

Abstracts (englisch)

Friedrich Wetz

Requirements and reality of political starting - points in the field of work: the example of teamwork

In times of crisis, lots of companies have developed a double strategy: on the one hand, new political starting-points in the field of work are being propagated and partly tested as well, aiming at activating the motivation and initiative of the staff. At the same time, there is a hard line aiming at a maximum reduction of costs with a minimum of inclusion of staff and their representatives. The introduction of teamwork is a typical example. This double strategy results in a divided company reality side by side: a politics of performance destined for confrontation and a politics of work, which announces participation as a central target. Practice and science have so far ignored this contradiction to a great extent, but coming to terms with its possible consequences seems to be absolutely necessary.

Martin Schmeiser

Disposition and Position: Motivational Patterns of Nurses' Occupational Choice and its Change (1890-1990)

Using historical and statistical data on German nurses employed in the non-religious health sector between 1890-1990, this paper analyzes changes in the motivational dispositions for occupational choice. At the beginning of this century the experience of parental loss was the dominant motive for entering the nursing profession. After World War II this motivational pattern slowly diminished and was substituted by the experience of illness and "social inheritance" of the mother's occupation.

Karin Büchter

Small and medium-sized enterprises: Carriers of structural change?

Large enterprises were counted among the guarantors for potential economic output social well-being up until the 70s, then, in connection with the liberal economic politics at the beginning of the 80s, small and medium-sized enterprises experienced a renaissance as endogenous development potential and carriers of hope for the structural change. With this upward trend of smaller and medium-sized enterprises - thus seems to be the economic-political tenor - an increase in the need for qualifications seems to go hand in hand, which makes initiatives for further extended vocational training a necessity. Based on existing empirical results, the following shows assumptions of prosperity and qualifications in small and medium-sized enterprises in a relative light, as well as points towards practical problems for continuing training in and for smaller and medium-sized enterprises.

Helmut Martens

Cultures of company participation by combine-wide concepts of modernisation concerning work and health protection

With the example of the implementation of participatorial concepts of the preventive protection of labour and health the following essay discusses the role of members or work councils within this context. The essay is based on empirical findings in five companies within three enterprises of the German iron- and steel-industry. It can be demonstrated that there are very different cultures of participation and co-determination on company level, which have been generated under the co-determination law - even within the same enterprise. They are the filter which combine-wide concepts of modernisation have to go through. At the same time they are the remarkably solid basis of all progressive concepts of participation, a basis which has outlasted all radical changes which have been going on the branch over the last ten or even twenty years. Referring to the actual role of labour representatives the findings confirm that recent interpretation which estimate their co-management functions more cautiously and rather attribute them the role of someone who moderates those processes of change. There is evidence that work council members will play a prominent part in the turning out and further development of progressive co-determined participation cultures.