

Lei and Science *Lei & Scienza*

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talk with

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You are professor of Applied Chemistry at the University of Mazandaran, Iran and you are collaborating with Ca' Foscari. Could you tell us about your scientific path?

I started my academic study in Industrial Chemistry at University of Tehran, Iran. After my bachelor and master study at the same University, I started a postgraduate research activity at University of Tehran and, during my research period, I obtained an international research fellowship as a visiting researcher in Italy for six months. In 2016, I came to Italy and started my research activity at CATMAT, as a visiting researcher. After six months, when I returned to Iran, the valuable achievements during my research at CATMAT constituted the very motivation behind my application for pursuing and gaining more experiences in this group. Therefore, I wrote a Marie Skłodowska-Curie project proposal as an individual researcher under the supervision of Professor Michela Signoretto; my proposal has been awarded the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Seal of Excellence. In 2018, I returned to Italy and started my new research as a PhD student at CATMAT. Their strong research environment was the important factor to give me a great opportunity for close communication and challenge

myself through critical thinking and innovativeness. During my PhD, I carried out a three-month research activity at Group of Industrial Chemistry and Reaction Engineering, Åbo Akademi University of Turku, Finland, under the supervision of Prof. Dmitry Murzin. Indeed, the research that I performed during my PhD received the prestigious Mauro Graziani Award for the best research in the field of catalysts for energy and environment by GIC-SCI. After PhD, I started postdoctoral research at CATMAT following several academic and industrial projects. Meanwhile, I applied for a job position as an assistant professor in my country and, after several steps of interview among many participants, I obtained the job. At the moment, I am working as an assistant professor of Industrial Chemistry at the University of Mazandaran, while I am still keeping my collaboration with Ca' Foscari.

What was the focus of your research activity?

My research has been focused on catalytic science and gas/liquid phase reactions respecting the environment and circular economy. I am skilled in formulation, characterisation, and application of various micro-mesoporous and acid/base materials such as zeolite, oxides, activated carbons, composites and hybrids. In addition, I am experienced in different classes of biomass and biomass wastes and their valorisation to valuable chemicals, fuels, energy, and smart materials. More recently, I have been involved in an INEST-PN-NR project focusing on optimization of sustainable and innovative materials for photocatalysis.

Why did you choose Italy for your abroad studies?

First, I have been interested in Italian culture, people, nature, history, and society since my childhood. I was motivated to live a period of my life in Italy and feel whatever was in my dream from my childhood. Second, the high scientific level in Italy

motivated me to have this experience in academic community.

What will remain of your experience in Italy?

Let's say Italy is my second home. I cannot describe my huge and worthwhile achievements in Italy in some sentences. The people around me in Italy, both at university – especially CATMAT – and outside university, have been always as my family and supported me in all aspects of my life. I have a lot of special experiences beyond academic life thanks to my colleagues at CATMAT. For instance, several times I have been invited by my venetian colleagues for boat tours around Venice lagoon. It was very special for me to be hosted by them, enjoy the view of the amazing Venice from a boat and, learn the history of Venice from Venetians. Moreover, I was invited by my friends from outside university to their hometown (for example in Sicily) and I experienced the Italian culture, food, history, and people from different sides of Italy. Indeed, the warm hospitality of people in this beautiful country will always remain with me.

Why did you choose a career in science? Did your family support your choice?

I became interested in Chemistry during high school because of an amazing chemistry teacher. Fortunately, my family have always supported me to select and explore whatever I liked and motivated me to pursue my interests. I passed the difficult national entrance exam to university, and I was accepted in one of the top-ranking universities of Iran (University of Tehran). So, I moved from my hometown (Noor), which is in the north of Iran, to Tehran. During my academic life, I lived in the residence or rented a house with my friends from different parts of Iran. Most of my friends have been scientists and we still have many collaborations together among different universities.

Did you have any trouble relating with your European colleagues?

My both personal and professional relations with my European colleagues have always been friendly. At CATMAT, I am working in a group of men and mainly women that all are very strong, creative, wise in science, and friendly in both scientific and personal relations. At university, every scientific challenge has been solved in the group and we have been free to discuss and explore the topics together. Moreover, in my social life, whenever I needed a help or support, my colleagues and professor were there for me. I also had a similar experience when I was in Finland, and I had colleagues from different European countries who were very nice and friendly with me. Moreover, at CATMAT, we often have had the occasions to share our cultures and foods together. For instance, every year at Christmas time we have a dinner together in my professor house. For dinner, I always prepare some typical Iranian food for my colleagues and now they are familiar with many Iranian foods. In fact, we are as a team or a family both inside and outside university.

Speaking of Chemistry, it is said that chemists are supposed to be good cooks! Can you share with us the recipe for your favourite Iranian dish?

Iranian cuisine is amazing and very particular. Of course, I am professional in cooking delicious Iranian foods. Let me just say the name of some Iranian foods which I have cooked for my Italian friends, and they really liked it, such as: *Fesenjoon* made of walnuts, meat, pomegranate sauce, *Zereshk polo* made of rice, barberry, and saffron, *Sabzi polo ba mahi* made of rice, herbs, fish, and *Kashke bademjan* made of eggplant, dry whey, walnuts and garlic. We normally prepare this sort of traditional foods in family gatherings and special festivities such as Persian new year (Nowruz) on March 21st.

Innovative Business Tools *Strumenti innovativi per il mondo del lavoro*

by Miriam Bertoli

Digital & Content Marketing Strategist, Consultant & Trainer

Social media and the world of work: learn how to improve your LinkedIn profile using artificial intelligence & more

Social networks have been getting closer and closer to business over the years:

- They have given rise to new jobs such as content creator and social media manager;
- They are powerful platforms for professional communities; for example, many Facebook groups were established to extend the experience of corporate training courses;
- They are the place where new job opportunities are discovered through advertisements or informal word-of-mouth from former classmates or colleagues;
- They are digital touchpoints allowing individuals to make themselves known, build professional credibility, and form valuable relationships, if strategically managed.

Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, or LinkedIn can be highly relevant, depending on industries and professions; in particular, LinkedIn covers a wide range of them by focusing on the work and education realms. Therefore, if we talk about social networks for business, LinkedIn is *the* platform to engage with, understand, and dedicate to.

The first step is to have a complete and up-to-date personal profile. Let's take a look at some best practices for an effective LinkedIn profile:

- Pay attention to the visual aspect, including the profile and background pictures. In just a few seconds, they communicate who we

are and create the first impression that will remain a significant point in subsequent interactions. An effective profile picture encourages recruiters to contact you for an interview or collaboration proposal. The profile picture should be a recent portrait. The quality should be high (avoid blurry photos). The background and clothing are part of the communication and you should choose them after considering the level of formality you want to convey.

- The Headline is the text that appears immediately below the name and surname. Many people only write their professional role or field of study; however, it is a good practice to leverage the 220 characters provided by LinkedIn to highlight your values, notable achievements, specializations, and future goals. As an example, I share the Summary from my LinkedIn profile: *Digital & Content Marketing Strategist | Lecturer and Consultant | Speaker and Moderator | Agile Marketing Certified | I guide businesses in building their marketing strategy, placing content at the center.* This highly visible text represents the crucial core of professional identity on LinkedIn along with the profile picture.
- The main sections – About, Experience, Education, Publications, and so on – should be completed, regularly updated, and enriched. Among the basic recommendations, I always suggest checking the privacy settings that regulate, for example, who can see the profile information, request a professional connection, view connections in our network, and much more.

A good, complete, and up-to-date profile is the first step to make LinkedIn an ally in professional relationships. The next step to make the most out of it is to publish content. A text post, or even better photos and videos, amplify our presence on the platform, reach-

ing the LinkedIn feeds of people in our network and beyond. The best practices to follow in creating content that works and liked by the LinkedIn algorithm may be complex, but I will sum them up with a few key concepts: relevance to your target audience, consistency in publishing (yes, quantity matters, and one post per week is really the minimum), adherence to the 'grammar' of LinkedIn, such as using hashtags and persuasive writing techniques.

Recently, ChatGPT and other generative AI systems have also started to be used to improve profiles and create content for LinkedIn.

For instance, to create a Headline for my profile, I can provide ChatGPT with this prompt (instructions):

"I am a [role, profession] and I want to improve my LinkedIn profile. My audience consists of [examples of target contacts, to whom I am addressing]. Write 10 different Headline proposals for my LinkedIn profile based on these important pieces of information: [List the highlights of your CV, achievements, values, experiences] Keep in mind that the Headline should be short and impactful, with a maximum limit of 220 characters. Consider these 3 Headlines as good examples: [copy and paste here the texts of 3 well-written headlines obtained from LinkedIn]"

Similarly, I can ask ChatGPT to write a post for LinkedIn based on a press release or to update the description text of a professional experience by adding new accomplishments; by the way, you should review and improve contents before publishing.

These are just some examples of use; good results can be achieved through engaging in a conversational mode with ChatGPT and other generative AI systems. Possi-

bilities are truly infinite, and tools like ChatGPT are excellent to support you in making LinkedIn an ally in the world of work.