

Foreword

Crime prevention is a good example of knowledge-intensive work. Crime prevention is built upon information: gathering, analyzing, and exchanging it. Intelligence-led policing, a crime-prevention strategy that has recently gained worldwide support, has raised the significance of information. The amount of information, however, has reached a level that cannot be processed by human capacity alone. Planned information processing and tools for it are needed. Managing the cumulating amount of information and knowledge of the police is a prerequisite for success.

Crime investigation is not merely about individual competencies, although this is how it often looks in the detective stories. Crime investigation necessarily involves collaboration; working together. The new ways of gathering information in crime investigation may clash with the old structures, the way activities are traditionally organized and carried out. Crime does not obey the boundaries between authorities. Economic crime, for example, may burden authorities such as tax office, enforcement office, customs, and the prosecutor, in addition to the police. Information exchange is the minimum of collaboration, but often there is a need to work together and create new knowledge together in multiprofessional and multiorganizational groups.

The traditional mode of collaboration between agencies resembles a relay race. This *sequential collaboration* enables only the transmission of papers and information from one participant to another. The mere exchange of information does not, however, guarantee good results: *parallel collaboration*, working together and analyzing the information together, is needed. The goals of the investigation have to be defined together as well: the target has to be

shared to avoid a situation in which each agency aims at its own, diverging goals. This involves negotiations, interaction, and open-minded crossing of organizational boundaries.

Knowledge management has seldom been mentioned in connection with crime investigation, although the work is highly knowledge intensive. The significance of collaboration between units within the police organization and between other agencies that may contribute crime investigation has increased not only within national borders, but internationally: Crime has globalized. Thereby, a new kind of challenge seems to have risen: How to share the information and knowledge between those who need it in the multiorganizational, possibly international, collaborative investigation process? Moreover, the mere *passing* of information from an agency to another is not sufficient: the information must also be processed together to gain accurate conclusions. The knowledge concerning the crime has, increasingly, to be *created* together, in interorganizational collaboration. The deficiencies of the existing tools and instruments make this work even more challenging. There seems to be a need for interorganizational knowledge management tools and instruments in crime investigation

All knowledge can never be explicated. There still is room for the mythical, heroic detective described in so many detective stories. Technological tools can, however, help him or her. The risk with information technology tools, especially registers, seems to be that they easily begin to lead the actors. The filling of registers takes over the power from the detective who should *use* the registers as tools for gaining better results in the investigation. Modern IT-tools can, however, give a much better base for creative investigation than the traditional registers. The detectives should be able to systematically utilize the possibilities of modern knowledge management tools. The new knowledge management technology gives an opportunity to collective learning by, for example, systematically storing and managing information about past cases, and an opportunity to utilize that information in future cases. Technology, however, will not solve all our problems. Be the tools as good as they may, the cases will be solved by objective and competent human detectives who will be able to utilize the tools.

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