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CORPORATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING: OBJECTIVES, PROCESS AND OUTCOMES (SUMMARY)

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Despite the consensus concerning the value of established organizations acting entrepreneurially (Morris et al, 2008), there is a lack of understanding of how firms develop effective structures and processes that spur corporate entrepreneurship (Dess et al, 2003). Training is one HR practice that can be used to nurture entrepreneurial competencies and enable corporate entrepreneurship (Thornberry, 2003; Haynie et al., 2010; Hayton and Kelley, 2006). However, the notion of entrepreneurial training and development is not clearly defined in academia (Vecchio, 2003). Research addressing entrepreneurship education initiatives predominantly focuses on student populations (Kolvereid, 1997; Chrisman and MacMullan, 2000; Krueger et al, 2000; Peterman and Kennedy, 2003; Souitaris et al 2007; Wilson et al, 2007). Literature which addresses CE training (CET) focuses on individual characteristics and perceptions of the internal environment (Kuratko et al, 1990; Hornsby et al, 1993). The literature does not deal with managers’ and trainers’ experience of CET programs nor does it fully explore the potential outcomes. In this paper, we explore the objectives of CE program designers and participants. We look at potential learning outcomes and query what may influence these outcomes.

Method

Given the dearth of material addressing CET we engage in theory building. Theory building from case studies is an increasingly popular and relevant research strategy (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). In this study, we examine a CET program which was delivered in a large multinational company. Over a 24 month period, we sat in on training sessions, engaged in semi-structured interviews with participants, instructors and program designers and reviewed program materials and training reports. We use this case study to develop theory and propose a framework for understanding CET.

Results and Implications

We focus on the intrapreneurial competencies which participants may develop. We propose that competency acquisition impacts upon participants’ confidence in their ability to be intrapreneurial (intrapreneurial self-efficacy) and ultimately on their intention to behave intrapreneurially (intrapreneurial intention). Our study underlines the role of teamwork, social capital and knowledge in the creation of intrapreneurial self-efficacy and intrapreneurial intention. We also probe participants’ perceptions of organizational and management support. We lay the groundwork for two new constructs and bridge prior research in the domains of corporate entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education.

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