

Participation: two positions

- Voluntary engagement! (Lazear/Freeman),
Eg. employees expertise in technology, productivity, codes of conduct, work-life balance, values at work, language, motivation.
- Legal procedural support: economic, social, political and industrial rights! (Streeck)
Eg. Expertise on organisation, reorganisation, strategy, decision-making.

Scenario-study on employee-participation, Kaar/ Smit 2006, idem: Benedetti/ EU studies

Contextual factors:

- Globalisation of production
- Rise of an European corporate governance regime
- Decentralisation of collective bargaining
- Rise of reflexive labour law
- Flexibilisation of employment relations
- Regime and cost competition versus diversified quality production

4 scenarios for works councils

- 1 As a decision-maker in the network-chain (coalitions with leadership in the organisation)
- 2 As an organisation developer (in coalition with HRM)
- 3 As a partner of the labour unions (implementing part of the collective agreement)
- 4 As a company union (negotiating personnel agreements)

Statement

- Roles and responsibilities of HRM and employee participation should be turned into learning organisations
- Knowing that:
 - HRM is about deriving competitive benefits by strategically using involved and competent employees. From business partner back to employee champion.
 - Employee-participation has both a indirect, structural form, supported by legal information, consultation and negotiation rights; and a voluntary direct, situational form in work progress meetings.

(Theoretical) roles for HRM and employee participation

	Proactive	Active	Reactive
	←		
Strategic	Strategic Change-maker	Partner	Adviser
Tactical	Supporter		Monitor
Operational	Implementer		

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995): the learning organisation

- Both implicit and explicit knowledge matter
- The flat organisation needs hierarchy, if not: the risk of evaporation of knowledge ('the learning bureaucracy')
- James March/ Henk Volberda: "*The exploration of new opportunities to balance the exploitation of existing routines*".

The learning organisation, HRM and employee participation are unconnected in the literature

De Geus, *The living company*, (1997) 4 criteria:

- 1 sensitivity to environment
- 2 coherence and identity
- 3 tolerance and decentralisation
- 4 long-term orientation, in order to survive

Unclear mutual expectations

- 1 Whose interests prevail? Organisation of employees?
- 2 Considering each other's expertise
- 3 Interpretation of tasks: HRM stressing procedural rules versus works councils stressing pro-active role in policy
- 4 Up-to date information (80% managers yes, 40% works councilors no)

Conclusions: wide gap, not focused on joint learning

Example: ASML during the crisis

- Temporary decrease in production
- Joint sessions on making implicit knowledge explicit
- Various teams of direct and indirect employees engaged
- Exchange of information between

Taking stock from policy learning

- Heclo, 1974, Visser/ Hemerijck, 1997:
 - policy learning
 - puzzling and powering
- Van der Meer, Visser, Wilthagen, 2005:
 - adaptive learning
 - reflexive learning
 - learning by monitoring/ reflexive benchmarking
- Aloisini et al, 2006:
 - Generative learning: radical innovations
 - Adaptive learning: gradual implementation

Conclusions: tuning HRM and WC towards learning and development

Now need for liaison: HRM as 'knowledge broker'

- 1 Knowledge coalition HRM with works council
- 2 Employee participation coalition between indirect participation (work council) and direct participation (work-progress meeting)