Agneta Brav  

Agneta Brav works as a lecturer at the Department of Psychology at Mälardalen University. She is also a qualified nurse and registered with the National Board of Health and Welfare. Her previous work life experience also includes 15 years of administration and accounting at ABB. Her interest in research is within the domain of work and organizational psychology.

Work groups can be an effective means to increase productivity, efficiency and innovation processes in organizations. The general aim in the thesis is directed towards work conditions and whether work groups redefine stipulated tasks to include initiative taking and self-organizational activities. Data is based on work task analyses and questionnaires administered to work groups at four Swedish industrial organizations. The results from three empirical studies show that dimensions of job demand, support from leader, reflexivity, and potency as well as cooperation and social support are important for the outcomes of work groups if the organization wants groups to take initiative and go beyond the stipulated tasks in order to implement meaningful change. It is also advocated that job design has an inherent potential for learning and the possibility to make use of one’s resources. Main findings, strengths, limitations, practical and theoretical implications, directions for future research and when it will be worthwhile to invest in group work are included in the discussion.