

Improving Your Networking Skills



Connecting students to global careers!

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What are we going to cover?

- What is networking
- Steps on how to prepare for networking
- Proper etiquette for engaging contacts
- Opportunities to practice some networking techniques



What is networking?

By definition, networking is the informal exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions who have grouped together for some common purpose
(<http://www.quantum3.co.za/CI%20Glossary.htm#N>)

Networking is the act of meeting new people in a business context.
(<http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/networking>)

Well, I'd like to re-define it...



Networking (re-defined)

Networking is *simply talking and listening* to people while at the same time *developing relationships* around *common interests & experiences*



Why is networking important?

It is important because only **15%** of available jobs are advertised through online resources, newspapers, and trade journals

That means that the other **85%** are found by being in the right place at the right time, through word of mouth...(aka, **Networking**)

It gives you the opportunity for someone to get to know, meet, learn about you in-person, rather than from a resume

So, the saying ***"It's not what you know, but who you know!"*** takes on new meaning



Why is networking so stressful?

The “meeting” people part of networking can be intimidating – *it takes us out of our comfort zone!*

Networking is not quickly acquiring names of people just to get a job

Networking should be more about “planting the seed” and building “advocates”



How do you make networking easy?

1. Informal conversations
2. Relationship building
3. Paying attention to opportunities
4. Tell me about yourself?



How to prepare for networking...

By knowing yourself

Questions to think about?

- What is my career trajectory?
- Where do I see myself headed?
- Where did I come from?





Places to network..

The ones you know...

Social gatherings

- Receptions
- Alumni events
- Happy hours

Business settings

- Career Fairs
- Conferences
- Panel discussions

Some you don't now...

- Seminars
- Advisement meetings
- Lectures
- Student groups
- Volunteer activities

The key is what are yours and others common interests!!



Who makes up your network?

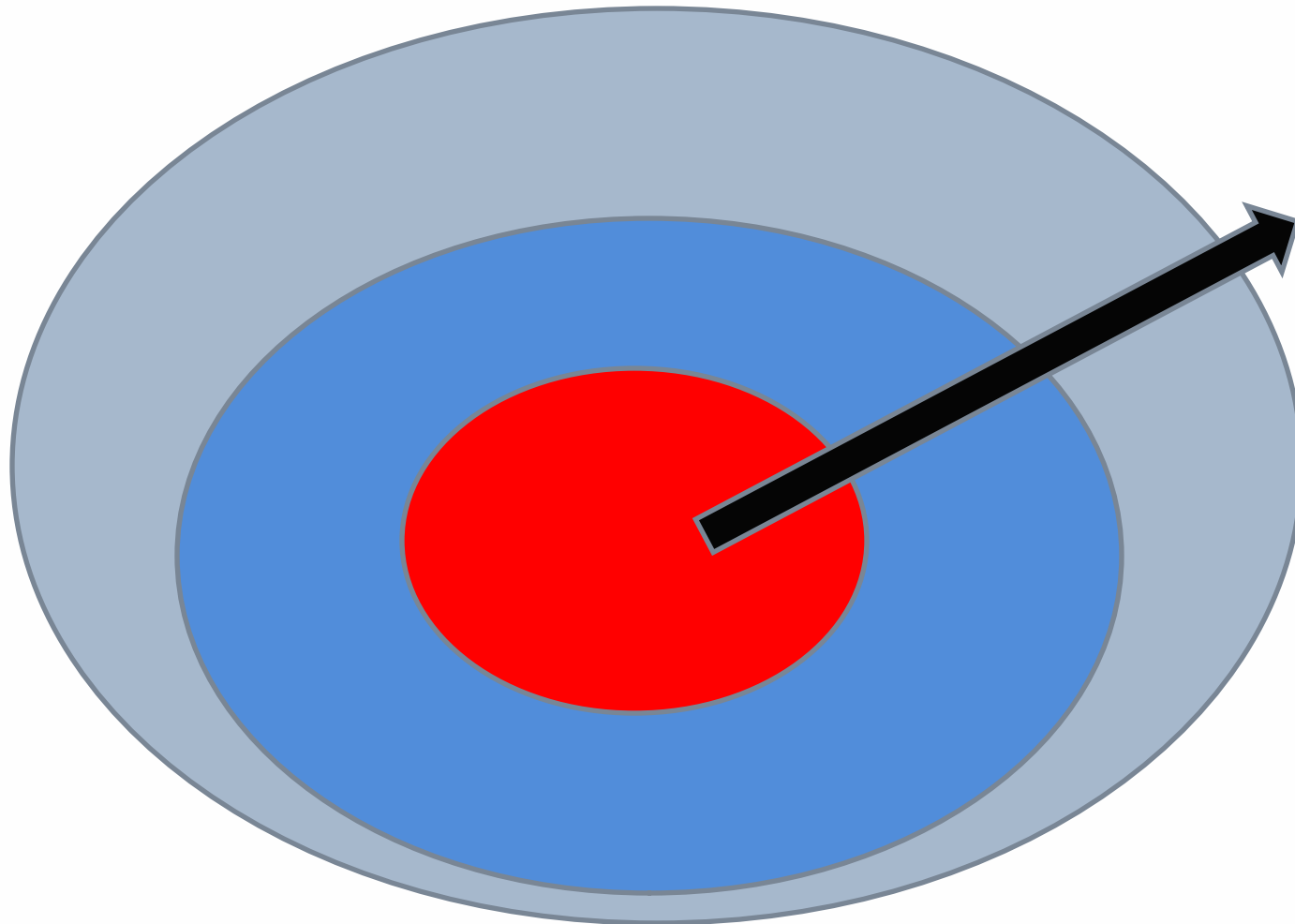
Everyone!!!!

- Classmates (current & past)
- Professors/Advisors
- Alumni
- Co-workers and former co-workers
- Former supervisors
- Your contacts from community
- Neighbors, friends, relatives



Who do you know?

Three levels of your contacts:



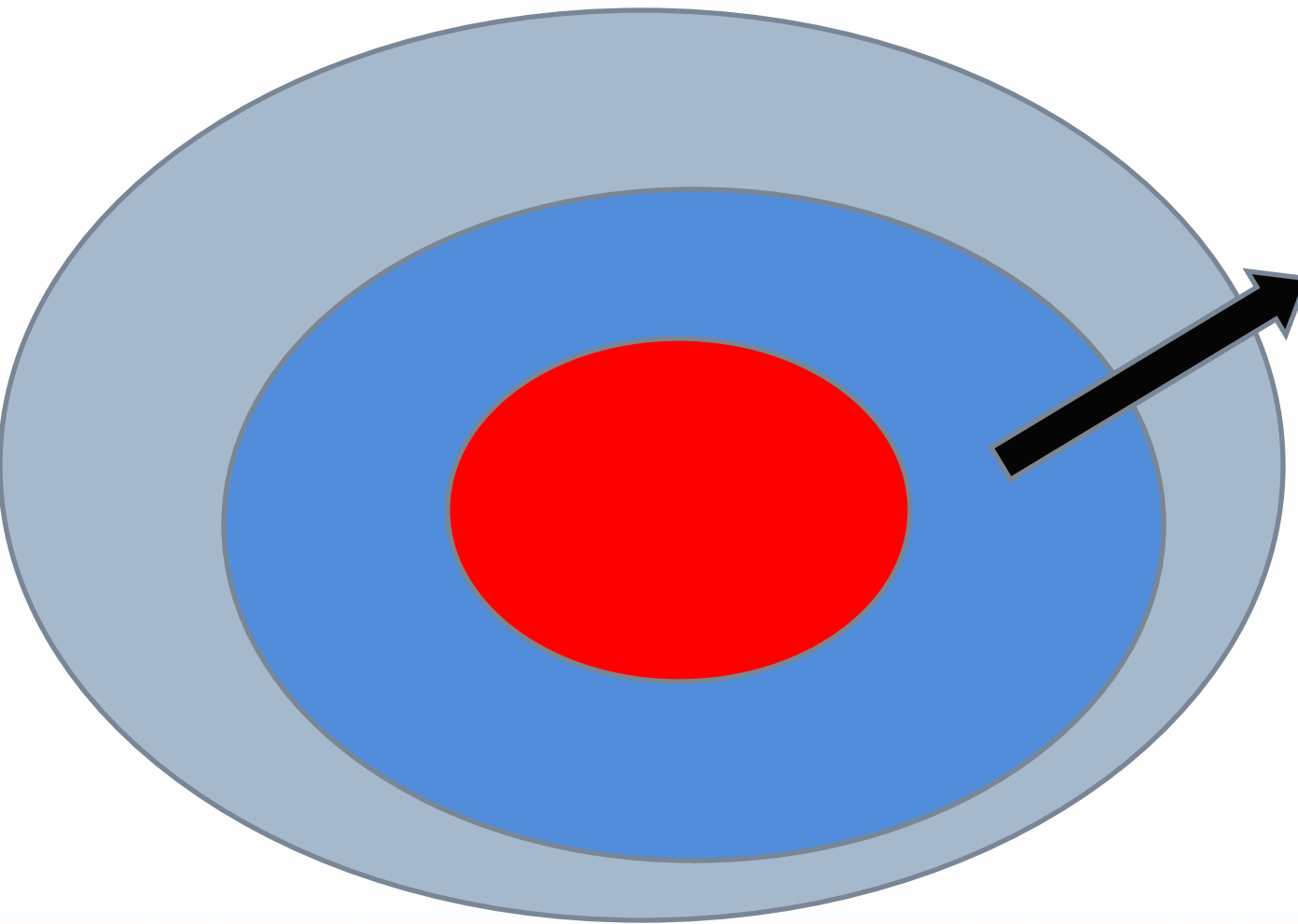
Level 1: Those you currently know

- Close friends
- Family
- Work Colleagues



Who do you know?

Three levels of your contacts:



Level 2: Those with a connection

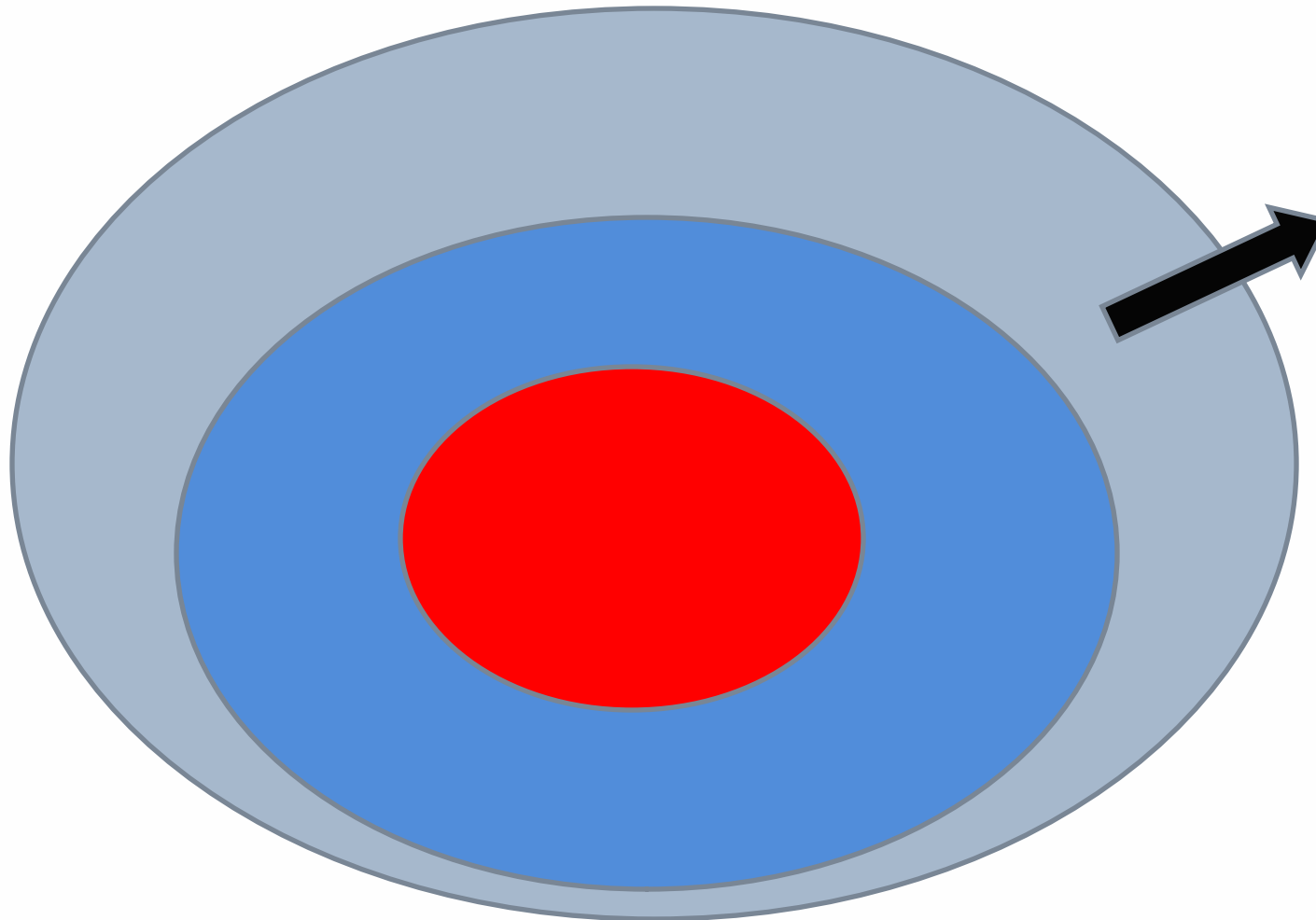
- Friends of friends
- Other students
- Other alumni
- Other business associates

There is a connection that you can use to bring them into **Level 1**



Who do you know?

Three levels of your contacts:



Level 3: Those without any viable connection.

- What do we do to bring them into **Level 2** and eventually into **Level 1**?



Maintaining Your Contacts

Organize your contacts into two categories:

- Targets and Non-Targets (or whatever groups names work for you)
- Targets: those that would be important for you to stay in contact with.
- Non-Targets: those who are useful, but not as important.

Staying in touch

- Targets: every couple of months
- Non-Targets: every 6-12 months

Strategies:

- Quick note to let them know how you are doing.
- Quick note about an article or something that you wanted to get to them.



Informational Interviewing

Informational interviewing can be your first step in networking with anyone – Alumni, Faculty, Professional, etc.

What to remember:

1. Not asking for a job
2. Think like a reporter gathering information
3. Representing the school
4. Planting the “seed” for future help
5. People generally like to talk about themselves and usually they are willing to help



Informational Interviewing – How it helps?

1. Create advocates
2. Influential introductions
3. Personalizes your job search



Informational Interviewing – How to do it?

1. Start with an email – less intrusive

Subject line: Questions from a current JHSPH student

Email Text: My name is _____ and I came across your information in a search of _____ in the _____. I'm curious to learn more about your career path and about your work at (name of organization) . I'm emailing you today to see if it would be possible to find a convenient time in your schedule for an informational interview. I'd only ask for approximately 30 min. of your time as I'm sure your schedule is quite busy.

If necessary, I can send you more information about me and what I'm currently doing at the Bloomberg School of Public Health. I'm hoping you'll be able to accommodate this request.

Thanks in advance for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,



Informational Interviewing – How to do it?

2. Timely follow-up (within 24-48 hours if possible)

Possible email reply:

Thanks for reaching out. It would be helpful to see your resume and I would be happy to speak for 20-30minutes via phone in the next couple of weeks. My flexible days are Wednesday, Thursday and some Fridays. Have a good weekend!

Your email reply:

Thanks so much for getting back to me. Attached you will find my resume.

Please let me know a convenient time for you to schedule a phone call. My calendar is fairly wide open on the flexible days you mention above.

Look forward to speaking with you soon.



Informational Interviewing – How to do it?

3. Confirming and offering to call them

Email confirming:

Wednesday Nov 17th at 1 pm would be great for me. I will plan to call you at the number in your contact information below. Should you need any additional information from me prior to our call, please don't hesitate to contact me.



Informational Interviewing – What to ask?

1. How did you get to be where you are at? or What was your career trajectory?
2. What ways do you use your JHSPH training in your current position? Or How did your JHSPH training prepare you?
3. What advice would you give to a student preparing for their transition from school to working?
4. Can you describe your typical day to me?
5. What is it like to work at your organization?



LinkedIn (cont.)

Use it for your career development

- Discover the “career histories” of those in your targeted job function, industry, and company.
- Profiles serve as “expanded business cards” or “shortened resumes”
- Search for people like you or places you could potentially see yourself working at. Helps you to target the right companies.
- Join relevant groups
 - Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Group (796 members)
 - APHA Group (3,721 members)
 - UMCP Alumni Group (11,941 members)

