

Name given to the project: **Sticky Knowledge Transfer in Action**

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Keywords associated with the project

- Effective communities of practice
- Development of reflective professionals
- Action learning
- Applied social psychology meets strategic management thinking

Summary of the project focus

Things like learning from mistakes or passing on of working solutions without constantly having to reinvent the wheel are not necessarily very popular in many organizations. This is surprising, since there is an abundance of classical writing on organizational learning available. The existing mismatch between theoretical knowledge on the one side, and successful practical application on the other, can partly be attributed to the fact that some classical management insights are often quoted in academic publications, but no longer get read and understood in education of students. This results in a waste of valuable insights, which could relatively easy be prevented by routine after-action reviews of implemented projects, such as in the internship semester to share best and next practices.

This proposal aims at bringing students into contact with classical writing about the stickiness of knowledge transfer in a group context to prepare them to develop to reflective practitioners. A topic of particular interest is how barriers to knowledge sharing can be broken down in communities of practice, by merging applied psychological with tested strategic management concept. The psychological factors to consider here are the embedding of communities into a culture of psychological safety in order to let immature ideas emerge in the first place. Moreover, the social psychology of the group also plays a key role to prevent social loafing. The business acumen becomes crucial as communities of practice are joint in the traditional view on a completely voluntarily basis. However, waiting for full self-organization tends to invite some organizational friction. Thus the question emerges how classic strategic management ideas such as reflection on / in action - or single / double / deuterio learning can be introduced into the dynamic group interaction happening in the after-action reviews taken place in communities of practice. This shall be a fruitful avenue for research to combine applied business psychology thinking with tested strategic management literature. A benefit for teaching could be to help vibrant student communities to emerge, for example to share best practices derived from the internship semester to allow better transfer of such sticky knowledge between cohorts by allowing for more routinized reflection.

Work plan

After 6 months an review of relevant literature shall be realistic.

After 12 months initial experiences from interviews with students coming from the internship semester shall be realistic. The interim report shows how this insight informs a second round of literature review.

After 24 months, in the second interim report, contact to constituents in the business world should be possible to transfer the internship semester focus to a broader field.

After 36 months, in final report an outlook for avenues of potential research will be given to inspire a follow-up project.