

Universität zu Köln

Seminar für Allgemeine Betriebswirtschaftslehre,
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Agility Study

Motivation

In many companies the topic “Agility” has reached the corporate agendas and initiatives have begun to increase the agility of corporate staff functions. However, today we have only limited evidence with regard to the extent that agility initiatives indeed increase a unit’s agility. Furthermore, to effectively achieve agility, agile working methods alone might not be sufficient. Instead, it could be necessary to embed them in a broader context of organizational supportive factors. The present study by the Department for Corporate Development and Organization of the University of Cologne (Prof. Dr. Mark Ebers) seeks to inform on these questions.

Contents of the Study

The study focuses on the agility of corporate staff functions in large corporations, such as human resources, organization, accounting, finance, or purchasing. We employ a structured survey to provide information on the following issues:

- How agile is the unit in terms of responsiveness/proactivity, flexibility, and speed?
- Which supportive factors can help to increase a unit’s agility? In particular, we focus on agile mindsets, the unit’s network of knowledge sharing and advice, leadership roles, empowerment, and a culture of tolerance for error.

All data will be handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation of the EU. Data processing and analysis are fully anonymous and will not reveal any personal information. The survey should be completed by all members of a unit. It takes about 40 minutes to complete. Ideally, 2-3 customers of each unit should also rate the unit’s agility. This latter survey takes about 5 minutes to complete. The researchers personally administer the survey on an agreed date and time.

We need you

Knowing that you have taken first measures to become more agile, we would greatly appreciate your participation in this study and your insights to advance the research on what really brings greater agility into companies!

Your Benefits

As a participant of the study you will receive detailed results gained from the study. We would be happy to offer a presentation and discussion of the study’s findings, including:

- an assessment of your unit’s agility,
- allow you to identify areas you can improve on when seeking to advance your unit’s agility,
- provide benchmarks from other participating companies and the findings from other studies that allow you to compare where you stand.

As a further benefit to you, we would be happy to monitor in future the progress you make with regard to your unit’s agility and its drivers.

If you should have any further questions, please contact:

Professor Dr. Mark Ebers