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| <p>Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract</p> <p>The ability to constantly produce innovations has become the major driver of corporate success and economic growth. Within the workforce, knowledge workers are in the key position to create renewals that produce competitive advantage. This research examined antecedents of innovation in knowledge worker teams. The aim was to find out how knowledge worker team innovation is related with team diversity, within-team interaction and collaboration with external parties.</p> <p>As the subject of knowledge worker team innovation has received relatively little attention in the earlier literature, a theoretical framework was constructed with the intention of covering extensively the group-level factors influential to the phenomenon. Team innovation, team diversity, within-team interaction and external collaboration were all studied from several viewpoints. The level of team innovation was assessed by both external experts and the team members themselves. Two types of team diversity were addressed: diversity based on highly job-related attributes and diversity based on highly visible attributes. Within-team interaction was approached via team climate and interpersonal trust. External collaboration was examined by studying the amount of external collaboration and the content of external relationships.</p> <p>The sample of the research consisted of 20 knowledge worker teams representing different functions of a large Finnish telecommunications corporation. Data was gathered with questionnaires. Analysis was conducted mainly with statistical methods, although qualitative classification was also conducted for responses to open-ended questions in order to assure the ecological validity and exhaustiveness of the theoretical framework.</p> <p>Overall, the results demonstrated that social factors are highly influential for knowledge worker team innovation. As this research was the first one to empirically examine the significance of trust to team innovation, the most important single result was that interpersonal trust was related with high levels of team innovation. Also team climate was connected with high team innovation. Team diversity based on highly visible attributes was negatively related with team innovation. Surprisingly, also external collaboration had negative associations with team innovation, except for when it was aimed at general scanning for ideas and information. In addition, internal team processes were found to be more significant for team innovation than external processes.</p> | | | |
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