

Academia - engage or disengage ?

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Is it worth engaging with academia? This week I sent off a denial of a request for an interview to a PhD candidate reviewing companies in our space. They only asked for half an hour of my time, (but these calls usually go at least an hour). My reasoning was three-fold: 1: I don't think I've ever been sent a copy of the results of the research.

2: It will be presented at a conference which because of its paper submission process will only have academic presenters and almost only academic attendees.

3: Its going to be published behind an academic paywall, only visible to academics.

I looked at the last year's conference, and none of the presentations were cutting edge, there were ideas presented as new that I personally new were being done by multiple practitioners, and studies of practitioners by academics, but none of the leading edge people in the field.

I've given feedback several times, on how to improve the process, and even sat on a program committee once (only once, given the pressure to include rubbish in the program) but academics need the publishing brownie points so there is no real interest in actually having interesting leading edge material at conferences. (By the way, I'm not talking about *my* material, I just want conferences to go to where I learn something from the other leading edge people).

So what do we do - continue to engage with a broken academic process, or disengage and remove the appearance of credibility?

I'm not sure - we all lose when academic knowledge and practitioner knowledge circulate in two completely separate communities, but academia seems to have no interest in actually being state of the art any more.