“Networks for Basic Education need a home”

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Agenda

- A short manual
- Attempt at a definition
- Networks between theory and practice
- Dimensions of success in networking
- Valuable tips for local networking
A short manual

- The following information refer to the interaction between professionally operating institutions, the so called „tertiary networks“

- !!!!!Warning: Just in case you want to maintain close contact to your family and friends do not apply to primary and secondary networks

- The assumed empiricism and the results derived from this analysis are based on experiences made in the „Rheinland“-region in Germany

- Please note that the speaker does not assume any liability to the risks and side-effects when transferring the method to other cultural areas
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Attempt at a definition

Networks are

unlimited...

- ...non-hierarchically structured and voluntary forms of cooperation, which
  - aim to achieve medium and long-term objectives,
  - provide the resources required for achieving these objectives,
  - are based on mutual confidence.
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A warning message based on personal experience...

- working for basic education in the municipality: chronically underfunded and underrepresented
- the panacea: Let’s start a network! Do networks boom because they are so wonderfully informal?
- the trouble is: even basic education networks need resources to be successful.
- class instead of mass?: 50 sleeping members better than 5 active supporters?
- networks as (research-)objects of desire: the (pseudo-)academization of networking
Basic education in regional networks

- Basic education is an interdisciplinary topic, but that doesn’t mean everyone feels equally responsible.
- Traditionally, educational infrastructures are focused on the school system. Viewed from this perspective, other settings like day nurseries, youth institutions, or adult education are seen as "the outside world".
- On the municipal level, these systems compete for resources and are at the same time integral parts of the same education- and prevention chain.
- Offers and services of social issues ease access but they also cost money.
- Professionalization on a fee basis is a difficult business.
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Successful strategies for networks

- Knowledge of and understanding for the involved players, their interests and framework conditions
- Cooperativeness also on the management level
- Coordination and support by a „neutral“ moderator
- Agreement on a common strategic objective, on working structures and key activities
- Creating occasions for collaboration (e.g. joint training, stock analysis, events,...)
- Connecting networks, using existing structures
Optimal lifecycle of a network

A = Activity

T = Time
Non-optimal lifecycle of a network

A = Activity

T = Time
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Typology of networkers I

**The caring one:**
Motivation: Responsibility
Motto: „...because no one else dares“

**The cosy one:**
Motivation: Confidence
Motto: „...love the one you’re with“

**The blocker and objector:**
Motivation: Keeping control
Motto: „...the evil is always there and everywhere“
Typology of networkers II

The know-all:
Motivation: Knowledge
Motto: „...if you don't ask you'll never know“

The trader:
Motivation: Resources
Motto: „...it’s money that matters“

The system changer:
Motivation: Power
Motto: „...all alone they wear you down“
Networks as access to public funding

- In the past it was easy to get access to public funding by building networks as a project target
- Unfortunately a lot of networks turned out to be „one hit wonders“ that vanished after project completion
- Public funding agencies and foundations soon began to learn: today existing network structures often are a condition for public funding
- Public/private applicants foster and nurture network structures in various areas and are actively involved
- Normally networks do not act as project sponsors themselves but as a „canvas“ for projects
Basic education as an interdisciplinary topic

- Struggle against poverty
- Prevention
- Employability
- Inclusion/equal opportunities
- Family education
- Consumer-/financial education
- Neighborhood development
- Health promotion
- Political and social participation

interdepartmental cooperation for participation