating Cultures of Success for women in science**
Dr Maureen Cooper, Former Director, Scottish Resource Centre for Women in SET, Napier University, Edinburgh
This talk describes 'institutional' and 'attitudinal' barriers to women's career progression in engineering. Based on findings of an international research project the emphasis will be on positive initiatives for women students, faculty, professional women engineers and employers to overcome these barriers and to recruit and retain talented women engineers. The relevance to women and employers in other disciplines will be highlighted.
- 16: 30 – 16:35 **Chairman's summing up and close**