

**Why employees involve themselves in organizational  
enhancement by employee innovation behavior.**

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## **Why employees involve themselves in organizational enhancement by employee innovation behavior.**

**Principal Topic** - How to manage subordinates in order to reach the most efficient work production has been a major and central theme in organizational and management literature for decades. Even so, there is a lack of research describing the process of employee innovation, seen from the employee perspective. The events of the 1990s, including widespread reengineering, restructuring and work redesign initiatives swept through organizations. The strategy used to respond to this pressure has been to change the way work has been done. A strategy of corporate entrepreneurship encourages individuals within the company to become more imaginative, creative, innovative and entrepreneurial. Even so, many corporate entrepreneurship programs where the management asks for innovation initiatives from the employees, do not achieve the desired enhanced organizational change. Research on the motivators for employees show mixed results regarding which rewards stimulating employees for to contribute toward innovation.

**Method** – This is a case study of five employees and their bosses in three SME in Norway. The employees voluntarily participated on behalf of their organization in a stateley administrated regional development program aimed for to help SMEs to take use of e-commerce. This paper seeks to elaborate some of the motivators for the employees to involve themselves in innovation behavior on behalf of their employer. The motivation for employees to involve themselves in innovation behavior is operationalized as the reasons the employees themselves find important for explaining their innovation behavior. Employee innovation behavior is understood as behavior from an employee toward developing new products, developing new markets, or to improve business routines in their employing organization. The

data was collected through several rounds of interviews and by participation in the development program. The study shows the strategy of the involved organizations for innovation and the study shows the rewards the employees received for their innovation behavior and for participating in the program. The aim of this study is to reveal the impact of reward and organizational strategy on employee innovation behavior.

**Results and Implications** - This study of employee innovation behavior shows that the employees seek to align their innovation behavior according to the expressed strategy of their organization. The study also indicates that the employees provide innovation behavior for the benefit of their organization because they feel an obligation to do so. The employees claimed they felt providing innovation behavior was a natural part of their job. This feeling of responsibility was regardless their position in the organizational hierarchy or their job title. Monetary compensation was not requested, but the employees wanted recognition by their bosses for their innovation behavior. The employees wanted to exploit learning possibilities but was also driven by a want to reduce the amount of boring routine work for to be able to solve otherwise un-addressed organizational problems.

The paper shows that employees take responsibility for the progress of their employing organization. There are several implications that could be derived from the findings in this case study. The key finding in this paper is that the employees align their innovation behavior with the perceived strategy of the organization. This stresses the importance of distributing and clarifying the organizational strategy to all organizational levels. The second finding is that monetary payment is not the only valued reward. This indicates that reward systems should include non-monetary rewards valued by the employees, rewards as learning and influence. Taken account of the findings and the implications of this paper could foster more and better aligned employee innovation behavior in organizations.