

# APPROACHES TO EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

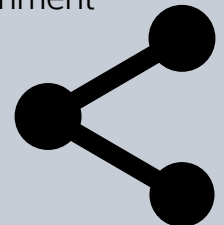


## WHY IS THE APPROACH TO EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS IMPORTANT FOR INNOVATION?

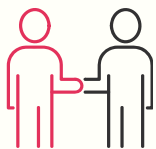
Clients, partner organisations (e.g. suppliers) and competitors can be invaluable sources of knowledge and expertise. Scanning the environment and making the most of external relationships - by managing exchanges of information, collaborating and asset and risk sharing - can open up new ways of working, new ways of accessing resources and new market opportunities. Evidence suggests that innovative organisations are more likely to involve their employees in the exchange of information within and across their supply chain.

## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT APPROACHES TO EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS?

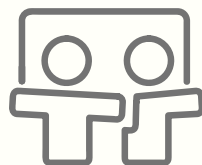
- Employees are a source of information about the external business environment
- Organisation shares resources with competitors
- Organisation accesses external expertise
- Work with competitors for mutual benefit
- Feedback from partners/suppliers is a source of new ideas
- External connections are valuable to people



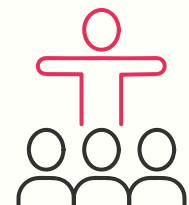
## EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE



One law firm develops ideas and new ways of working from external networking events, conferences and leadership lunches. Learning from external expertise is then fed back to colleagues and is often filmed so that everyone can access this information at any time or location.



One law firm is involved in an HR network with 10 organisations that come together to share aspects of HR such as gender pay, the apprenticeship levy and business restructuring in order to learn from each other's practices.



One funeral service firm created a training and education academy to share their knowledge and expertise which has facilitated learning between firms within the industry.