

Challenge 1

Enabling Relationships and Building Networks – Research Insights

What	Define	Why	How
Structural	Connections to people: weak or strong	Recognise the importance of different types of relationships for different programme objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To master job and role tasks: Build strong ties to a smaller network of contacts with relevant information. – To facilitate intern learning and development: Build networks that cross organisational boundaries. – To help newcomers fit into the organisation: They need strong friendships. – To build intern commitment to the organisation: They need strong friendships (8 plus friends) with people in different units and levels of the hierarchy, this is linked to higher levels of organisational commitment.¹³
Relational	Relationship quality: trust, norms, identification	<p>Virtual contexts reduce nonverbal cues about expected behaviour and so these behaviours need to be made more explicit than in face-to-face interactions¹⁴ by:</p> <p>Trust – specifically competence and benevolence – is key to building relationships.¹⁵</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Make norms around etiquette, cooperation, and conflict management more explicit. – Prepare guidelines about norms for communication such as frequency and preferred technology. – Train virtual workers about communication norms. – Socialisation strategies at induction should provide opportunities for: positive and supportive interaction, team building tasks, and opportunities for interns to showcase their competence and benevolence. – Behaviours that help build trust in early virtual encounters are enthusiasm, communication about personal activities, active participation, timely responses, in-depth feedback, open communication, delivering agreed results, cooperative behaviour and individual initiative.¹⁶
Relational	Mentor-Intern	<p>Mentees with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – greater instrumental and psychosocial support and relationship quality are more satisfied, have greater affiliation and a lower intention to turnover. – more instrumental and psychosocial support report greater socialisation and learning.¹⁷ 	<p>Match mentors with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – deep level similarity to mentees in terms of attributes, values, beliefs and personality as this predicts psychosocial and instrumental mentoring support and relationship quality. – Experiential similarity in terms of educational background and functional area as predicts instrumental support and relationship quality.