

Open Organizations and Organizing Openness

Openness and Boundaries

Leonhard Dobusch

April 30, 2019
University of Innsbruck

“ To describe the political organisation of all things open requires leaving the rhetoric of open behind.

Tkacz (2012,
p. 404)

<1>

Hernes, T. (2004). Studying composite boundaries:
A framework of analysis.

Selection of questions provided by students:

Group I

- ▶ To what extent are boundaries even helpful in a company? Could a total disappearance of boundaries be possible?
- ▶ Haven't organizational boundaries become less important as a result of electronic communication and globalization?

Group II

- ▶ Organizational boundaries are a very important topic in Herne's text. How could the success of often very loose organized start-up companies be understood?
- ▶ Is every organization aware of their organizational boundaries?

Selection of questions provided by students:

Group III

- ▶ To what extent do boundaries of organizations influence other organizations according to Hernes?
- ▶ Is it possible to get to know organizational boundaries before one becomes a part of the organization?

Group IV

- ▶ The author argues that tight social and mental boundaries favour change processes as internal commitment plays an important role in implementation procedures. Which implications does this have for managing change processes in organizations?

Organizations and Boundaries

“ boundaries are central, not peripheral to organizations.

Hernes (2004, p. 10)

Process Types of Boundaries

Scott's (1995) three pillars of institutions

- ▶ *Regulative*: rules, laws, sanctions
- ▶ *Normative*: certificates, accreditation
- ▶ *Cognitive*: prevalence, isomorphism

Hernes (2004) three types of boundaries

- ▶ *Physical*: material partitioning, rules
- ▶ *Social*: bonding, identity, 'etiquette'
- ▶ *Mental*: sensemaking, ideas



Santos, F. M., and Eisenhardt, K. M. (2005). Organizational boundaries and theories of organization.

Selection of questions provided by students:

Group I: Boundaries of Efficiency

- ▶ Can an active and conscious boundary management be a realistic management strategy, or is it just for researchers in retrospect possible to gain an overview about different organization's boundaries through detailed analysis?

Group II: Boundaries of Power

- ▶ In the text the term "boundary choice" is used a lot. But can boundaries always be decided upon intentionally? Or are there also things that play into the existence/development of boundaries which cannot be managed?

Selection of questions provided by students:

Group III: Boundaries of Competence

- ▶ When competence conception is spoken of, the dynamics of the market play an important role, but why is the market dynamics so decisive?

Group IV: Boundaries of Identity

- ▶ Is it really effective to hire new employees to change the identity of an organization?
- ▶ What would be an effective way to analyse and change the identity of an organization?

Boundary (as) Decisions

Example of efficiency boundary:

“ A boundary decision is ... the choice of whether to conduct a particular transaction inside the organization or outside through a market exchange

Santos and Eisenhardt
(2005, p. 492)

Comparing the Readings:

- ▶ **Commonalities** of boundary conceptions?
- ▶ **Differences** of boundary conceptions?

Concluding Question:

- ▶ What have we learnt on **organizing openness**?

Contacts



E-Mail: Leonhard.Dobusch@uibk.ac.at

Twitter: [@leonidobusch](https://twitter.com/leonidobusch)

Web: bit.ly/LD-UIBK // dobusch.net

Research blogs:

osconjunction.net

governancexborders.com