

Executive summary

In this thesis, I look into some of the challenges that organisations meet in today's *informational society* in relation to network- and knowledge management. I specifically focus on the emergent transition in organisational- and management theory; from a traditional *scientific management* point-of-view, perceiving knowledge as a 'thing' and thus assuming that the network is a structure; to a more organic approach, accepting that networks are not only the *container* but also a highly valuable yet *complex substance* of knowledge-creation and knowledge-sharing.

There is a general consensus among leading theorists and visionary leaders that the *network-company* is the business unit of the future. Hence *Social Network Analysis* is experiencing a surge in popularity as a tool for organisations to investigate and understand how knowledge transfers in formal as well as informal networks. Building upon theories of Boisot and Snowden, I will, however, argue that this method, which is based on a common survey-approach, used largely by management consultants, suffers from a lack of context and meaning, resulting in only a sketchy picture of what is really occurring in the organisation. Although useful, this appears to be insufficient in our increasingly complex and fast-paced world.

In order to *make sense* of the network, - that is, in order to be able to act in it, organisations need to recognise the importance of both *narrative* and *embodied* knowledge. This argument is supported by an empirical study of the social network in a large Danish drawing office, in which I am partially testing what the SNA-method can and cannot be used for, and partially looking into further possibilities of analysing the complex aspects of the network. By also investigating narrative patterns, I coin a method for a *sense-making* analysis of the value in the network, which is based on a new theoretic conceptual framework of *knowledge making* and *relation making*.