How to keep up within your field:

Strategies for continuous learning and to pick up new skills

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In this talk I will mention products and services that can be used to help keeping up with a topic. These products and services mentioned are used as examples for illustrative purposes. In the interest of time for this webinar, the list of tools is not comprehensive.
The problem

When we are in school or attending some formal education, we rely on our instructors to select, organize and curate the materials necessary to learn about a topic. We are also spending the majority of our time to learn and study.

When we start working, it is much harder to keep up with our field because we are not dedicated 100% to it, and we do not take classes all the time.
What does it mean to *keep up*?

I know I am interested in a topic, and I want to know the latest research on it.

I want to know the new topics/trends in my field.
Push vs. Pull information flow

The sender is in control on what information you receive

Examples of push communications:
- Email subscription (e.g., journal table of contents)
- Blog alert

You are in control on what information to receive

Examples of pull communications:
- Searching for a particular topic
- Deciding whom to follow on Twitter

https://www.business2community.com/strategy/push-vs-pull-balance-your-information-flows-0b6b186
Push hand Ceitry ID: 602742621
Pull names Scool ID: 496076555
Search vs. Browse

You need to initiate a search for information based on some keywords

When searching, you are looking for specific answers/results

You browse a topic without knowing exactly what information might be of interest to you

When browsing, you are looking for multiple answers, new ideas, and inspiration

https://uxdesign.cc/ux-cheat-sheet-searching-vs-browsing-221de84c51ed
Search Getty ID 1141748040
Wine Getty ID 1259846677
Self learning mindset

Given you cannot rely on instructors to organize and teach the material, it is up to you to set up a self-learning journey that will keep your knowledge up to date and also expand on new skills.
Different ways to keep up

Professional associations
People, networking
Books & Journals
Online content
Social media
Many forms of education
Training
Professional Associations

Conferences
Workshops
Short courses

Webinars
Mailing list(s)

Certifications

Journals & Magazines

- Search for "List of professional [keyword] associations "Country"

- Join a local chapter, special interest group of a professional association

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Personal example: move from US to UK

What professional associations should I join in the UK?

Market Research Society (MRS)
Royal Statistical Society (RSS)
Section on Social Statistics
Association for Survey Computing (ASC)
ESOVAR
European Survey Research Association (ESRA)

https://www.rss.org.uk/getmedia/a507c586c-7d00-4cb6-a74e-018829a619c9/About-barnet-ca.jpg.aspx?width=600他认为=599’&e=jpg
https://www.research-ve.com/index.jpg?YCG_HIND3=INDEX202’
People / Networking

Mentors

Colleagues

Friends

Communities

(e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn groups, Reddit, Stack Overflow)

Google Cloud

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Books and journals

Books

List of publishers

Library search

Online bookstore search
(p.e. Amazon > Social Science Methodology
> Sort by Publication Date)

Journals

Online First, Early View

How do I create a list of journals relevant to the topics I care about?

Getty ID 1220413225
Finding and accessing journal articles and books

Free

Google Scholar
Microsoft academic
Semantics Scholar
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)
Academia.edu
ResearchGate

Subscription based (most academic libraries have a subscription to these)

Web of Science (includes Social Science Citation Index)
Scopus (Elsevier)
EBSCO Information Services

Consider joining your academic institution alumni association; it may come with library access

https://paperpile.com/g/academic-search-engines/
Gally ID 122688/2/6
Online content

Blogs
White papers
Industry magazines
Newsletters
Podcasts
Videos
StackOverflow
Open source code repositories (e.g. Github, RStudio Connect...)

* Create a list of keywords and refine it
* Use search features like “video search” on search engines
Social media & Social news

LinkedIn
Twitter
Reddit
Academia.edu
ResearchGate

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More formal education

Summer Winter schools

New degree
Training

Within company
(most likely at larger companies)

- Summit
- Internal conferences
- Book/paper reading club
- Code review
- Mentoring

External trainings

- MOOCs
- LinkedIn Learning
- Coursera
- Ted ed
- Wiversity
- iMinds
- Certifications (e.g. software)

Getty ID 545783936
e-prints are generally not peer reviewed. Examples are the databases arXiv.org, ssrn, advance, MetaArXiv, Socarxiv.
Making a plan

Search and browse strategies

Get a quick look at new content

Make a mind map

Tools to organize resources

Write up what you learn & (re)search
Search and browse strategies

Search works well with specific keywords

Search is getting better and better in handling natural language

Browse works well within a limited context
(e.g., browse a conference program or a book publisher series)
Search strategies

✓ Make a list of keywords starting from generic to more specific
✓ Zero in on the more specific keywords
✓ Use Google Trends to assess interest over time
✓ Organize the material on that topic
✓ Once you find a paper look for its citations (backward in time)
✓ Do a reverse citation search (forward in time)

Example with survey gamification


Look for “Articles citing this one” on the Sage page:
Found 2 more recent references related to the topic

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Browse strategies

Think like a librarian

Each book is classified as a series of subject and subtopic until a final topic number or name has been assigned to it.

Find the subject you are looking for, and then browse within that subject.

Example with the publisher Wiley

Series in Survey Research Methods & Sampling

Sort the list by publication date: Newest:

Results:

- Register-based Statistics: Registers and the National Statistical System, 3rd Ed.
- Item Response Theory
- Handbook of Web Surveys, 2nd Ed.
- Administrative Records for Survey Methodology
- Advances in Longitudinal Survey Methodology
- Big Data Meets Survey Science: A Collection of Innovative Methods
Get alerted of new content

Researcher app
Google scholar alerts
Google alerts
Google news (follow a topic)
Apple News (follow a topic)
Social media monitoring software
(many require a paid subscription)

Getty ID 1288723807
Make a mind map

Topic
Sub-topics
People
Sources
Tools to organize resources

Reference management software

- EndNote
- Flowcota
- Mendeley
- Paperpile
- Re:Works
- Zotero
- ...
Write up what you learn & (possibly) teach

Literature review

Point of View

One pager

Email

Blog post

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Bigger picture topics

Quality of information

Fear of Missing Out (OMO)

Information overload
Quality of information: CRAAP Test

C - Currency - Is the information in this source current, or has it become outdated?

R - Relevance - Is the information relevant to your research question or topic? And is this kind of source appropriate for your use?

A - Authority - Who's the author and what are their qualifications? How do they know what they're telling you is accurate?

A - Accuracy - Are the claims supported by evidence, and are sources cited? Are there editors or peer reviewers? Do any other sources support or verify the information?

P - Purpose - Why is this information out there? Does it appear impartial or biased? Are the authors or the publisher trying to present facts or to convince you of something?

https://guides.library.brandeis.edu/evaluatinginfo
https://libguides.westsoundacademy.org/eb/craap-test
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)

Do not stress if you cannot follow everything all the time. Time will tell you what is important from what is relevant.
Information overload

Narrow down your search keywords after you found the most relevant and specific ones.

Talk to mentor/expert who can help you on what to focus and what is more important leaving everything else out.

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Fully worked examples

- New research on the quality of Agree-Disagree questions
- In 3 emerging topics in survey research methods
- Visualise survey data
New research on the quality of Agree-Disagree questions

1. Start by reading 2-3 papers on AD questions by finding them on Google Scholar and/or MS Academic
2. AD questions are compared to Item Specific (IS) questions
3. Go back to Google Scholar and MS Academic and refine the search using Agree Disagree and Item Specific questions as keywords
4. Sort the results or narrow the range to the most recent years

4. Discover the authors who published recently on it: Jan Karem Höhne, Jennifer Dykema and Nora Cate Schaefer
5. Check the main author's personal web pages for new research
6. Check recent conference programs for new studies using the same keywords
7. Find a recent literature review of AD vs IS questions by Dykema et al.

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Emerging topics in survey research methods

✓ Browse the AAPOR & ESRA 2021 conference programs for inspiration
✓ AAPOR 2021 Examples of emerging topics:
  • Live Video Survey Interviews when In Person Data Collection is Impossible: Challenges for Recruitment and Participation
  • Response Patterns Before and During a Pandemic

✓ ESRA 2021 Examples of emerging topics:
  • New Communication Channels In Web-based Surveys
  • Video interviewing for social surveys: before, during and beyond the pandemic

For both conferences look at the short courses as a way to follow emerging new skills

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Visualize survey data, a search journey: Google deep dive

1. Search string: “Visualize survey data” or Google
2. Found many blog posts
3. Evaluating quality & partisanship
4. Found list of software visualizing data
5. Refining search string by typing: “Principles to visualize survey data”
7. Found blog page: “Data visualization: basic principles” by Peter Alchous, science journalist

7. On the same blog there is a page linking other data visualization blogs as well
8. Going back to the search results page
9. Notice that the keyword survey does not really show up in the first 10 results
10. At page 3 of the search results, find the page: “12 Great Books About Data Visualization” on the Tableau blog
11. Start writing down related keywords and concepts:
   a. Choose the right chart type
   b. Visual cues & accuracy
   c. Dashboard
   d. Infographics
   e. Visualization software
   f. ...
Visualize survey data, a search journey:
Wiley & Computer Graphic Forum deep dive

1. Search using: “Visualize survey data” on onlinelibrary.wiley.com
2. Scrolling down I find this reference: “Survey of Surveys (SoS): Mapping the Landscape of Survey Papers in Information Visualization”
3. Paper not available as open access: Googling the paper title and found the PDF on ResearchGate
5. As before, no link to full text. Found the PDF on the author’s university page
6. Realized these two relevant papers come from the same journal: Computer Graphic Forum
7. The journal is published by the European Association for Computer Graphics
8. Found annual conference and local chapters
9. Browse 2021 conference and found a relevant paper: “Project in Visualization and Data Analysis: Experiences in Designing and Coordinating the Course”
10. Found interesting concepts and references to read
References

Books:

Blogs:
Searchresearch [Blog]. News series: "How to Find... anything."

Articles

Videos
Summer schools in survey methods and survey statistics

University of Michigan Summer Institute in Survey Research techniques site

ICPSR Summer Program site

European Survey Research Association page on European summer schools

By now (end of August) most/some links will be outdated, so check back on the same institutions for next year summer schools

P.S. there are also winter schools
Exercises

- Perform the same search we did on onlinelibrary.wiley.com: “Visualize survey data” this time on the Sage publisher website https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/narrow
- Find a list of professional associations in a field of your interest
- Pick a topic of interest and start creating a mind map
- Browse the table of content of a recent conference you attended (or future) to find some topics you might be interested in
- Find a LinkedIn or Facebook group on a topic of your interest