

# Establishing Your Network

Basically, networking is reaching out to people who can help you achieve your career plans. In the short run it might mean talking with faculty and fellow students to get contacts for a good practicum. Later it may mean meeting with people who can help you get access to a field or career you want to pursue. As you become more experienced with networking, you will learn how to initiate and nurture relationships that can help you get into graduate school, obtain a promotion, find a new job, build a business and accomplish other goals you might have.

## Give and Take

Two-way networking requires that you be willing to help others in addition to receiving help yourself. When you are generous with your information, you will find people more willing to assist you. Here are a few tips:

Share what and who you know – as you hear about opportunities that may not interest you, pass them on to friends and acquaintances. Introduce them to contacts that may not be useful to you right now. Later, your friends and acquaintances may do the same for you.

Make requests – as you get more comfortable with networking, ask for help for yourself and for others. Know your networking needs and goals and be willing to take time to talk about them clearly with people.

## Members of Your Network

**Friends and Family:** Your sister's husband's father may be in the same field that interests you. You're your family and friends about your job plans and career goals. They may have friends or acquaintances who you could talk to about the kind of work you want to do.

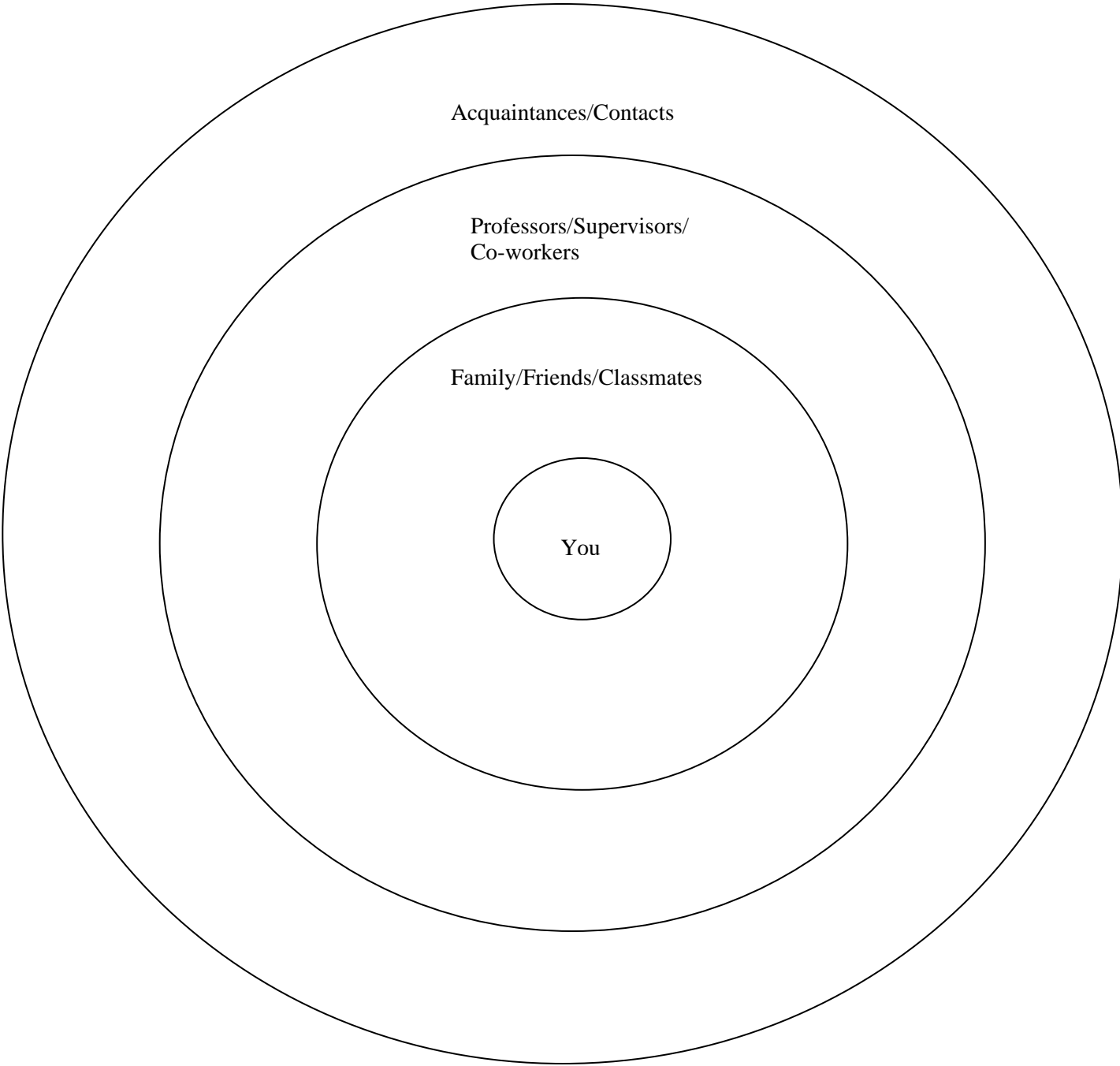
**Current and Former Classmates:** Your classmates have friends and family that could be in fields that interest you. Realize that the person sitting next to you in class might have a good lead for you. Check it out.

**Current and Former Professors and Instructors:** Some of your former professors and instructors are/were professionals in your field of interest. Or they may have colleagues that are.

**Business Associates:** Remember to talk to your co-workers from current and past jobs. Again they may have a good contact for you to follow up on.

**Professional Associations:** Join a professional organization that's connected to your field of interest. Then get active with it. Go to meetings. Volunteer to do publicity or take notes or help with their events. Most importantly, talk to other members and learn more about the field and meet plenty of potential contacts.

Use the diagram on the back of this page to list people you can start networking with. Then do it!



Acquaintances/Contacts

Professors/Supervisors/  
Co-workers

Family/Friends/Classmates

You