Designing Creative Environments

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Strategic Research Support at IBC

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1. Designing creative environment – in organizations ?

2. The need of innovation at universities

3. What have we done at IBC ?

4. Results and Consequences

Background: newly established department after "existential crisis" (re-definition of the academic field & re-defining the position in the organization)

1 - Designing creative environment– in organizations ?

- Innovation – widely acknowledged and applied in areas of industry and production,

- Transfer called for to the organizational field, and especcially in public sector,

- Increasingly so in the university world in the areas of social sciences and humanities, where research has been seen as "intellectual work" of an individual researcher.

The organizational understanding

Innovation – definitions and key points:

– *"To recombine existing ressources – product, expertise, technologies, brands, ideas, in order to create something new from something old". (Morten T. Hansen 2009)*

– *"To combine different knowledge domains and identities into new ways leading to new valueadding pratices in a product, in processes and services" (Justesen 2008 – CBS)*

– *"Innovation is a proces of turning opportunity into new ideas and of putting these into widely used practice". (Joe Tidd & John Bessant 2009)*

A - Combining diverse ressources

Innovation is reconceptualising the utilization of the diverse existing ressources (as new ressouces often are scant):

- Bring the the different knowledge domains and their competences to playing together,

- Establish deliberate integration of the diverse ressources in the processes,

- Integrate and focus these resources to work for a joint challenge,

B - Opportunity

Innovation is in essence a question of:

- Identifying and seeking the openings in both the organizational and the societal environments
- Creating opportunities through active participation and intervention in the environments of the organization,
- Constantely "opening and constructing" new "spaces of opportunity" for what you want to achieve.
- Changing the mindset (collaboration, constructiveness, reflection)

From developing intellectual insights for academic peers to "producing solutions" to societal challenges and problems.

C - Changing Practice & Mindset –

Innovation needs the full engagement of the management – the leadership dimension

- ✓ Communicating a clear vision for the direction and the goal,

- ✓ Readiness to take the necessary dialogue and confrontation in order to establish a common line of sight for the organization,

- ✓ Ability to act in the constant duality between the need og organizational governance and liberty for creative thinking ("academic freedom").

2 – The need for innovation at universities

The consequences of the proces of globalisation

- Internationally: growing competition (from universities and private research activities),
- Nationally: growing demand for documented relevans from the societal stakeholders and competetion for public funding.
- Need to play a more proactive role in society.

Universities have to design creative and innovative ways of organizing themselves

3 - What have we done at IBC – and CBS ?

A – Breaking down the professional silos

Opening up the traditional division beween academic faculty and technical-administratrive staff and integrating the different professional competences:

Faculty competencies:

- in depth academic competences for research and knowledge finding

- Academic networking across universities internationally

A - Breaking down the professional silos

Support staff competences:

In bredth organizational, practical and procedural competences across professional, institutional and societal boundaries.

- Support (and management) of experimental research activities,

- Communication and documentation of research activities

- Institutional network management between research environments and stakeholders,

- Design and facilitation of creative processes.

The T - organization

Integrating the duality of depth and bredth:

Support
functions across
boundaries

Academic research
and knowledge
production
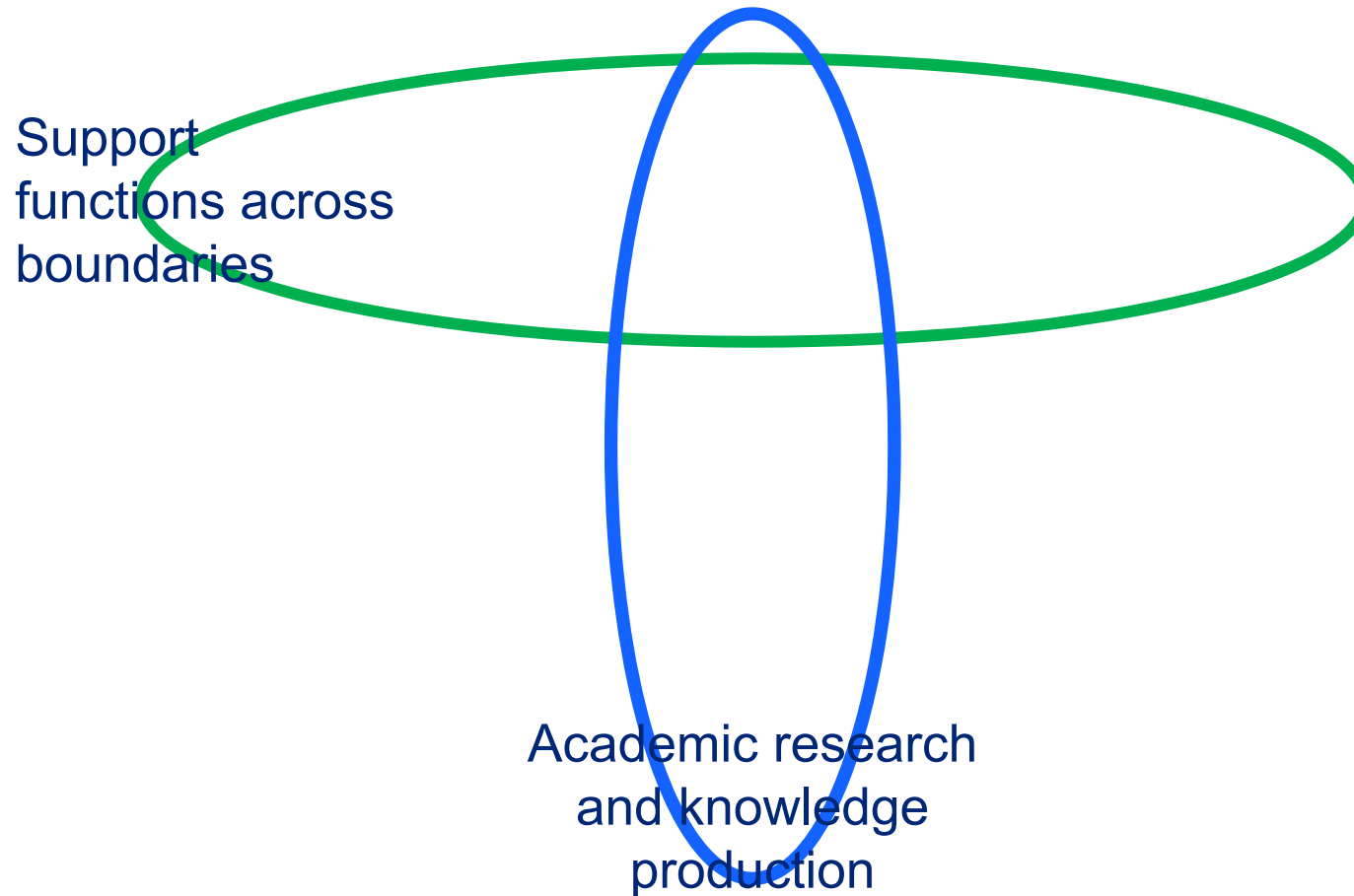
B – Redesigning the Organizational setup

We have changed the organizational setup:

- From centralized administrative support to fully embedded and integrated support in the research environments,

Resulting in:
- ✓ Culture of supplementing roles in the collective proces
- ✓ Creation of "rooms for opportunities" and "spaces for innovation"
- ✓ Network-building and communication with internal and external stakeholders
- ✓ .

C – The engagement af the management

Leadership and governance dimension:

- Strong focus on the vision and the strategy,

- Emphasis on collectivness in the research proces

- Openness on the duality between governance and academic freedom,

- Initialising croass boundaries "rooms of opportunities"

- Constant collaborative reflection with the societal stakeholders,

4 – Results and Consequences

It is W.I.P. – work in progress……

- The faculty can focus on their parts of the research proces,
- An new professionalism is emerging on the borders between academia and support staff
- Better communication with the external stakeholders
- Longterm and realistic strategic planning,
- More mutual interaction between the researchers and the external stakeholders,

4 – The final Remarks

It has brought:

- More fun at work for most staff:
- A more sound basis for development of the department over the next years.

But:

- It takes long time to change the mindsets of all involved,
- It binds a great deal of management and leadership ressources to the necessary constant observancy of the process.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Comments and questions ?

Also possible by mail to:
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