



Universiteit  
Leiden  
The Netherlands

## Diversity faultlines and team learning

Rupert, J.

### Citation

Rupert, J. (2010, April 14). *Diversity faultlines and team learning*. Kurt Lewin Institute Dissertation Series. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/15223>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/15223>

**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

## Diversity faultlines and team learning

Managing diversity is an important issue on the agenda of policy makers, managers, and researchers. Past research has shown that diversity can enhance the team's potential to excel, but on the other hand it can also disrupt communication leading to poor performance. In this dissertation, I attempt to more thoroughly understand this paradox by examining when and why diversity can enhance versus inhibit team learning and performance. These studies are grounded in the faultline perspective, which focuses on the demographic alignment of diversity attributes in a group, creating homogeneous subgroups (e.g. all females in a group are sales managers, all males are accountants). In addition, in this dissertation, a typology and instrument for measuring team learning types was developed based on the topics that teams can learn about: task, process, and social learning. The relationship between faultlines and these types of team learning was examined.

The results of this dissertation indicate that faultlines are not necessarily bad for team learning and performance, as is often assumed. For instance, faultlines had healthy effects on team learning when team members knew each other well, when subgroups were able to overcome the distance between subgroups and when the team had a constructive error culture. On the other hand, faultlines disrupted team learning and performance when team members perceived subgroups in their team. The results of this dissertation have important implications for future research and for the management of diversity in organizations. When diversity faultlines are managed well, subgroups can act as healthy divides stimulating team learning and performance.



Dissertatiereeks  
**Kurt Lewin Instituut**  
2010-2  
ISBN

# Diversity Faultlines and Team Learning

Diversity faultlines and team learning

Joyce Rupert



Joyce Rupert