

Development of a *knowledge sharing game* to design collaborations in a hierarchical organisation

How innovation strategies can be implemented at the working floor throughout organisations

Main problem

What

Innovation implementation at the work floor can be limited if individuals "are being more concerned about the hierarchical ordering than maximizing the organisational performance." (Meyer & Zucker, 1989; Kerno, 2008)

Why

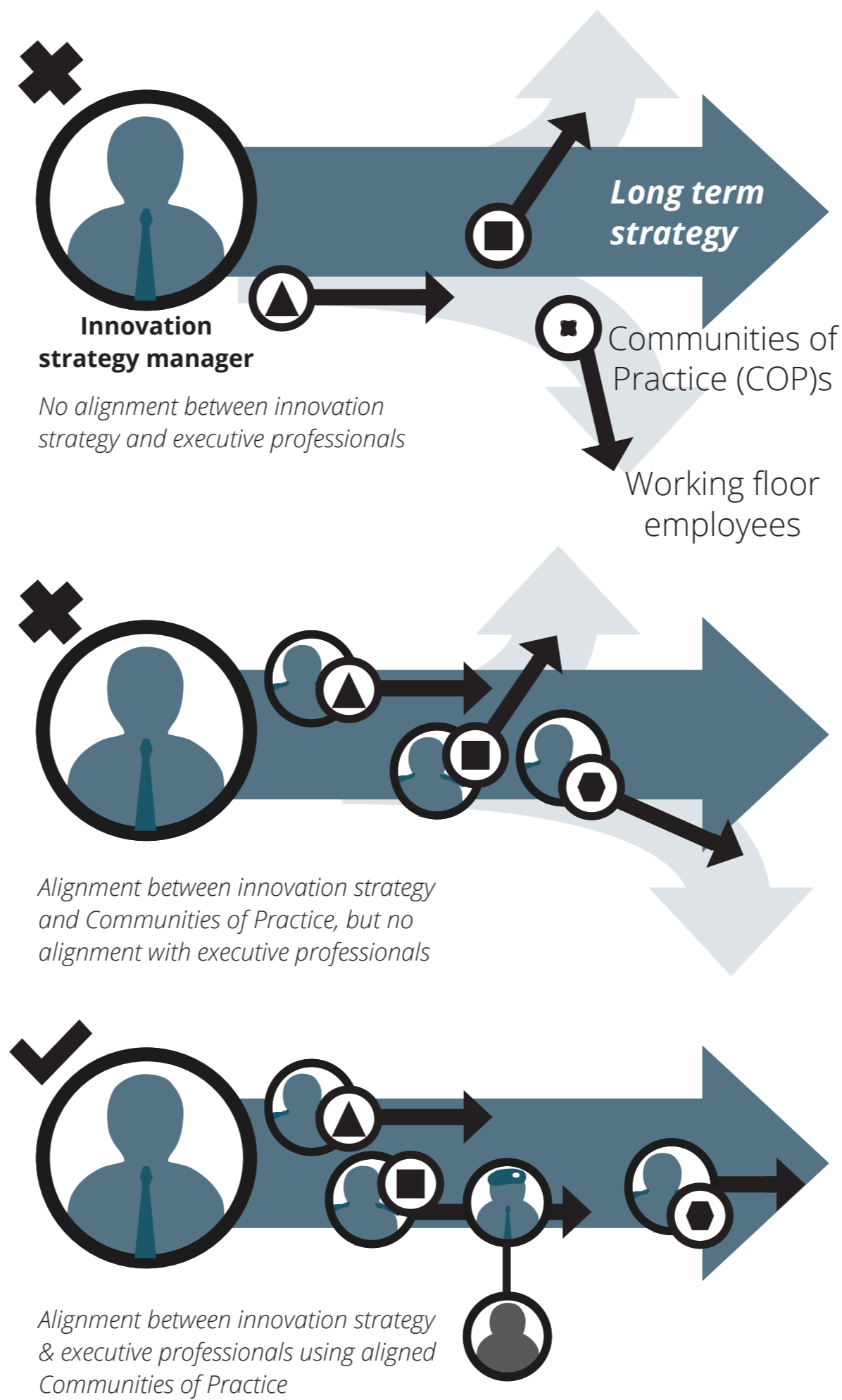
As a result knowledge sharing as part of innovation implementation is inhibited at operational level (working floor), which makes COPs designed for innovation purposes useless.

When

Lack of knowledge sharing occurs when COP members are not supported by their environment (supervisor and direct colleagues) to share (critical) information during interprofessional collaborations.

To whom: Dutch Ministry of Defence

The increasing threats of networked organisations ensure that the Ministry of Defence must grow from a hierarchical oriented organisation (HO) towards a knowledge-driven organisation. The strategic concept 'the Adaptieve Krijgsmacht' is a required mean for the Ministry of Defence (at large) to continue protecting the Dutch citizens. The innovation strategy requires bottom-up initiatives (Defensity College) to implement the strategy at all levels.



Case study analysis: **Defensity College**

Defensity College (DC) is a working floor initiative that aims to reconnect Dutch academic students to the Armed Forces by providing the students with a part-time job throughout all departments of the Ministry of Defence.

Defensity College promised to deliver a contribution to the innovation strategy 'Adaptieve Krijgsmacht'.

To make use of the innovation strategy potential, it is of importance that (newly) obtained knowledge is implemented on the work floor. In the view of the COP approach, the students function as 'knowledge brokers' to share knowledge and thereby implementing the innovation strategy. Therefore, students should be supported in open collaborative communication with his/her employer in the 'fuzzy front design stage' of the collaboration.

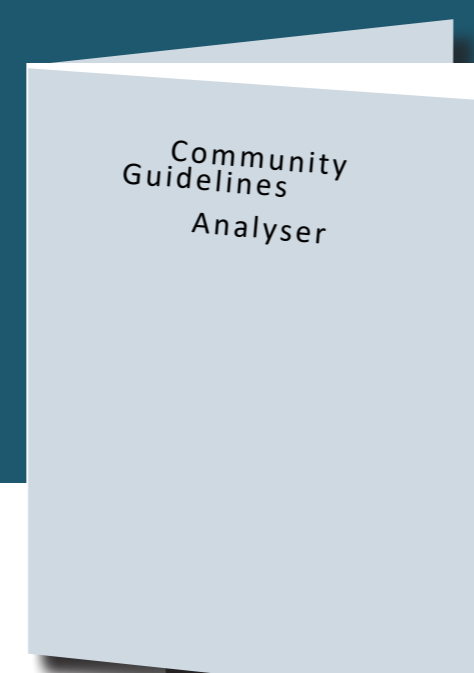
Objective

Facilitate COP managers in their execution of the organisation's innovation strategy via knowledge sharing in collaborations between two professionals (differing in hierarchy) on operational level.

Results

Communities of Practice managers can facilitate knowledge sharing in hierarchical organizations by actively fulfilling the connecting role between the innovation strategy managers and the executive professionals at the working floor. The COP managers can facilitate knowledge sharing by integrating the three levels (strategic, tactical and operational) using the Community Builder Program. Therefore, three steps need to be taken:

1. Develop close connections between the innovation strategists and themselves to align the organisation's innovation strategy with their communities of practices' raison d'être.
2. Design a COP strategy (using the Collaboration Analyser) aligned with the innovation strategy and simultaneously should all COP managers' personal perspectives be aligned prior to the execution of the COP strategy.
3. Facilitate knowledge sharing and open communication in the design of the collaboration between COP members and their employers they are working with to share the gathered COP knowledge and put into practice. Use the C-Booster.



Community-Analyser:
• Model
• Form

C-Booster:
• Text - & game board
• Booklet
• Cards & game hexacons
• App

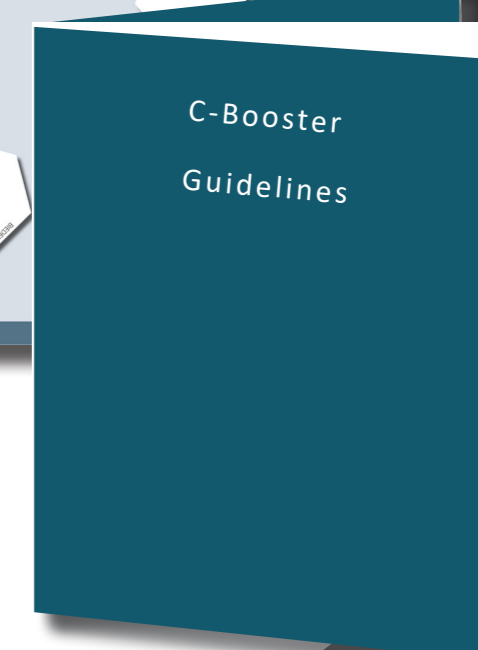
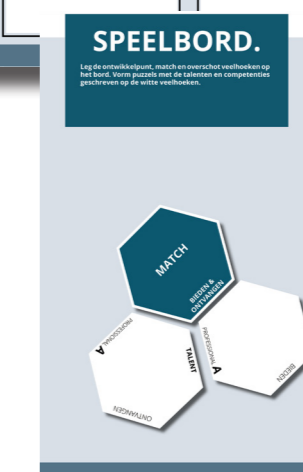
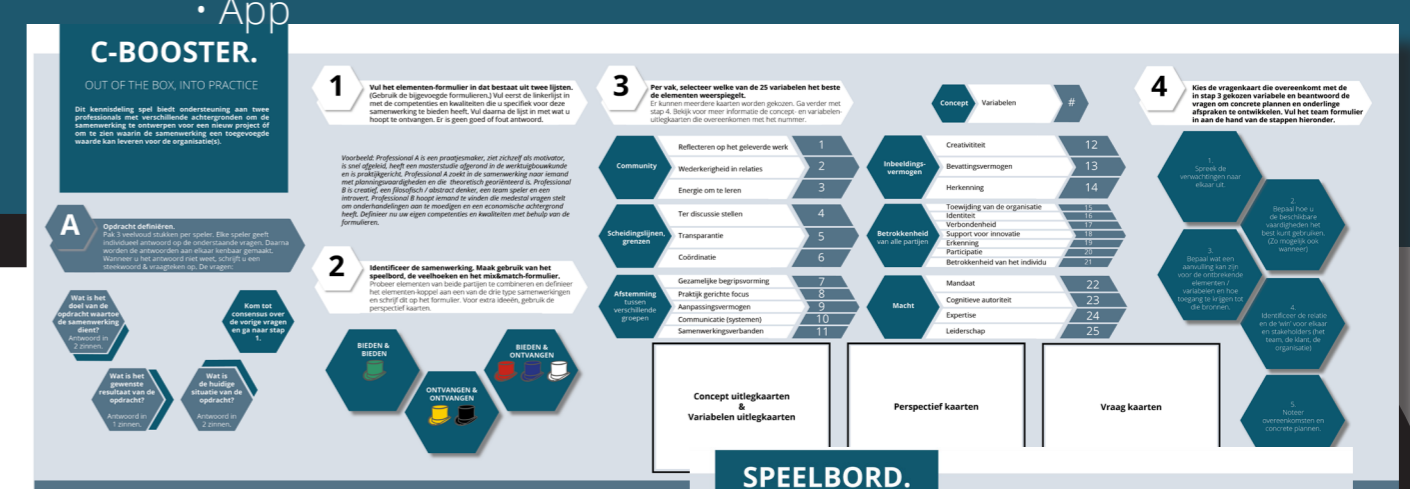


Community Builder Program delivered in suitcase
• Community Analyser
• C-Booster)

Scientific relevance

The scientific relevance of this research is found in exploring the interprofessional collaborations on operational level and proposing a conceptual model using the COP theory as a means to create innovation capabilities to implement abstract innovation strategies within HO.

However, the usability tests provide a first identification that 'hierarchy' does not have to interfere with knowledge sharing.



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