



EMPLOYEE-DRIVEN INNOVATION IN THE NORDIC CONTEXT

The Nordic Region – an attractive place for advanced businesses?
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In the Nordic context, employee-driven innovation (EDI) is ...



- one of the most important strategic instruments to preserve and develop Nordic workplaces in manufacturing and production -
 - and to develop an increasingly more effective and flexible public sector.
- an important source of competitive advantage, based on the fundamental idea of sustainable value creation; economically, environmentally, and socially.

The core

The core of *employee-driven innovation* is the belief that all employees possess knowledge, ideas and problem-solving skills which will be of great value for business performance ...
... provided that the organizations adapt for it.

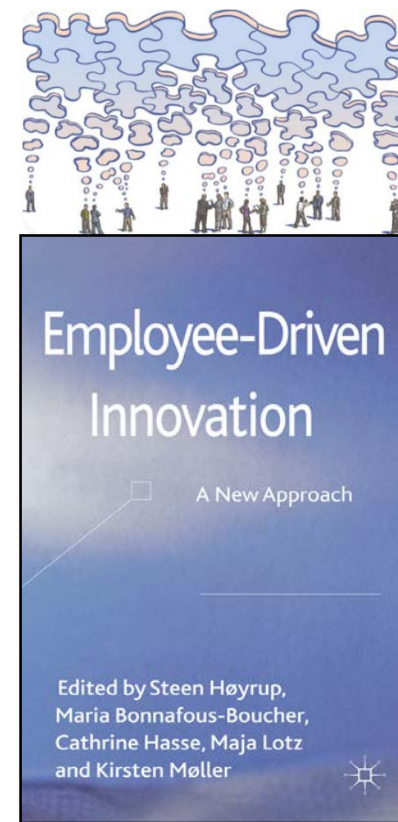


**The challenge is how
to make it work
in practise!**

Employee-driven innovation (EDI) defined -

... refers to the generation and implementation of new ideas, products, and processes – including the everyday remaking of jobs and organization practices – originating from interaction of employees, **who are not assigned to this task.**

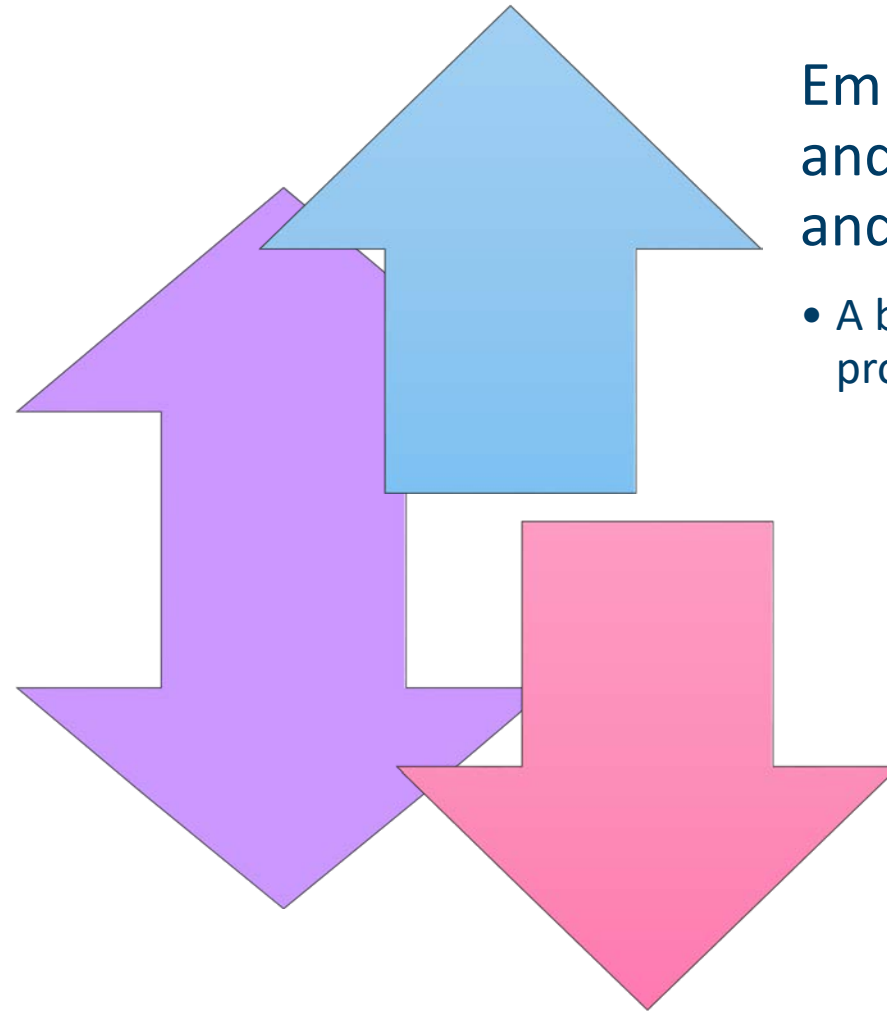
The processes are unfolded in an organization and may be integrated in cooperative and managerial efforts of the organization. Employees are active and may initiate, support and even drive/lead the processes.



Directions of EDI

Employees' initiatives, understood and supported by the management, and integrated as part of the formal innovation strategy

- *Combination of bottom-up and top-down*



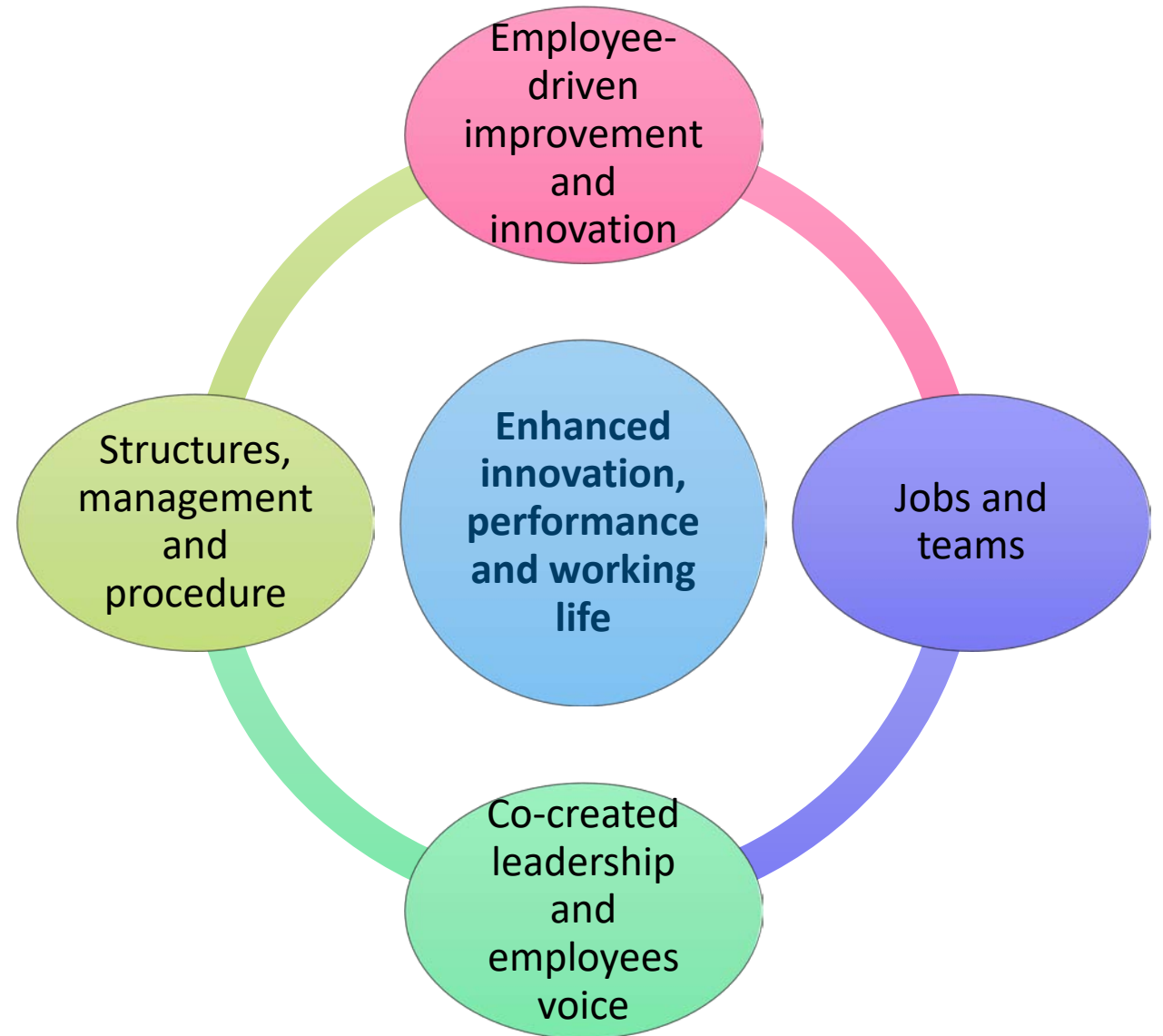
Employees spontaneous and informal initiatives and actions

- A bottom-up innovation process

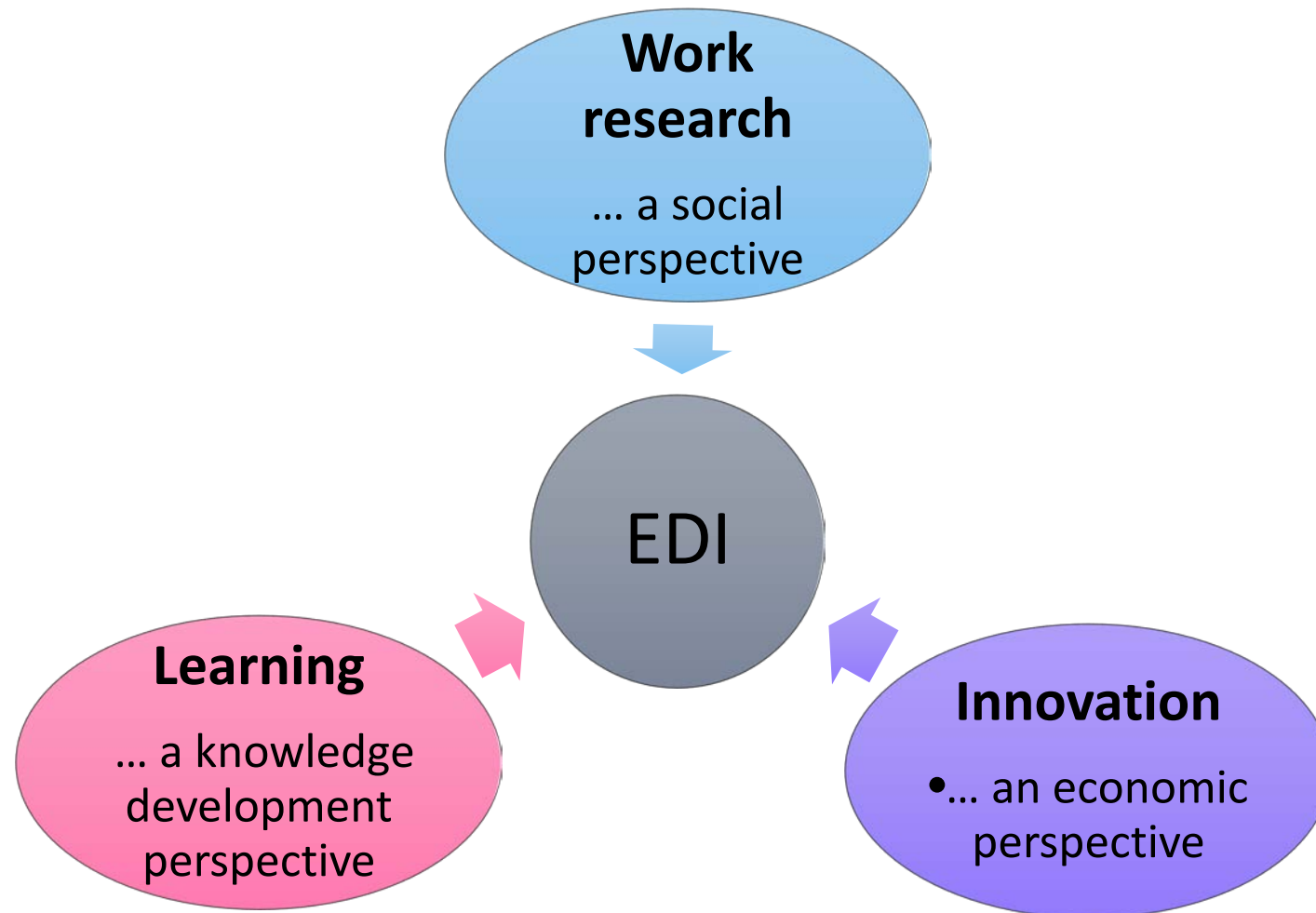
Managements' invitation to and adaptation for active participation in innovation

- *Top-down processes where participation is integrated as part of the innovation strategy.*

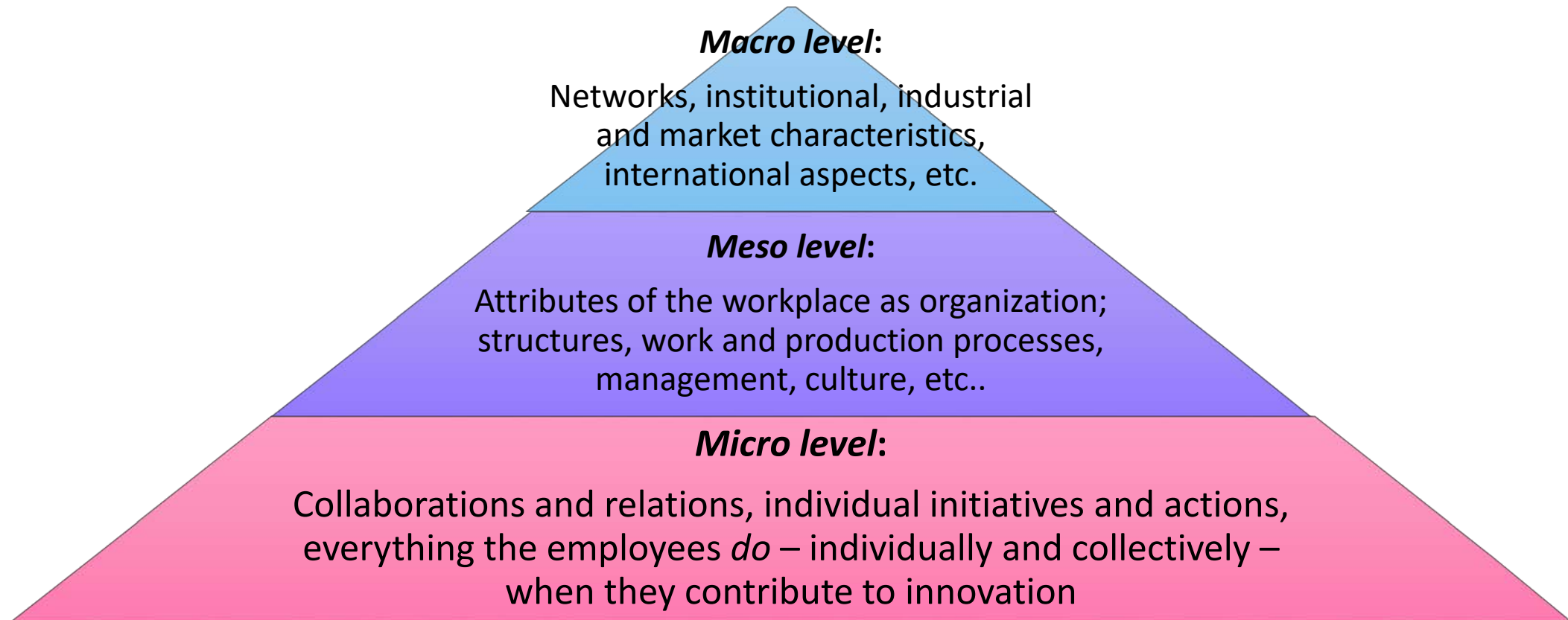
Workplace innovation: Integration of EDI into an overall innovation strategy



Interpreting EDI from different perspectives



... and on different levels



Insights from research combined

1. Conditions

Internal conditions

- Cooperation
- Leadership
- Autonomy
- Innovation focus
- Tasks

External relationships

EDI

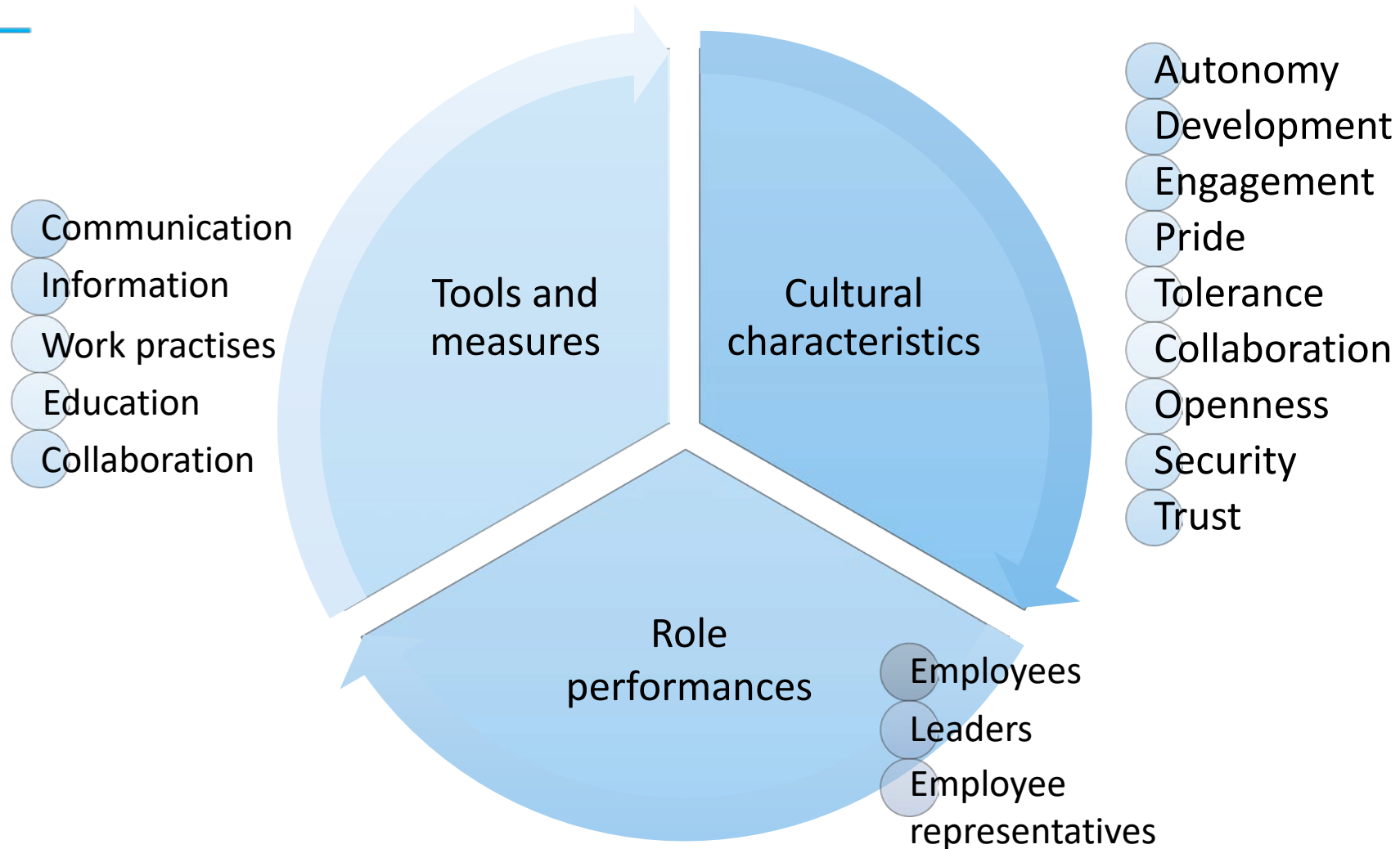
2. Effects – direct and indirect

- ↶ Productivity
- ↷ Operational costs
- ↶ Product quality
- ↶ Job satisfaction
- ↶ Motivation
- ↶ Change attitude
- ↷ Sickness absence
- ↷ Labour turnover
- ↶ # of employees

Impact on business sustainability

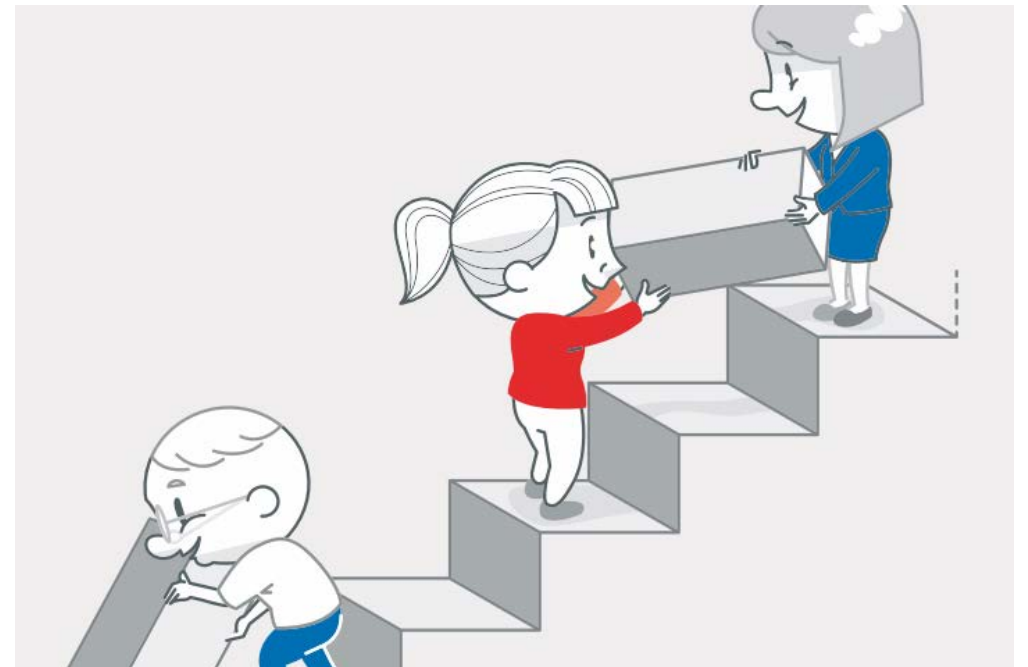
Impact on socio-economic factors

Experiences from Norway



What we also know about EDI in Norway

- ✓ There is no one 'best practice' for EDI – there are many, but all involve the active and systematic participation of all employees in innovation
- ✓ Broad involvement 'in all directions'
- ✓ Mutual development of ideas and knowledge development across fields and responsibilities
- ✓ Norwegian work tradition is in the core



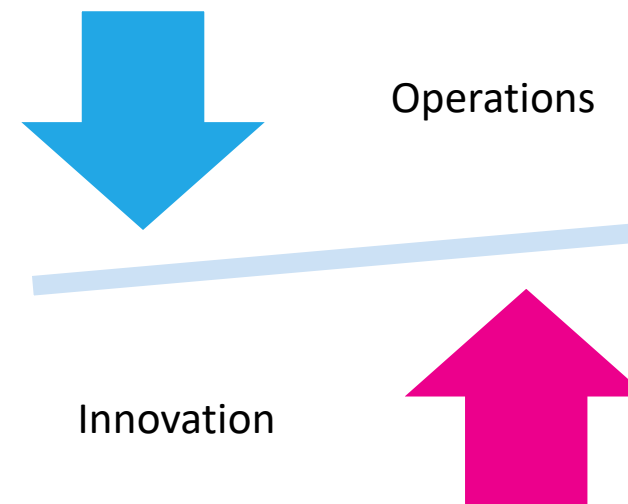
The necessity of a 'bigger picture'



The significance of a bigger picture

- Sufficient **knowledge** of relevance for the situation
- Correct level of **responsibility**, and the necessary **autonomy** to be able to act
- Sensible **power of judgement** as basis for making choices and acting

'...the most important facts about a situation and the effects of that situation on other things'.



Return on investment?

EDI →



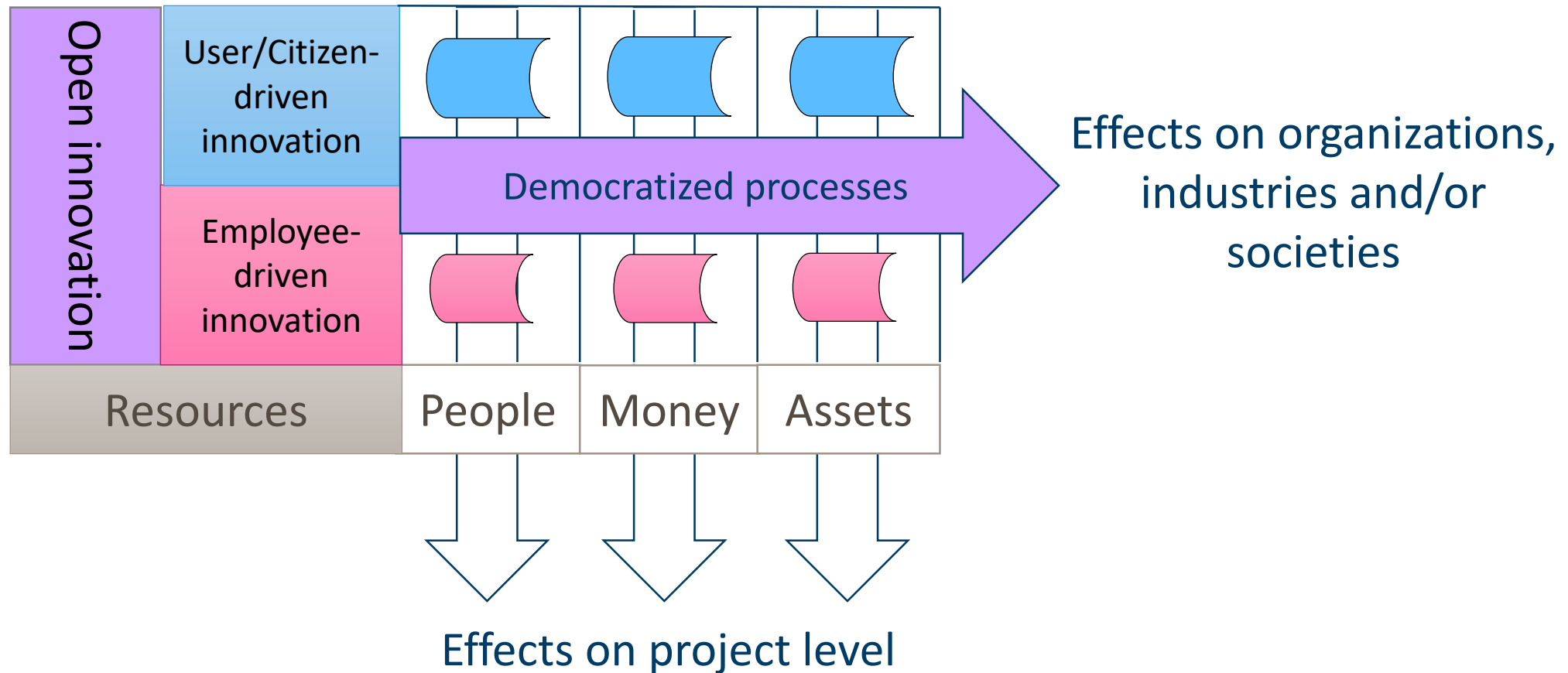
... widespread cooperative and creative skills...
... general interest in improvement ...
... increased engagement in innovation ...
... reduced opposition to change ...
... improved coherence ...

... changing roles of leaders ...
... changing roles of employees ...
... mobilization of middle management ...



**... open,
collaborative
innovation**

An example



NORDISKE ARBEJDSPAPIRER
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**Nordiske strategier for medarbejderdrevet
innovasjon – 2013**

Rapport fra arbeidsseminar om medarbejderdrevet innovasjon
(MDI) i Norden

Tone Merethe Aasen, Kirsten Møller og Anna Fogelberg Eriksson

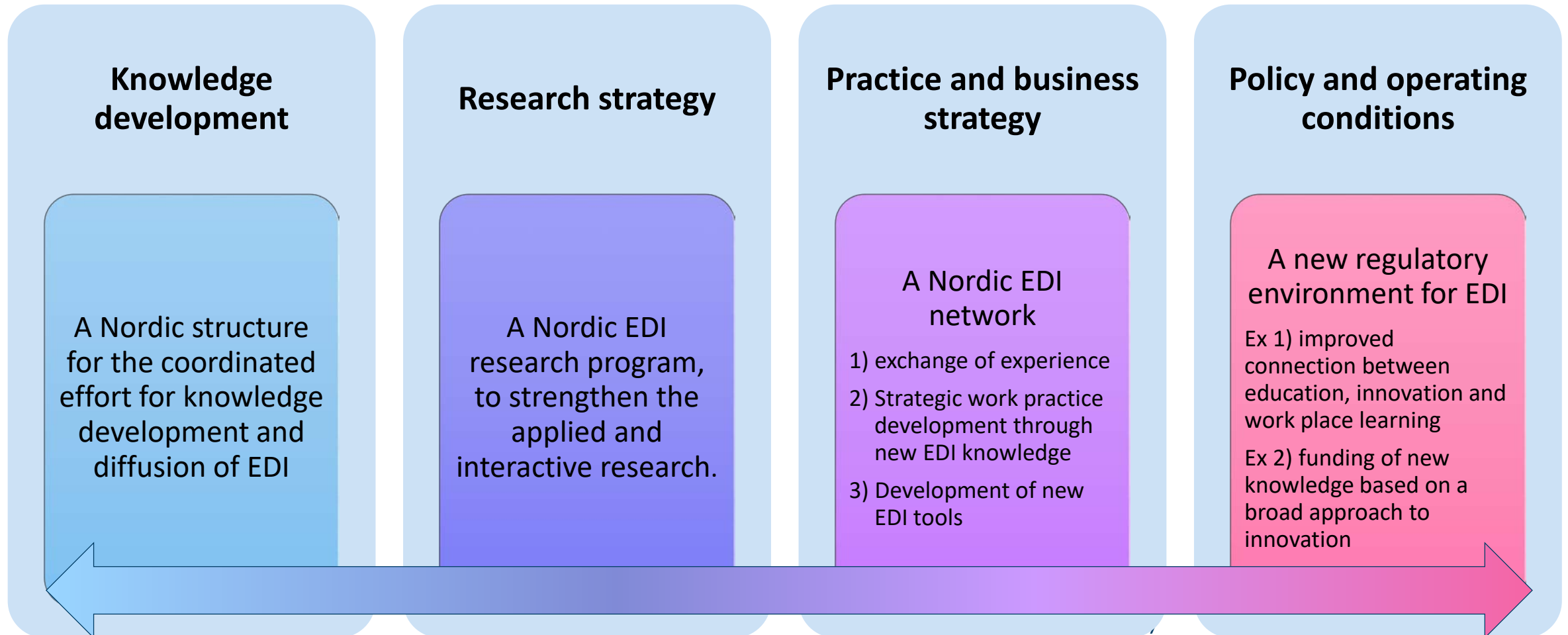


There is a need to increase the attention towards employee-driven innovation in Nordic work life.

In spite of the various efforts already made to develop and implement EDI-practices in the respective Nordic countries, large, unexplored potentials still exist for Nordic work life to become more innovative.

This implies the use of the skills and expertise of all employees in innovative ways as a source to new knowledge and new opportunities.

(Still valid) strategic recommendations





Technology for a better society

Thank you for your attention 😊