

TWITTER 101:

An Introduction for the AASM Member



Welcome to
Twitter

See what's happening in the world
right now

Sign up

Log in

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This guide is the first installment of a free, introductory series about Twitter from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM).

The AASM improves sleep health and promotes high quality, patient-centered care through advocacy, education, strategic research, and practice standards.

What is Twitter?

Twitter is a social networking site where businesses, individuals, doctors, patients – you name it – share fast facts, breaking news, blog posts, photos and videos, thoughts and ideas, and the like.

Why is it important?

Twitter is a great online tool to help you connect with your patients, other medical professionals, and colleagues in the field of sleep medicine all across the globe. Using Twitter, individuals and groups are able to stay informed on recent happenings throughout the world and can circulate information to other colleagues or patients.

As a medical professional, Twitter is a convenient way to stay engaged with your patients and colleagues. It gives you an opportunity to connect with people you might never have been able to connect with before on both a personal and professional level. It also gives you a chance to listen to what others have to say to you or about the field of sleep.



Setup

First things first, you will want to go to [Twitter.com/signup](https://twitter.com/signup). Input your information, click Sign Up and follow any additional prompts.

Create Your Account

When creating your Twitter account, you will be required to enter your full name, email address, and a password to access your account. You will also be asked to select a username. Be sure to choose something that will make it easy for others to find you and identify who you are. We suggest using something with your title, first, and last name, because this is how the public will identify you (or your business). Keep in mind, your full name will still appear on your profile, above your username.

Complete Your Profile

Next, you will want to complete your profile. Twitter will prompt you to add a profile picture and set up your bio, as well as add your birthday and location information, to make it easier for others to find you. You will want to make sure your photo and bio are an accurate description of who you are, because this helps build trust and makes others more comfortable interacting with you. You can always update your information by editing your profile.

1. Username
2. Profile Photo

3. Bio
4. Header Image

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When creating a personal account, we would suggest a username such as @DrJaneDoe or @JaneDoeMD.



Terminology

Already know the Twitter lingo? Feel free to skip this part! Otherwise, read on to learn about some common Twitter terms you should know before exploring your home page.



The Basics

1. Twitter Handle – your username. This is how you’re identified on Twitter and is always preceded immediately by the @ symbol. This is how others include you in a tweet or find you on Twitter.

2. Tweet – a 140-character message that can include text, links, videos, or images, so long as they do not exceed the 140 character count.

3. Reply – a response to another person’s tweet. To reply to a tweet, select the  button.

4. Retweet (RT) – when you share someone else’s tweet with the people who follow you. To retweet, select the  button.

5. Like – a reaction to a tweet that tells the user who tweeted it you like it. To like a tweet, select the  button.

More Terms to Know

Bio – a place on your profile to let others know who you are in 160 characters or less.

Direct Message (DM) – a private message between two users.

Follow – Connecting with someone on Twitter. When you want to see a person’s updates regularly, you follow them; when someone wants to see your updates regularly, they follow you.

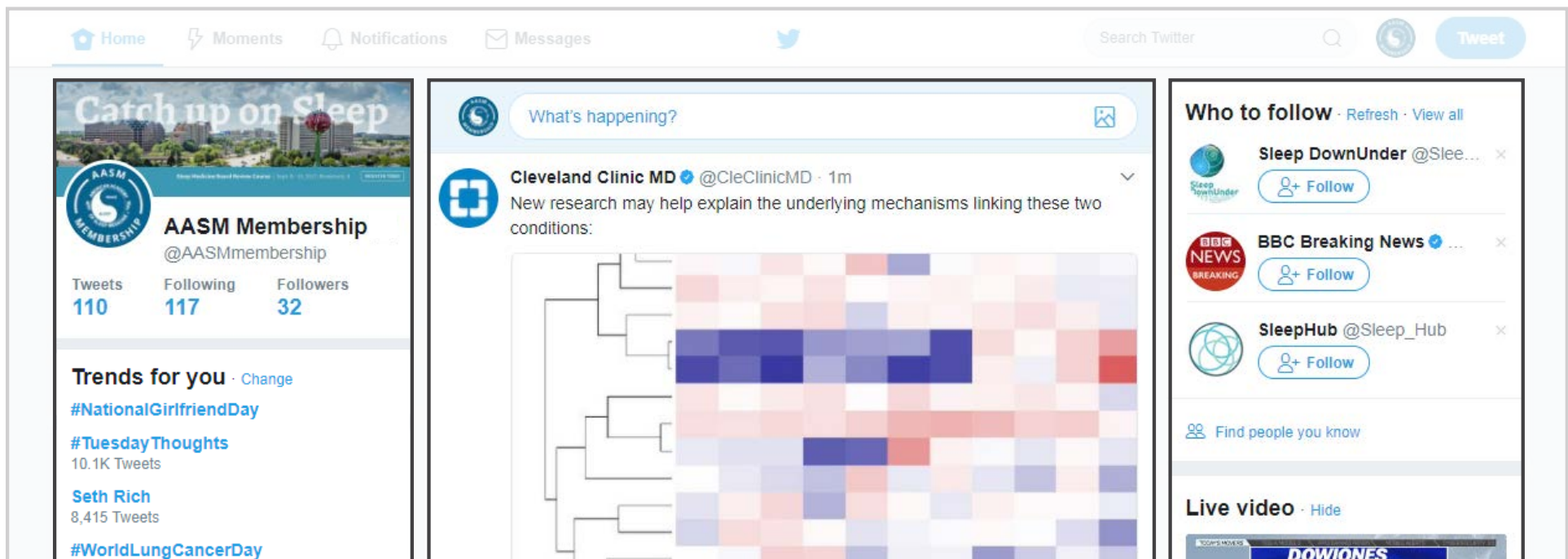
Hashtag (#) – a discovery tool that lets you find tweets based on certain topics. For example, if you’re looking for tweets related to sleep, you would search #sleep.

Mention – Bringing a tweet to another user’s attention by including their Twitter handle in your message.

Newsfeed – a stream of tweets on your home page from users you follow.

Tour

Now that you know the lingo, let's explore your home page and get familiar with its features.



Home Page: Left

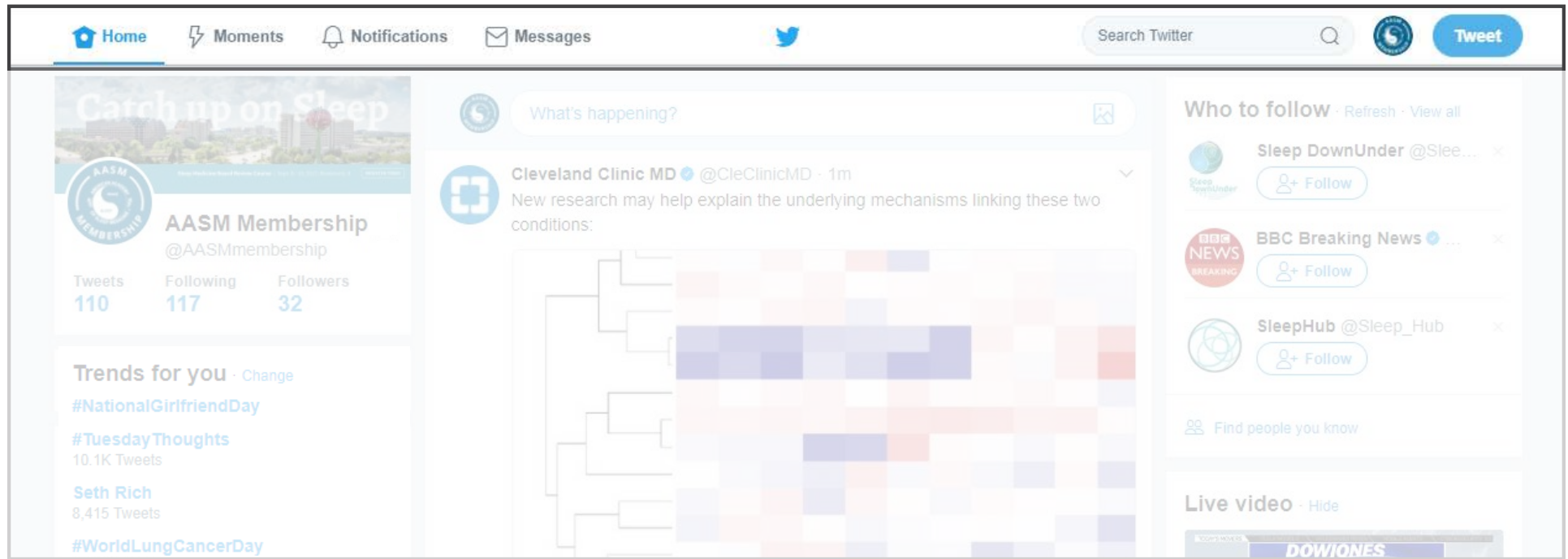
On the **left** is your profile picture, header image, and stats about your account. You'll also see trending topics based off of your Twitter lifestyle.

Home Page: Middle

The **middle** section is your newsfeed that livestreams tweets from the accounts you follow. You can create your own tweet at the top, or retweet/reply to a tweet in your newsfeed.

Home Page: Right

If you are looking for additional suggestions of accounts to follow, you will find those on the **right** hand side of the page.



Home Page: Top

Also displayed at the **top** of the page is a menu bar where you can view your home page, moments, notifications, and messages. If someone follows you, mentions you in a tweet, or reacts to one of your tweets, you will receive a notification. If someone sends you a direct message, those will be in the messages. You also have the option to search for people, businesses, or topics in the search bar. To the right of the search bar, you will find your profile picture. Clicking that will give you the option to view your profile, update your settings and privacy, log out, and more.

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Any time someone follows, tweets, or retweets you, their followers see this, which increases the likelihood that you get new followers!

Engage

Once your profile is set up and you've familiarized yourself with how to use your home page, it's time to start engaging with the Twitter community! To get started, you should follow other Twitter users. Then you can create your own tweets that mention, reply to, retweet or direct message other Twitter users! You can also post your own content that other users can interact with.

Following Others

It's time to start following the right accounts! Who you follow will dictate what information you see in your newsfeed. We suggest following friends and people/companies you know first.

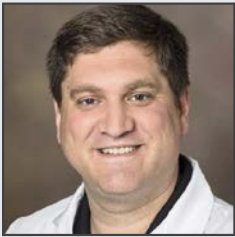
Don't know who to follow? If you didn't already add your interests when creating your account, now would be a good time to do so. Adding your interests will help Twitter better understand you. The better it understands you, the better suggestions it will be able to make regarding who you should follow. These suggestions can be found in the "who to follow" column on your home page and will help you make relevant and meaningful connections.

This is a great way to start finding other people and businesses that suit your interests.

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Keep in mind, no follow is permanent. You can choose to unfollow an account by going to their home page and choosing the unfollow button.

To get you started, here are some of the AASM's most active Twitter users for you to follow. Check out their accounts for additional ideas on people to follow.



Dr. Michael Grandner

@michaelgrandner



Brandon Peters, MD

@BrandonPetersMD



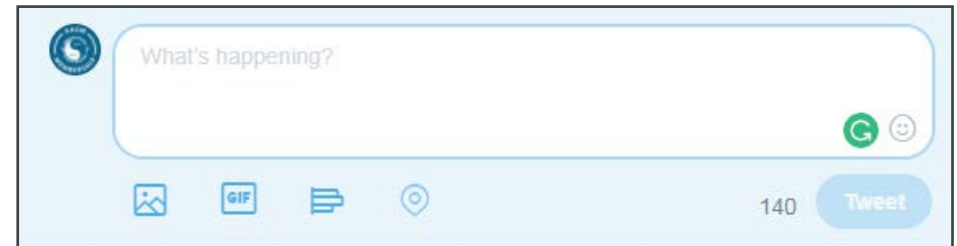
Dr. Nate Watson

@SleepDocWatson

Create Your Own Tweet

To **create** your own tweet, click on the Home button and the top box in your newsfeed is where you can create your own message. Tweets can include images, links, polls, locations, videos, and the like. Remember, you are limited to 140-characters, so be sure to keep your message clear and concise!

If you would like to add an image, gif, poll, or location to your tweet, use the icons below the text box.



Delete Your Own Tweet

To **delete** a tweet you created, select the dropdown arrow in the upper right-hand corner of the tweet and select "delete tweet".



Mention Another Account

To **mention** a specific person or business in your tweet, you will need to use their Twitter handle. Remember, this is the @ symbol followed by their username(s). For example, if you want to include the AASM membership Twitter in your message, you would mention them by typing @AASMmembership. You can include more than one account in your messaging.

This is a great way to interact with another account or give credit to someone who may be included in the message you are posting.

Reply

A **reply** is a response to someone else's tweet. To reply, click the conversation bubble icon and type in your message. When two people reply to each other, only accounts that follow those conversing will see the replies in their timeline. If someone replies to one of your tweets, you will receive a notification in your Notifications tab.

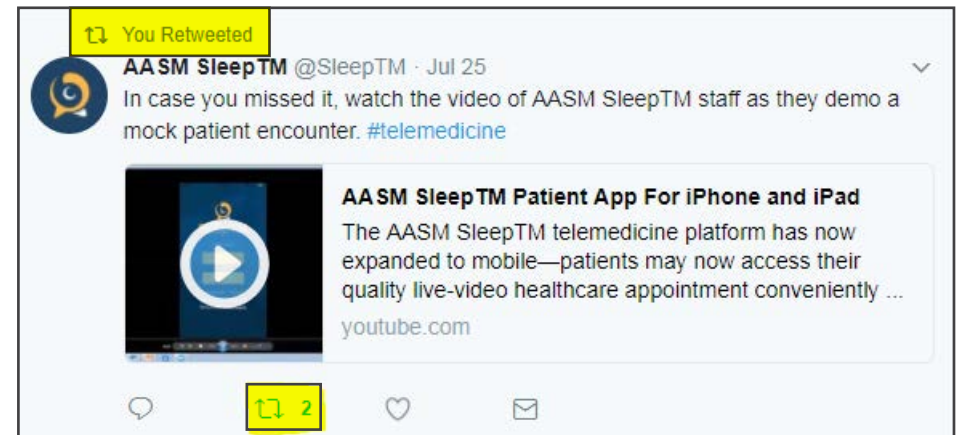
This is a great way to engage with your patients, other colleagues, or those within the sleep community.



Retweet

You can also choose to share a message on your page by **retweeting** someone else's. To retweet a message, simply click the icon with the two arrows. You will be given the option to share it as is, or to add a message with the post you are sharing.

This is a great way to support your followers or spread a message among other accounts.



Direct Message

Another way to communicate on Twitter is through a **direct message**, which is a private message between you and the receiver. To send a direct message, you will need to go to the profile of the account you wish to message and select the message button on the left hand side, or hit the three buttons next to the “Following” button and select “send a direct message.”

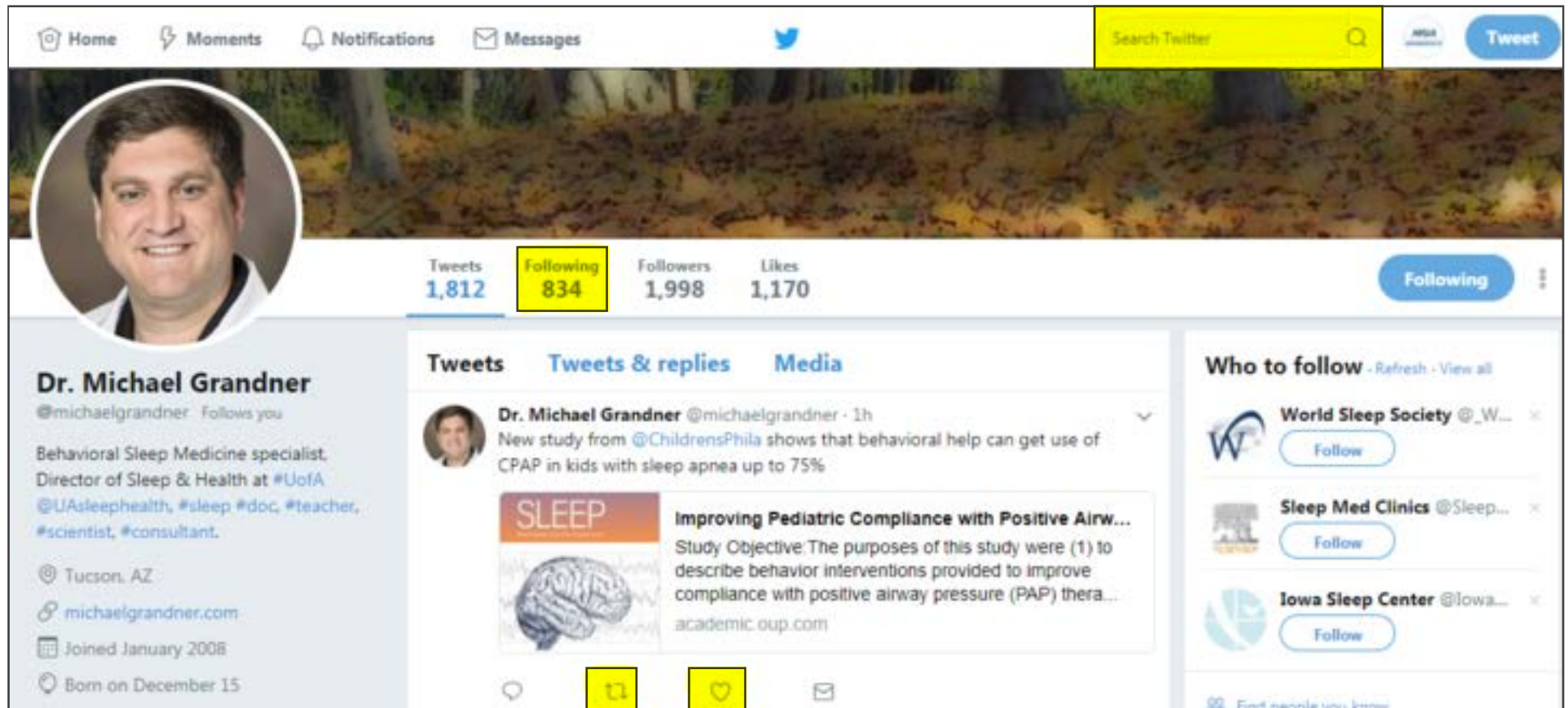


Quick Exercise: Increase your followers by following others!

Getting started can be a little intimidating, so we've compiled a quick exercise to help set you up for success in the Twitter world.

1. **Follow the three suggested AASM member users on page 7** – @michaelgrandner, @BrandonPetersMD, and @SleepDocWatson. You can find each doctor by searching for his name in the search bar of your home page.

2. **View their followers** to get an idea of some additional accounts to follow.
3. Once you have followed a handful of users, **read through some tweets on their profile** and
 - a. **Like** one tweet
 - b. **Retweet** (share) one tweet



Tips

While there are many tips to making the most of Twitter, here are just a few to keep in mind as you're getting started.

Post on Twitter at least once a day.

Users know if you have engaged with them. The more active you are, the more likely they will follow, tweet, or retweet you.

Don't forget to include hashtags!

This is especially important if you're sharing information relative to a specific topic. For example, if you're sharing an article or fact about sleep, use #sleep, so anyone searching for information relative to sleep can find your tweet.

Save some space.

Even though a tweet can be as long as 140 characters, you do not need to use them all. Limiting your tweets to about 120 characters will ensure that users who retweet your content will not have to edit it for length before adding their comments and sharing with their followers.

Short and sweet.

When including a URL, try using a shortener like [Bitly](#) or [Google URL Shortener](#) to help you maximize your character count.

Feel the influence.

Follow companies, influencers, and like-minded individuals that you may become involved with in the future.

Ask questions!

The best way to encourage people to engage with you is to ask questions they can respond to.

Download Twitter for mobile.

Go to [iTunes](#) or the [Google Play Store](#) to download.