



# Networking

## Building and Cultivating Professional Relationships is Worth Your Time

### Tools of the Practice

**Relationship-building:** Connecting with people based on one or more topics of shared interest

**Relationship-cultivating:** Creating and nurturing an ongoing, warm and authentic connection with people you know

**Networking:** Interacting with people to exchange information and develop contacts useful in furthering your career

### Why invest the time and energy in building and cultivating professional relationships?

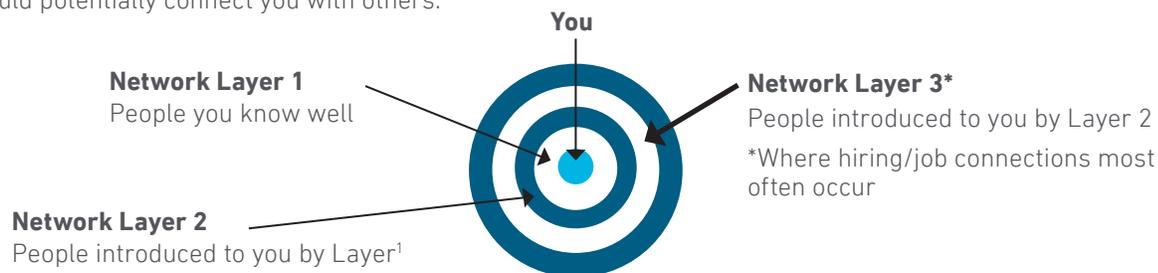
- 60%-80% of jobs in today's market are created or **filled as the result of relationships**, rather than posted job listings.<sup>1</sup> With this reality, it is crucial that you have a proactive networking strategy.
- Successful individuals tend to have a robust and well-rounded set of **"Vital Relationships"**<sup>2</sup>
- Active and ongoing pursuit of relationship-building and cultivation can increase your awareness of professional opportunities that might otherwise remain unknown.
- Engaging in this activity helps to 'level the playing field' with competitors who are most certainly networking.

### Tools and Opportunities to Build and Cultivate Relationships

- Informational interviews
- LinkedIn messages, articles and postings
- Career Fairs and networking events
- Industry conferences and training events
- Instructors, classmates and colleagues
- Mentorship and/or coaching

### Establish your Network

You are the 'bull's-eye' of your network; aim to build three layers out. Make a list of your Layer 1 network. Add people you've already met to a Layer 2 list. Include and categorize anyone who may be helpful to include in a professional network and those who could potentially connect you with others.



<sup>1</sup>McGraw-Hill Higher Education at [http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073377007/student\\_view0/chapter4/true\\_or\\_false.html](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073377007/student_view0/chapter4/true_or_false.html) and HR News Daily: <http://hrnewsdaily.com/2013-most-jobs-will-be-filled-by-referrals/>

<sup>2</sup>Ask your Coach about a resource and framework to assess and/or build your "Vital Relationships."

## Develop a networking plan

Building and cultivating a professional network takes time and preparation. Consider the following questions and steps; write down your action plan.

- On which career goal(s) do you want to focus your networking efforts?
- Research potential face-to-face networking events in your area; learn about other networking activities that you may attend over the internet or the phone
- What unique activities should you participate in to keep your network active?
- Develop a strategy for maintaining regular contact with important/interesting
- Review networking activities and contacts regularly to examine what is working, what is not, and consider people and groups to include/exclude from your networking efforts