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## Doctoral Thesis: Abstract

*Margret Beisheim: Work groups in banks - group concepts integrated into organizational theory and empirical evaluation of their impacts on the organization and its actors*

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The thesis deals with organizational change pertaining to the coordination, control and job design of various forms of work groups (quality circles, project groups, workshops, teams and semi-autonomous groups) in banks. It explores the risks and chances for management and employees involved in the implementation of work groups in the banking sector.

Empirically based on case studies, the thesis answers the following questions:

1. Why and how do banks implement work groups?
2. How do these groups look like and how do they work?
3. Which economic and social effects result for organization, groups and actors?

The paper is structured in five chapters. The introduction is followed by a second chapter, where the general context and strategies of banking are discussed. Furthermore, the theoretical basis of working in groups is laid. The third chapter constitutes the theoretical framework based on a micro-political approach. It builds up a continuum between a mechanistic and an organic organization. Especially the effects of work groups are focused by juxtaposing hierarchical coordination and self-regulation. The fourth chapter presents five in-depth case studies in four German banks and one Austrian bank. The results are evaluated and summarized.

The last chapter gives advice for implementation of group concepts and ends with some thoughts on organizational learning.

Method: five case studies, based on 40 semi-structured interviews with actors in banks; qualitative approach (content analysis).

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