

ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with innovation and the particular focus is to identify barriers to innovation at a communicative level in an organizational context.

The interest to this theme has its starting point from several facts. First of all, for my part, the last years have been characterized with a special focus on innovation - through my internship at AAU Innovation and through the last several theses during my education. And partly current issues such as how the society is functioning today. - A society where facts such as globalization, outsourcing and financial crisis has led the Danish organizations to realize that Denmark should not live on to produce or fabricate, but by innovating. But what does innovation actually mean? Innovation occurs in many different contexts today, which is why this term in particular can be difficult to define. In relation to identify barriers to innovation in this thesis, therefore one of the milestones also is to end up with a specific understanding of the particular concept of innovation.

And why are so few organizations really innovative, now that innovation is generally perceived as a necessity and something positive to bring in to organizations? The reason may be that there are many barriers in reaching a successful innovation process. That is why it is so interesting to identify these barriers. By identifying barriers in an innovation process I will end up on with a basis for organizations to prepare for the particularly difficult times and circumstances that they will encounter as they embark on an innovation process.

The thesis is built on empirical and practical data in the form of certain interviews and other collected data from seminars, meetings, conferences, etc. This ballast is through the thesis elucidated with an eclectic connecting of theories - to illustrate the subject field of the thesis in both its width and depth.

Based on theoretical perspectives Niklas Luhmann's system theory is worth mentioning because it is the overarching theoretical "red thread". Other includes some aspects of the discourse theory by Michel Foucault, considerations from the language philosopher Ferdinand de Saussure and selected parts of the sociological theory by Anthony Giddens. Just to name a few who have contributed with relevant considerations in the context of this thesis.

Apart from a desire to visualize thesis research I will introduce an innovation model which the barriers to innovation will be visually placed in. The innovation model is input from the report 'Seven circles of innovation', prepared by a competent team of professionals, including the Danish organizations 'Center for Ledelse', 'Fremtidstanken' and 'Innovation Cup (Mandag Morgen)'. The model highlights the fact that achieving innovation excellence involves a series of interrelated innovation process steps, based on 'basic elements' at a corporate level and closely linked to the customer and market - all stressing the fact that achieving innovation excellence is not a question of focusing on innovation simply as a product, but as a process requiring an optimized corporate structure.

The model, my empirical and theoretical supplements, provides an attractive base in order to investigate the particular communicative niches which circulate in the discourse of innovation.

Enjoy reading.