Workplace learning & organizational learning in new universities in times of academic drift

Call for abstracts – Cloud 5 & 14 EAPRIL

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In many teaching-only Higher Professional Education (HPE) institutes across Europe, until the 1990s research hardly existed and a proper research culture was lacking; research competencies were not required and large groups of lecturers possessed a professional bachelor’s degree as their highest formal qualification (Griffioen & de Jong, 2017). Since then, under increasing governmental pressure, many teaching-only HPEs changed into organizations of both teaching and research (Teichler, 2008).

Nowadays, in the Netherlands for instance, all universities of applied sciences have multiple applied research groups, and enhanced research ability of students has become a watchword in all education programs and curricula (Andriessen, 2014; Losse, 2018). The academic drift of universities of applied sciences has substantially increased attention to the quest for optimal ways to integrate research in the curricula and the conditions under which such integration can take place. As a result, the foundational beliefs and values (mental models) of staff in large organizational changes are affected and challenged. At the same time, it is a widely shared impression that research in universities of applied sciences often remains disconnected from education and is often practiced by only small pockets of staff. A profound research culture and integration of research in curricula is still far away from becoming a reality.

The current situation evokes relevant and interesting questions about organizational learning concerning research in HPE institutes at the individual-, group- and organizational level. This does not only involve lecturers and researchers, but also managers, advisors, deans and board members have a role to play. These questions relate both to workplace- and organizational learning, since it is about the interplay of individual and collective learning. Organizational learning is defined here as a learning process within organizations that involves the interaction of individual and collective levels of analysis and leads to achieving organizational goals (Popova-Nowak & Cseh, 2015) and innovation (Santos-Vijande, López-Sánchez & González-Mieres, 2012). This relates to leadership, management, decision-making, organization,
policies and corporate culture. Workplace learning focuses more on the level of the individual learner (Elkjaer & Wahlgren, 2005).

The call is open to HPE institutions and other knowledge intensive organizations in other branches and sectors that face similar challenges, which require a learning process for individuals, groups and the organization at large.

**Submissions can for instance focus on:**

- Which are the main challenges for workplace and organizational learning in efforts to promote research at European HPE institutes? What are the most important constraining and enabling factors?
- How can knowledge intensive organizations optimize on the organizational learning mechanisms in order to promote its investigative attitude and research ability?
- How can existing mental models about research be changed in favor of a profound research culture in European HPE institutes?
- Which workplace and organizational learning mechanisms are effective? Which practices and ideas concerning the promotion of research are worthwhile spreading?
- What are similar experiences and challenges of other branches and sectors? What can HPE institutes learn from them?

**References**