

## The Relationship Onion

We will discuss and work on this tool during Session 1. However, we recommend that you spend some time before Session 1 thinking about the way you will fill out this relationship map.

Psychologists estimate that the maximum number of people we are able to maintain in our “tribe” is 150. However, no matter the number of people in our tribe, our relationships fall into one of these seven categories:

1. Family of origin (parents and siblings)
2. Immediate family (relationship partners, children, grandchildren, etc.)
3. Close and trusted friends
4. Acquaintances and extended family (aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, etc.)
5. Superiors
6. Colleagues and business relationships
7. Mentors

All seven categories are important in their own way.

Your **family of origin** is your link to your roots. Your roots influence your sense of identity and many of your closely held values and beliefs.

Your **immediate family** contains your most intimate—and therefore most impactful—relationships. These are the people you live with and see on a regular basis.

Your **close and trusted friends** sometimes have as much of an impact on you as your immediate family do. The friends who support and uplift you belong in this close circle. However, some friends who do not support or uplift you might be better relegated to the acquaintance category or removed from your relationship circles altogether.

**Acquaintances and extended family** are less impactful relationships, but this circle offers a valuable pool of wisdom, skill, and support from which you can draw. You may want to “promote” some of the people in this category to your inner circle.

Your **superiors** are those to whom you report. Ideally, these people are individuals that you admire and from whom you can learn—people who bring out the best in you.

Since we spend a large portion of our lives at work, our **colleagues and business relationships** have an undeniable impact on our lives. Although we cannot always choose our business partners and colleagues, it’s still important to nurture these relationships, because if we can’t find happiness at work, we cannot find true fulfilment in our lives.

**Mentors** can accelerate learning and growth in all areas of your life. When you want to succeed in your goals, a great strategy is to locate someone who has flourished in your chosen field and learn from their experiences. If you don't yet have a mentor in your inner circle, it's a good idea to welcome one in to help foster your growth as a leader.

## Your Relationship Onion

To nurture meaningful and rewarding relationships, you must deliberately enhance the relationships in your tribe that serve you best and bring those relationships closer to you. You should also seek out new relationships with people who will support, instruct, and inspire you.

The best way to visualise which of your existing relationships you want to enhance is to map out the key people in your life today.

Using the diagram on the next page, you'll map out all the key relationships in your life. Use two different colours of ink as you fill in the diagram: one colour for personal relationships and one colour for business relationships.

1. First, identify those within your **Circle of Intimacy**. These are the people who have the most impact on you and whom you impact the most. They are the people you can't imagine life without. You share your worries, problems, and successes with them.
2. Next, identify those individuals who occupy your **Circle of Friendship**. The Friendship Circle is for those who are close to you, but with whom you share a little less intimacy.
3. Now, fill in your **Circle of Participation**. This circle is made up of close coworkers, acquaintances, and extended family.
4. Finally, include the people who occupy your **Circle of Exchange**. This circle contains people with whom you interact only occasionally (distant friends, work contacts, etc.) or often but superficially (shopkeepers, distant coworkers, regular customers, etc.).
5. The next step is to assess which relationships you want to move further into your Relationship Onion and which relationships you'd like to move further out. Draw an arrow pointing inward next to those people you want to move further into your Relationship Onion. Then, draw an arrow pointing outward next to those individual you'd like to move further out.

In our session, we will determine where you can best direct your energy to ensure that all your close relationships impact you in the most positive way possible. We'll also discuss how you can repeat this mapping process at regular intervals during the LIONS to chart your progress.

## Map Your Relationship Onion

