

COLLABORATION - *is the new* - COMPETITION

Strategic alliances in the industry in which Sweco participates

Reflection

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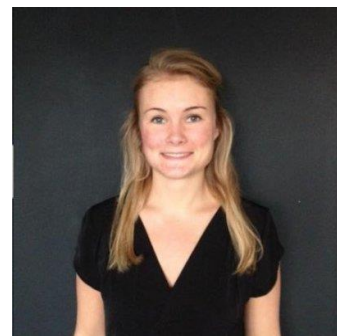
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REFLECTION

METHODOLOGY

This research is based on the grounded theory approach, which implies exploring a certain phenomenon. No other type of methodology could have been in place, due to the fact so little is known about strategic alliances in the construction industry. By exploring this concept and creating theory about it, a first step towards understanding strategic alliances has been made.

With regard to the research itself, the process has been very logical, being a literature review as theoretical framework for the empirical research. The literature review might be slightly too broad and superficial for the empirical research, however, not much other literature was available. Relating the empirical findings back to literature, has resulted in recommendations for literature as well. Literature functioned as theoretical framework and is complemented with new findings from the empirical research.

FINDINGS AND RELEVANCE

Findings

The findings exposed during the research do not match my initially predicted findings. Based on the literature review, expected where well considered alliances with a clear strategy and intended organisational structure. However, the findings can be labelled as typical for the construction industry, where projects are more important than the time beyond it. Also the scale of the alliances which are used for the case study are of a different level than the ones used in literature. This implies that there is a gap between literature and strategic alliances in the construction industry due to the fact literature describes strategic alliance of Starbucks, where this thesis describes alliances of Piet and Kees.

Relevance

The relevance of providing an insight in strategic alliances in the construction industry has multiple aspects. The social and practical relevance is that the participants of the organisations can benefit from the findings and recommendations set in this thesis. This might have influence on the current content of the alliance. The academic relevance is that the findings from this thesis provide an insight in strategic alliances in the construction industry, a subject that did not receive much attention in literature yet. Due to the empirical research performed in this thesis, strategic alliances became more tangible.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

As finishing up for my Bachelor at the Hanzehogeschool Groningen, I had to write a thesis as well. However, this was based on a case in practice; designing, drawing and analysing the transformation of a former office building into student housing. Due to the fact I have experience with graduating, I did not expect to have the process I had during my graduation thesis at the Delft University of Technology. It felt like a rollercoaster of thoughts and emotions. Main reason for these feelings is the fact that at the beginning, every student was 'swimming' and exploring a possible subject. Normally, I have a subject

right from the beginning and I know what to do. However, in this case, it was a more insecure period, which I experienced as being difficult and most of all, very new.

When evaluating the thesis research itself, it can be said that it is difficult to explore a subject which is completely unfamiliar to you. I never heard about strategic alliances, neither did the people in my surroundings. However, I approached it as a challenge to expose this concept and to make it more tangible for me and other interested people. Due to my practical mind-set, this research is relevant for both literature and practice, which has been one of my main conditions.

The limitless of time resulted in a less thorough empirical research. With more available time, the case study to the four alliances could have been more in depth and more beneficial for the overall findings. However, I am satisfied with the research I performed.