

Double binds of middle management in knowledge work

In this article, we analyse the role of middle management in organising knowledge work. The empirical material is based on interviews that form part of our broader ethnographic data. By using one work community as a paradigmatic example, we expound the positions, discourses, and articulations the double position of middle management produces. We ask: 1) How do members of middle management conceive of uncertainty as a part of i) the organisation, ii) their work, and iii) the management of subordinates' work? 2) How is uncertainty perceived from the middle management's position, and what kinds of contradictions does this provoke in the whole organisation? In our analysis, we utilise the concepts of double position and double binds. Our results reveal how the double position produces a lack of distinction in the organisation. The results engage with broader tendencies of uncertainty in knowledge work and the transitions of management in university work.