

# Beyond Theory

Changing  
organizations through  
participation

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Dialogues on Work and Innovation

## Chapter 5

# Strategic Management from the Bottom Up

The start of a process of managerial,  
organizational and institutional change

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### Introduction

Strategic Management from the Bottom Up is a concept that has developed from action research. The concept forms the start of a managerial, organizational and institutional process of change which has to result in a flexible organization with open decision-making processes. Openness in strategic management is a prerequisite for innovative organizations. The turbulence around firms demands quick responses by empowered employees. In contrast to traditional management practice, Strategic Management from the Bottom Up stresses open communication on strategic issues. If employees are well informed about strategy they will take up their responsibility, show initiative and come up with creative ideas and solutions. Traditional labor relations do not permit employees or workers to take part in strategic decision making. In this paper it is argued that the turbulence in the business environment on the one hand, and important changes in norms and values on the other, demand institutional changes in terms of labor relations.

This article reports the backgrounds and results of an action research project with four international companies and one large regional police corps that formed the lifelike 'laboratory of the future' in which the concept of Strategic Management from the Bottom Up was developed and tested in practice. Since the project started in these 'pioneer' organizations, the concept has been tested in about a dozen other companies and governmental organizations. In each of the organizations a hierarchical and functional cross section of about twelve people was formed. Together, these people, from the lowest level to the director or company president, formed the strategy team. The strategy teams worked primarily alone and only partially with representatives of existing structures, such as

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works councils and trade unions. The members of the strategy team are stimulated to involve other employees in the organization by actively seeking information and asking for comments and ideas. The strategy teams proved the thesis that democratic decision making on strategic issues can be done very efficiently and effectively from the bottom up.

### Strategic Management from the Bottom Up: building organizational competences

As a concept, Strategic Management from the Bottom Up is a radical new way of making open decisions on strategic issues, involving a cross section of the organization in terms of job and position in the hierarchy, and where each member occupies an equal position in a strategy team. This differs markedly from current practice in companies and organizations. As a rule, strategy is traditionally determined by senior management which often allows itself to be advised by outside management consultants. Everything to do with strategy, and the decision making which surrounds it, is frequently shrouded in secrecy. Strategic Management from the Bottom Up breaks the rules of traditional management concepts. However, such processes of institutional and behavioral change do not happen overnight; they evolve gradually. This is certainly to be expected not only in civil-service organizations steeped in bureaucracy, but also in hierarchically-structured, commercial organizations.

In the research project, which was partly funded by the metalworkers trade union in the Netherlands (Industriebond FNV), the concept was tested in the field. In each of the four companies and in the regional police force it was applied to real strategic issues. In all cases, the 'bottom' was directly and actively involved in complex strategic issues, using the knowledge available in both the strategy team and the company. This was achieved by effecting an improvement in communication between the senior and middle levels of management, and the shop floor.

The intended objective was to enable managers and employees to show that solving strategic questions together created a greater commitment, and broadened support for innovations. This contributes to a greater use of available knowledge. As a result, intrinsically better decisions can be taken. All this is in the interests of the company's survival in an intensified competitive environment, and therefore in the joint interest of management and employees. Furthermore, decisions can also be taken much more quickly like this, thereby reducing the uncertainty of all those involved, and eventually increasing the motivation required to take on new challenges. All these aspects can be summarized in terms of organizational competences. These competences are of crucial importance for innovative firms.

### Principles of Strategic Management from the Bottom Up

Strategic Management from the Bottom Up is not a one-off project. Nor is it a method which uses fixed techniques and tools. Nor is it a quick-fix communication strategy. Strategic Management from the Bottom Up is a concept that is based on the idea that a radical new method of organizing will have to be worked on within companies and organizations in the coming years. In particular, attention will have to be paid to another method of strategic decision making in which openness, efficiency and effectiveness will need to go hand in hand. Efficiency is about better supervision and management. Effectiveness is about improving the quality of the product that a company or organization supplies. Strategic Management from the Bottom Up revolves around core values which underlie the way in which people get on with one another in a company or organization. These core values are: openness and a free flow of information; mutual respect; equivalence; communication via a democratic dialogue.

Strategic Management from the Bottom Up is explicitly based on the capacities that every company has in the form of knowledge possessed by its employees in degrees varying from high to low. In this respect managers are also counted as employees. The central idea that everyone is a knowledge carrier and, as such, can make a valuable contribution to decision making processes, is insufficiently utilized in practice. Hierarchical relationships in the form of a plethora of management layers, and institutional pigeonholing in the form of what are often creaking employee participation structures are a liability. In many cases, such structures and institutions frustrate any form of 'open' type of decision making.

It is precisely in strategic decision making that it is essential to be able to make optimum use of the available knowledge, which explains why Strategic Management from the Bottom Up links up the content of the work with the knowledge that each person acquires in his/her job. This approach teaches participants that strategic questions do not necessarily need to be solved by senior

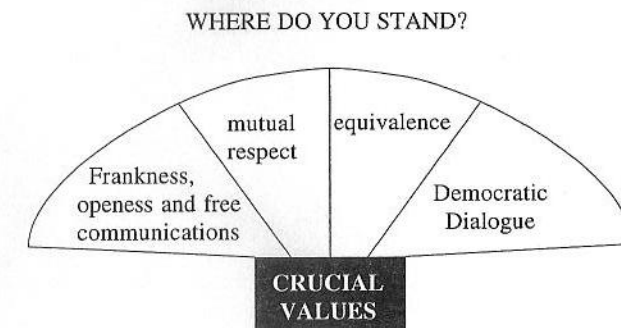


Figure 1: Principles of strategic management from below

management, but that they can also be solved by a process of open decision making. The action research projects have shown that this concept is broadly supported by the members of the strategy teams, and has shown that the quality of decisions taken is high.

### Limitations of decentralization and business units

Necessary wheels have been set in motion during the past few years as regards organizational structures. New insights have been gained. A distinct movement has been observed towards decentralised business units, operating relatively autonomously and run under a holding company. Many businesses are currently trying to create 'flatter' organizations by surgically removing layers of management and by decentralizing. The new structures create the possibility of shorter lines of communication. Decentralization brings accountability closer to those involved in implementation. This can help the quality of implementation because work can be better geared to the buyers, the customers or the citizens.

Decentralization has its dangers too, however. Although it's true that drastic decentralization does bring accountability up to the level of implementation, this form of decentralization is initially entered into for short-term financial reasons: the individual units ought to be responsible for paddling their own canoe. The pressure emanating from this contributes to a greater commitment in the daily doings of the individual unit, because people are judged on results. In a sense, it is possible to talk exaggeratedly of 'Taylorization the organizational structure' instead of a further democratization. Splitting into business units with a large number of individual service units can lead to additional fragmentation. Moreover, it also makes it difficult to utilize the synergy both in terms of improved cooperation between units and their individual service units, and in terms of a better use of the knowledge available in the organization as a whole.

In the Strategic Management from the Bottom Up research project we wanted to put the right emphasis on the synergy between the departments and the importance of active participation and involvement. Synergy can only be achieved if a better overview of the company is developed by the employees and the management. A better overview will not only result in better understanding of the possibilities and opportunities, but also of the problems and dangers in which the company sees itself.

### Increasing importance of immaterial rewards

Motivation and commitment are recurrent themes in management literature. How can you ensure that people are motivated, or stay motivated? After all, we know

that people who look forward to going to work are the ones who exhibit more energy and creativity. In the past few decades, there has been a great deal of experimentation on this front. Particularly in the human behavior 'school' during the fifties and sixties, and the discussion on humanizing work in the seventies and eighties, there were experiments on extending employees' duties and responsibilities, job enrichment, semi-autonomous groups, quality circles, and training programs. In addition, the old idea prevailed (and still prevails) that the management could goad people into doing more work by rewarding them on merit. However, the well-known material motivation boosters have their drawbacks. Financial contributions often offer short-term solutions for increasing motivation. The tiresome negotiations surrounding Collective Labor Agreements over wage increases often fail in this respect.

In the nineties, it is expected that employees will be set other conditions, mainly of a non-material nature. People will be happy to pull their weight in their company or organization provided that they are listened to seriously, and provided they see their commitment rewarded by participation in the decision making process. Today's workers do not want to have decisions taken for them, but to take part in the decision making itself. The higher educational standard of the average employee will only serve to consolidate this trend during the years to come. In view of demographic developments, managers will need to make extra efforts to attract young people into their companies during the coming years, and to make sure that the well-educated ones stay. Companies will have to make themselves more appealing. An important aspect of this will be the provision of space, in its broadest sense.

Support for this shift in trends can be found in recent studies of people wishing to change jobs. Looking out for a new job is often related to a feeling of insufficient motivation in the current job. A survey carried out by Intermediair Market Analysis (the Netherlands) found that job content and new challenges

Table 1. Reasons for looking for another job

Top 10 Men			Top 10 Women		
1	Job content	42%	1	Job content	45%
2	New challenge	39%	2	New challenge	44%
3	Salary level	27%	3	Nature of work	27%
4	Nature of work	24%	4	Salary level	22%
5	Promotion prospects	20%	5	Atmosphere in company	21%
6	Offer of independence	17%	6	Promotion prospects	17%
7	Atmosphere in company	15%	7	Company's location	17%
8	Salary prospects	15%	8	Traveling time	13%
9	Company location	13%	9	Offer of independence	12%
10	Traveling time	9%	10	Salary prospects	10%

Source: BOA 1992/Intermediair Marktanalyse, *Intermediair* 22 January 1992, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 51.

were the main reasons for looking around for a new job. The salary level has always been a key factor but appears to be hardly any more important than the 'nature-of-the-work' factor or the 'atmosphere-in-the-company' factor (and does not appear to affect women at all) (See Table 1). Although it is true that this target group of Intermediair is a rather highly educated one, their patterns of expectations are not much different from those of young people who have a lower standard of education.

### Reasons for higher involvement in strategic decision making

One of the basic assumptions of Strategic Management from the Bottom Up is the need to increase the commitment of employees in different layers of the organization to strategic decision making. Although at first sight it is not such an obvious idea to open up strategic decision making — the traditional domain of management — to the influence of others within the company, various reasons can be given. A company ought to open up strategic decision making to all its employees because:

1. Active involvement increases the employee's motivation to think along with the company or organization he is working in as regards its future. In reality, almost all employees seem to be concerned about the future, and are extremely interested in the ups and downs of the company for which they work.
2. An active involvement in strategic decision making results in a more positive development of individual capacities. This can open up new horizons for both the employee concerned as well as his/her immediate working environment. All too often people (have to) work below their abilities. In the long run this is extremely unsatisfactory for the persons in question, and for the organization as a whole. In many cases, people would dearly like to have more responsibilities, but naturally they need to have the opportunity and the confidence to do this. If people are given the opportunity to participate in a strategy team, they would not only learn all kinds of skills, they would also be able to demonstrate them.
3. The strategic issues have become so complex that the Management Team (or the management) no longer has a clear view of all the aspects that ought to be considered in the decision-making process. In future, the issue will be increasingly about filling in a puzzle, the important pieces of which are carried by a whole variety of people throughout the entire company.
4. Because of the time pressure in which decisions have to be taken. By drawing on the knowledge which is available within the company, and by giving these people a place in the decision-making process as 'knowledge carriers', knowledge can be far better utilized in a shorter period of time. The cross

section in terms of jobs and hierarchical positions results in faster and more effective communication between the Management Team, the managers and the shop floor.

5. It will create broader support for technological and organizational changes within the company. The rough and tumble of the company environment places much higher standards on the flexibility of the company and on the people who work in it. A greater involvement in what is going on within and outside the company reinforces the support for a more flexible introduction of changes, because more people know why those changes are needed.
6. Because of the relationship between involvement and open communication. There is in fact a dearth of good communication in most companies. Many people in a company do not know what is going on. Or they do not know exactly how the information channels work. Often they do not even know the organizational structure. This hampers the active involvement of employees. If necessary, senior management can ensure that messages reach all employees within a week. The reverse usually takes weeks, if not months. Ideas, suggestions, criticism and constructive comments from below are all too often obstructed along their path to the top. Senior managers, middle management, staff departments and other layers, all have a natural tendency to treat the passing on of information from below less seriously than if it had come from above.

In the Strategic Management from the Bottom Up research projects an attempt was made to avoid a number of the above (motivational) problems by creating open communication and a constructive, democratic dialogue between people from the various hierarchical layers and functional specialities. By starting off with an integrated approach in which employee participation, information and communication are closely linked with one another, a cultural change was created, without the need for all kinds of special training courses or campaigns. The focus, after all, is on a strategic problem on which everyone is working. It is the way team members get on with one another and the way solutions are found by successively involving each person's working environment, that creates broad support for changes within the company.

### Why a cross section of the organization speeds up the information flow

Important stimuli for the organizational and managerial process of change emanate from strategy teams drawn from a cross section of the organization. The reason why a cross section was used rather than a representation drawn from the existing consultative bodies and interest groups, such as works council or trade unions, is considered further here.

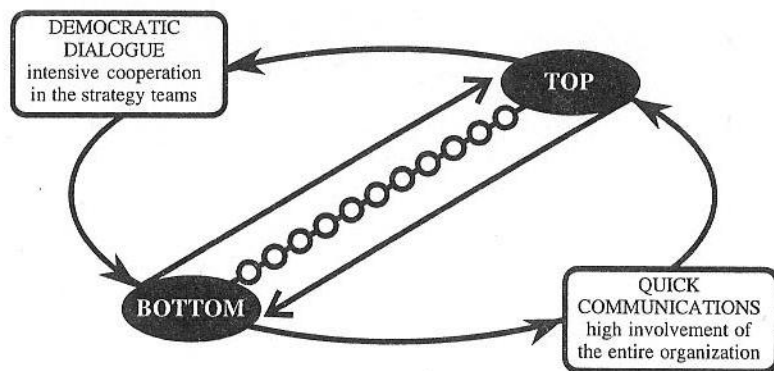


Figure 2: Hierarchical and functional cross section

The idea behind the cross section (see Figure 2) as the guiding principle for compiling a strategy team of about twelve persons (and the knowledge platform, see below), is that strategic issues are complex and therefore need to be examined from different points of view. By assembling a strategy team from people drawn from the whole organization, many more issues can be discussed in a shorter period of time and from various functional points of view, and also from different hierarchical positions within the company. Moreover, everyone in the organization is regarded as a 'knowledge carrier.' Each member of the strategy team brings along a piece of the knowledge puzzle. That knowledge may lie in all sorts of areas: functional, specialized knowledge, knowledge on how to organize the course of implementation, and how to communicate knowledge to the rest of the organization.

Another important reason for using a cross section rather than the top of an organization, is that strategic issues concern the entire organization. Without the active input from below, a chasm evolves between the general direction in which the top is looking for solutions to a strategic question, and actual implementation. Local knowledge is needed for implementation. The cross section combines the knowledge possessed by those persons on the shop floor with the management's knowledge. Practicable solutions are worked on together because of the concentration in time and the concrete focus. The solution to a strategic question often lies not in one pat answer, but in a series of dovetailed answers which bring about an evolutionary process of change in order to approach the eventual, stipulated goal.

Finally, a cross section is used because this method enables an estimate to be made, even during the strategy-team stage, as to whether there is support for the direction in which solutions are being sought. By stimulating team members to include their working environment actively in the duties of the strategy team, a feeling can be gained early on of how proposals for decisions or action items are

regarded by the whole organization, and which items need adjusting. The cross-section method therefore promotes the suitability of proposals in the organization, and thereby increases support for the processes of change.

The advantage which the cross section of people who hardly know anything about one another has over a representation from existing groups and institutions, such as works councils, is that a strategic subject is worked on far more uninhibitedly, and consequently more intrinsically, than would occur in a situation in which there is already talk about certain balances of power beforehand. In such situations, subjects and solutions are often 'negotiated', which results in strategic questions being sacrificed for reasons concerning the politics of the interested representatives.

For this reason, the strategy team is assembled in such a way that the team forms a true reflection of the people in the organization. The requirement of openness, efficiency and effectiveness ensures that use is made of the existing institutions, whereby one looks to see whether any 'natural bridgeheads' can be extracted from some of the important consultative groups and departments who are participating in the strategy team and who could provide immediate feedback to, for example, the (central) works council or staff association, an employee participation committee, the Personnel and Organization department, the Board meeting, the Development department (R&D). These do not have to be senior people as such, and can of course be composed of good junior people who are given the opportunity to build up a network by participating in a strategy team, thereby making them much more interesting to their own immediate working environment.

### The implementation of Strategic Management from the Bottom Up

The procedures for implementing Strategic Management from the Bottom Up can be viewed from two different perspectives. First, in terms of structuring the meetings and organizing them, and second, in terms of the way in which the members of a strategy team work together on a project.

The structuring of meetings took place in all the companies with the aid of a clear step plan for each meeting. A step plan can be regarded as a kind of agenda. Besides a step plan for each individual meeting, a step plan is made for the entire project. This forms the basis for the project but it will have to be adjusted flexibly time and again for the individual meetings.

Table 2 shows, in general terms, what a step plan for a whole project could look like.

In each company, the step plan was adjusted to the specific needs of the participants and the company's circumstances. Each meeting started with an explanation of the step plan of that particular meeting. In this way, both partici-

Table 2. An example of a step plan.

First: Explain the reason for the project to employees and company; explain the way that Strategic Management from the Bottom Up works. Then continue with the following steps:

- Familiarization phase
- Information on provisional strategic issues
- Designing and implementing a SWOT analysis by strategy team (SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)
- Final selection of the strategic problem area
- Problem definition and delimiting the problem area
- Immersion in the chosen strategic problem using own knowledge and skills
- Further in-depth exploration of the strategic problem by consulting external knowledge sources, and by getting started inside and outside the organization (working in subgroups)
- Coming up with possible solutions and then discussing the pros and cons of the various solution courses
- Choosing the direction in which the problem can be resolved
- Formulating concrete objectives and conditions.
- Checking the financial options and other restrictions
- Prioritizing the resources and actions so as to achieve the objectives
- The process of deciding on accountability and on the implementation of the action plans
- Going back and comparing the objectives, actions and resources with the company's basic assumptions and overall strategy (contained in the Business Plan)
- Evaluating the method and the results of the project.

pants and supervisors clearly understood what was going to be discussed, and what information, in the form of detailed assignments, would be up for discussion. The method is heavily goal oriented, that is, everyone knows the reason for their being in the strategy team and what is expected of them. There is no dialogue just for dialogue's sake but rather a 'dialogue aimed at reaching a concrete result.' The experiences obtained in the project show how very important it is that a clear goal be pursued during the very first meeting, so that all the assignments and group discussions can again be focused on the specific strategic issue for which the group has been formed. In this way, endless discussions which lead nowhere can be avoided without the need for an overly structured or overly supervised discussion. Although the activities were aimed at solving the strategic question, there was nevertheless a great deal of variety afforded by working in subgroups, by discussing the information collected during the plenary meetings, and by the formulation of specific questions in subgroups during the plenary meetings.

This structured way of working enabled the project to be concluded after three to four plenary meetings and a few sessions in subgroups, with action plans containing a summary of the findings of the strategy team, and including clear agreements regarding the follow-up activities.

If the procedure of Strategic Management from the Bottom Up is viewed from the second perspective, i.e., how people work together, then it can be said

that Strategic Management from the Bottom Up demands commitment from the top to allow employees at all levels in the organization to participate actively in strategic decision making through a strategy team composed of twelve to fifteen persons. This requires a climate of openness. It also stimulates the management to risk circulating strategic information to the employees and thereby obtain even more information. This interactive method of formulating and implementing strategy is vital. The concept involves working as a team, collecting information from within the entire organization as well as from outside it, and then discussing possible options and weighing up the pros and cons. In this way, employees gain insights into the kinds of questions that are important to the company, and what the implications of those questions are, and who can be made accountable for what. In a nutshell, this is how Strategic Management from the Bottom Up works.

### What are strategic questions?

Strategic Management from the Bottom Up is about putting forward a strategic question which will affect the entire company. But what is 'strategic' and what is a 'question' or a 'problem' from the company's point of view? The following can serve as a way of finding a strategic question:

Between now and the next three years, ..X.. has to be done, otherwise we shall be faced with insurmountable problems which may threaten the future of the company and the jobs of its employees.

Some examples of additional questions which can help gain a better insight into the strategic problem are:

- Are there any drastic changes expected in the operation of the business? If so, why?
- What, according to the business plan, are the most important concerns of the management?
- Can these concerns be grouped in clusters? If so, which ones?
- Have the problems been known for some time, or have they arisen recently?
- What, in order of importance, are the most important problems, and why?
- Do they concern internal problems, or do they originate from outside the company (shifts in competitive relations, cyclical fluctuations, legislation, political developments), or are they connected?
- Can the possible costs associated with the problem be calculated?
- Which departments within the company are most immediately affected?
- Which departments can provide intrinsic help in searching for solutions?
- Where are the most important bottlenecks expected in the solution path? How can these be remedied?
- Which markets and customers are relevant to the strategic problem?

- What are competitors doing? (Should they too be faced with the same problem?)
- How can the knowledge in and around the company be tapped?
- How do you get all layers of personnel to become active participants in a joint future?

### Continuing Strategic Management from the Bottom Up through a knowledge platform

The establishment of the concept in the company, not only in the form of a structure but particularly in the minds of the people, is pivotal to the success or otherwise of Strategic Management from the Bottom Up. Switches must be turned on, as it were, particularly in terms of management and control.

At the companies participating in our research project and the regional police force, most participants measured the success of Strategic Management from the Bottom Up according to the degree to which management was prepared to dedicate itself to the future application of Strategic Management from the Bottom Up. There was an almost universal fear that management would respond noncommittally. Participants expect an active, stimulating and enthusiastic effort on the part of senior management in order to ensure that Strategic Management from the Bottom Up becomes embedded. A clear commitment is also expected on the action items brought up.

In concrete terms for the regional police force this means that there is not only a visible *proportion* of the strategy team in the 1994–1998 Policy Plan, but also that these action items are translated into the annually-revised Business Plan and into the Activity Plans for each segment and for each department. Besides the implementation of the action items, periodic feedback is also needed. The proposed action items should be tested in the field and adjusted where necessary. These are then put into effect in the annual operationalization (Business Plan and Activity Plans). Feedback is also necessary in order to pass on learning effects so that employees throughout the entire force know what others have actually done with the action items, and what can be learned from each others' successes and mistakes. Feedback on this is not regarded as a control but as an essential input for a learning organization, which this regional police organization must become (see Figure 3).

The knowledge platform can continue to play a key role in the future application of Strategic Management from the Bottom Up. The knowledge platform is a transmitter and receiver of 'live' (strategic) questions in the organization. A combination of external and internal information takes place in the knowledge platform. The information originates from the members of the knowl-

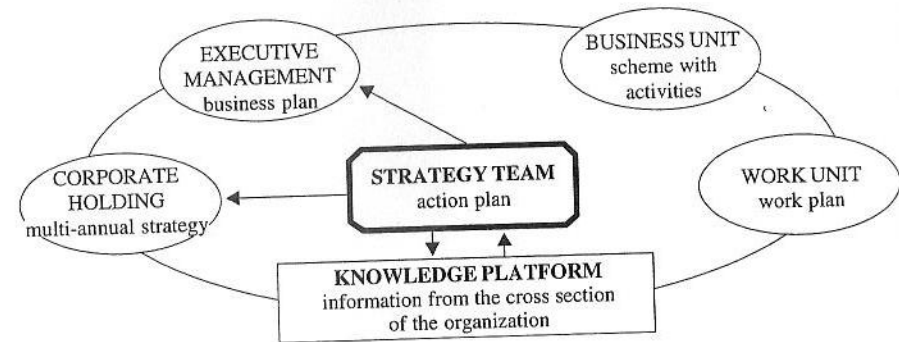


Figure 3. Embedding Strategic Management from the Bottom Up and the knowledge platform in strategic decision making.

edge platform. The composition of the platform is once again a cross section of the organization and consists of a maximum of 15 members who temporarily form part of the knowledge platform. A period of 18 months should be envisaged. The members are drawn from all areas of the workforce, irrespective of their position in the hierarchy. Motivation is the key word. The members can be chosen during a work progress meeting.

The establishment of a knowledge platform can ensure a reduction in need to have meetings in the company or organization. After all, if everyone knows what is going on and can come up with ideas through work progress meetings, then separate meetings need not be continually arranged in order to explain what is being done. Clear communication from the knowledge platform breaks the circuit.

There is therefore a great deal to be said in favor of working towards a situation in which the content plays a key role. This can be achieved if information and knowledge in the organization is better streamlined and made more transparent, thereby enabling more people to know more in a shorter period of time, and so enabling them to search actively and creatively for solutions. The knowledge platform can contribute to this. It does not mean that all other consultative bodies become superfluous as a result. From the evaluation it appears that many participants are of the opinion that Strategic Management from the Bottom Up can continue to co-exist well alongside, for example, a works council, staff association (police) or trade union, but that there ought to be a clearer delimitation of what the objective is: strategy and content, or conditions of employment and the protection of interests.



### Implications for the content of management tasks and the position of the shop floor

Embedding Strategic Management from the Bottom Up in the organization utilizing the knowledge platform has consequences for the traditional management-employee relationship. The more 'content' come to occupy the foreground, rather than the hierarchical relationship, the more both parties can grow closer to one another. This is literally the way participants in the police corps project perceived it. For the management (or the executives in general), this can result in a form of 'cognitive dissonance', something which is much the same as inner rejection. In such cases, it could be that executives are afraid of losing influence and consequently of being exposed to a loss of status. This will be of even greater importance in a bureaucratic, hierarchical organization. It is therefore extremely important to allow a new way of decision making to be accompanied by a form of 'intervention' for executives, so that they are able to identify with the new role and its associated tasks. Indeed, executives will continue to play a crucial role in Strategic Management from the Bottom Up too, even if that role is different from the previous one.

The following tasks fall within the scope of (changed) management tasks:

- to provide the (necessary) stimulus on the main issues (for every manager at his/her own level);
- to create an openness about issues and allow this to radiate actively;
- to contribute external information;
- to come up with strategic themes;
- to pass on information about what is going on in the company's internal politics as well as externally;
- to make adjustments where necessary, e.g. to the course of implementation;
- to take responsibility for implementing the action items;
- to take a critical look at the long-term effect of action items (reflection and feedback);
- to stimulate the active involvement of as many employees as possible;
- to stimulate interaction between 'top' and 'bottom';
- to reinforce the positive behavior of employees;
- to exemplify the basic values of Strategic Management from the Bottom Up.

Based on the above list, it turns out that it is primarily the attitude of the executives that changes. This seems simple, but it is the most difficult part of the process to social adaptation to other norms and values over a period of many years. This is especially so in the case of the police, but the phenomenon can also be detected in the companies. It will be a difficult process to change the culture of the police organization in regard to its core values. Even so, in view of the drastically altered environment of the police organization, great efforts will have

to be made in the coming years if innovations and changes are to be implemented. Companies as well as organizations can already make a start on the evaluation of new executives based on their ability to function as 'coaches' galvanizing their staff in a flatter, less hierarchical organization.

Just as the terms of reference will change for executives in the longer run, so too will Strategic Management from the Bottom Up change the work and, in particular, the employees' attitudes toward work. The most important change in this area is that they will no longer wait passively for information from above before complaining. Instead, they themselves will take on the responsibility as a team to ensure a smoother functioning of the company organization. Each person ought to feel responsible for improving the quality of the companies' products and services. This amounts in concrete terms to:

- being alert to changes in and around the workplace;
- helping to think of improvements in a pro-active way;
- daring to demonstrate this by suggesting activities themselves;
- providing an active input into the knowledge platform;
- working pro-actively on the informal transfer of knowledge to colleagues in other parts of the force;
- being open to learning experiences originating from elsewhere in the force, or from other forces;
- being responsible for a proper implementation of (strategic) policy.

### Conclusion

From what has been said, it is clear that Strategic Management from the Bottom Up is more than just a one-off project. It is the beginning of a much broader organizational, managerial and institutional process of change that will materialize gradually. Commitment from the top as well as motivation of the bottom are crucial to this. It has been explained how the setting up of a knowledge platform can streamline the information and knowledge about the content of the work, and how the knowledge platform can operate pro-actively by setting up strategy teams. The guiding principle for the creation of both the knowledge platform and the strategy teams is the 'cross section.' True commitment to the core values of this approach to strategic management are decisive for its success.