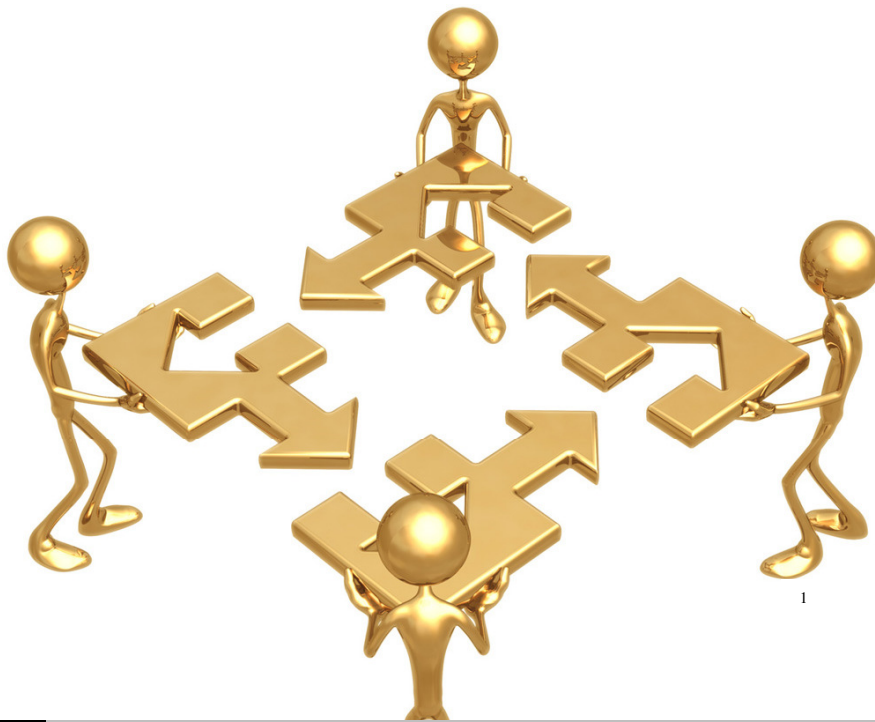


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# Corporate Universities as a Model for Strategic Human Resource Development

Formulating a Model Through Comparing Characteristics  
Drawn From Literature and a Case-Study Within  
Corporate Universities of Dutch Hospitals

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## **Abstract**

The paper identifies the characteristics that describe corporate universities through evaluating the literature on theoretical corporate university concepts and the information from a case-study research in the Dutch health care sector. The existing literature on corporate universities that strive to be a model for strategic human resource development holds many limitations. To overcome these limitations first, the requirements a real corporate university must meet are identified. Second, the theoretical models and the case-studies are evaluated at the hand of these requirements stated in a theoretical framework. The characteristics that result are: the target audience, the cooperation, the methodology, e-learning, the primary focus, the curriculum, the structure, the feedback loop, the strategy development, the measureable analysis and the hierarchical layer. These characteristics are formulated as dimensions through providing them with specific indicators. The research question of this paper is whether it is possible to generate a corporate university model for strategic human resource development. It can be answered by relating the identified dimensions to each other. Nevertheless, further research is necessary to test whether the model generated applies to different organizational contexts and whether quantitative research results in the same model.

## **Corporate Universities as a Model for Strategic Human Resource Development**

In today's globally connected world, organizations have to succeed in an increasingly competitive, profit-centered and electronically based environment (Smith, 2005). Changing managerial discourses, such as the emergence into a "knowledge economy", a "learning organization" and the communication technologies, lead organizations to restructure their application to training and development (Paton, Peters, Storey, & Taylor, 2005). In addition to that, changing market conditions as, the decreased durability of knowledge, the shift in focus from lifetime employment to lifetime employability, and the emphasis on the global marketplace, lead organizations to become flat and flexible (Meister 1998). In order to please these upcoming requirements, organizations aimed to qualify their employee's skills continuously and specific to the organization (Lorscheid, 2004). The companies contribute to their competitive advantage through stressing the employee's education and development (Meister, 1998) which results in the realization that "human resource development is now at the top of the strategic agenda" (Walton, 1999, p. 85), because "companies feel the need for a strategic approach to organizational learning" (Jansink, 2005, p. 40). This leads to a closer observation of the concept of strategic human resource development which is explained as: "the process of facilitating organizational learning, performance, and change through organized interventions and initiatives and management actions for the purpose of enhancing an organization's performance capacity, capability, competitive readiness, and renewal" (Gilley & Maycunich, 2000, p. 6). A solution to support organizations in creating, developing and distributing knowledge to their employees are corporate universities (CUs) (Jansink, 2005).

### ***Corporate Universities***

Corporate universities (CUs) have their roots in the United States where the first CU was launched by General Electric (GE) in 1955 in order to serve their upcoming demand in development (Glotz, 2002). As the fastest growing sector of higher education the number of Corporate Universities launched increased steadily at the end of the 1980s (Meister 1998). At that time, the number of existing corporate universities was approximately 400 which increased until the end of 1999 to approximately 1600 institutions. The first CUs were exclusively found by large organizations such as GE and Motorola. Around 40% of the companies from the Fortune 500, which are the 500 largest (in turnover) American organizations, enact a corporate university. In the meantime, some medium-sized

organizations such as Harley Davidson and the University of Chicago Hospitals also launched CUs (Glotz, 2002).

But what exactly are corporate universities? According to Meister (1998) they are defined as an educational institute that is run by a company and “functions as a strategic umbrella for a firm’s total educational requirements for all employees and the entire value chain, including customers and suppliers” (p.52). Thus, a CU’s aim is to transfer knowledge within organizations, but also to people external to the organization.

Even though, corporate universities have a long history it is not yet clear for all organizations what kind of requirements a corporate university must have to be different from a traditional training department, because some entities call themselves a corporate university even though they do little about corporate education or just relabel their training department (Allen, 2002). The main aspect that distinguishes the two is that CUs are concerned with a broader span of activities (Allen, 2007). For example, the focus of training has shifted from training the individual employee to developing the organization’s capacity for learning (Meister, 1998) and further to focus not only on training, but also on managing activities that are related to the employee’s development such as career planning, cultural change, research and development or strategic hiring (Allen, 2007). The strategic scope is essential as a recent definition of CUs by Allen (2007) reflects. Even though, there are different definitions, corporate universities have a common denominator: the strategic intent. Thus, corporate universities, in contrast to training departments, must be mission driven and tied to a strategy to be called a true corporate university (Allen, 2007).

### ***Corporate Universities in the Health Care Sector***

Corporate universities can be found throughout different kinds of sectors. The health care sector has recently began to establish corporate universities as The Corporate University Xchange realized in 2005 that hospitals are starting to introduce corporate universities as a result of a shortage of skilled employees in that sector. The reason that the health care sector is a service business makes it evident that its staff has to be well educated in order to result in customer satisfaction and enable the hospital’s success (Dresner, 2005). Likert (1967) announced that in the health care sector “of all the tasks of management, managing the human component is the central and most important task, because all else depends on how well it is done”. The difficulty with managing the human resource in health care services effectively is, that there is a large diversity in the employee’s experiences, skills and talents (Strike, 1995). Nevertheless, it is especially important to develop the human resource in health care services,

because, as Micheal Riordan, the CEO of University of Chicago Hospitals Academy, stated, learning is directly linked to patient satisfaction and loyalty (Dresner, 2005).

### ***Strategic Human Resource Development***

To understand the connection between corporate universities and strategic human resource development (SHRD), an illustration of the term strategic HRD is essential, as the strategic activities define a corporate university (Allen, 2007). According to Allen's (2007) and Meister's (1998) definition of a corporate university, the strategic orientation is what distinguishes a corporate university from a traditional training department. Allen (2007) stated in his book that there are two different possibilities to interpret the word *strategy* when concerned with corporate training. The first interpretation translates strategy with planning, thus "taking deliberate and careful action to how training is organized, announced, and distributed throughout the organization" (p. 40). The second interpretation emphasizes strategic alignment, including the position learning receives to support or influence the broader organizational activities (Allen, 2007). Gilley and Maycunich's (2000) interpretation of the term strategic is to plan and organize the long-term goals of an organization in order to achieve the organization's business goals by integrating HRD practices organization-wide.

When organizations introduce practices to improve the employees within their organization, they realize that the employees are their intellectual capital, because they provide goods and services. In order to achieve organizational performance and growth, it is inevitable to enhance the employee's knowledge, skills and attitudes. Furthermore, is the aim to develop the intellectual capital to increase its performance capacity and capability through improving their knowledge, skills and competencies (Gilley & Maycunich, 2000). A definition is introduced by Walton (1999) stresses the following:

Strategic human resource development involves introducing, eliminating, modifying, directing and guiding processes and responsibilities in such a way that all individuals and teams are equipped with the skills, knowledge and competences they require to undertake current and future tasks required by the organisation. It needs to be seen as part of the strategy management process of a given organisation, since the organisation is dependent on effectively utilising and enhancing all of its resources to cope with current and future contingencies. (p. 82)

Thus SHRD means ensuring a sustained competitive advantage when HRD activities are aligned with organizational goals such as generating firm-specific knowledge and skills (Garavan, 2007).

Walton (1999) further introduces a framework for a strategic approach to learning and development. The basis for SHRD is the insistent commitment of an organization to learning stated in “published core values or mission statement of the organisation” (p. 117). To implement SHRD in an organization the commitment can be supported by: stewardship, which is when managers are not motivated by individual goals, but rather are stewards whose motives are aligned with the objectives of their principles (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997), resource provision, systems, sponsors and partners, and policies (Walton, 1999). The human resource development (HRD) strategies should be implemented within the organization to form an interacting coherent whole which comprise of “individual development-oriented activities, learning climate related interventions, organization-wide learning initiatives, team-development activities and training-related activities” (p. 117). These strategies can be realized by focusing on “performance-in-task related skills, customer responsiveness, creativity, innovation, strategic awareness and flexibility” (p. 117) to enhance competences and continuing professional development. The outcome of SHRD should be that learning takes a position where it counts to the core competences of an organization so that learning can contribute to the strategic intent (Walton 1999).

### ***Research Question***

In the sections above, the definitions of CUs and SHRD are made clear. Corporate universities deal with HRD and they strive to be strategic, but the problem is that the existing literature does not combine these two terms in a model and does not explicitly state demands a CU should meet when it aims to support strategic human resource development processes. Meister (1998) argues that even though companies differ in their organizational context and thus in their requirements to a corporate university, they seem to cluster themselves around comparable principles and goals, because of their collective goal of becoming a lifelong learning institution (Meister, 1998). Different authors such as Fresina, Stauss, Deiser and Aubrey, have tried to define these similar principles and goals through introducing theoretical concepts for corporate universities (Lorscheid, 2004). Unfortunately, this literature holds many limitations which will be explicitly stated underneath. Therefore, there is the need for a model that integrates the theory of strategic human resource development and corporate university models. As stated above, it is especially important to provide adequate learning and development to personnel in the health care sector. The literature about corporate universities in this sector is very young and thus not yet deeply discussed. Therefore, the case-study in this paper is concerned with CUs in hospitals to provide additional information about this sector’s learning and development activities.

This paper seeks to achieve a model for corporate universities that caters to the strategic human resource development concept in the health care sector. Therefore, the research question of this paper emerges: *Is it possible to generate a corporate university model for strategic human resource development in the health care sector?* This question can be answered by means of evaluating the theoretical models and the information gathered through the semi-structured interviews with five Dutch teaching hospitals. To generate this model it first has to be clear which characteristics CUs must have to be called a true corporate university and thus implement strategic approaches to human resource development. Therefore, the sub-question is: *what characteristics describe corporate universities that implement strategic human resource development in the health care sector.* The paper strives to provide an answer to the proceeding questions by critically evaluating the characteristics from the theoretical CU models and the characteristics found in practice.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This paper aims to show that corporate universities strive to be a model for strategic human resource development. The following theoretical framework combines the definitions of CUs and the definitions of SHRD. These provide the requirements a CU must meet when it aims to implement SHRD. This framework serves as a lens through which the theoretical CU models by Fresina, Stauss, Deiser and Aubrey and the case-studies are evaluated.

From Meister's (1998) definition it is evident that a corporate university is an educational institute that belongs to an organization and that is strategically aligned for all educational requirements (Meister, 1998) or, as Allen (2007) stated, tied to strategy. Being strategically aligned can, according to Glotz (2002), have different forms. A corporate university can support the business strategy, it can realize change management or it can be the drive of change (Glotz, 2002). Overall, CUs should effectively increase the control of training and development activities in relation to strategic priorities. Such strategies can focus on building customer loyalty, cross-cultural working or making training more cost-effective and timely etc. (Paton, Peters, Storey, & Taylor, 2005). Walton (1999) states also, that CUs should provide tailored training and facilitation to the business's requirements. This means that the focus of CUs is proactive, thus planned in advance, and their organization is cohesive and centralized (Meister, 1998).

On the one hand, has a centralized structure the advantage that a company's culture, values and shared vision can be used as guidelines when providing training, so that training needs are aligned to the needs of the company. On the other hand, a decentralized structure, where the departments are responsible for training, might be advantageous, because they

know the training needs of their employees best. Another alternative is to form a combination of both (Paton et al., 2005). According to Lorscheid (2004), a CU should always reflect, develop, or support the company's culture. Corporate universities provide education to all employees and the entire value chain, including customers and suppliers (Meister, 1998). This may sound as a great investment at first, but, as Meister (1998) said, training along the value chain is very effective, because in the end the company depends on the goods and services supplied externally. According to Glotz (2002), corporate universities can have different target audiences; they might concentrate themselves on the top management only, on all employees or as Meister (1998) said, on an external target audience along the value chain as well (Glotz, 2002). Involving supply-chain partners into the focus of the target audience might be sector specific and can have additional value for organizations that routinely deal with requests from clients; this can strengthen the relationship with them. Training along the value-chain can bring additional value of receiving feedback from clients (Paton et al., 2005).

The present paper tests whether CUs can be a model for SHRD, therefore, the present theoretical frameworks combines the requirements of CUs with those of SHRD. Thus, when CUs implement strategies for HRD then its programs maximize the performance of the organization (Gilley and Maycunich, 2000), as they aim to provide "corporate value added" (Paton et al., 2005, p. 8). In addition to that, Gilley and Maycunich (2000) stated, that SHRD processes should be used to implement and manage change. Another aspect of SHRD is that individual and organizational learning has to be distributed across the whole organization (Allen, 2007) which is also evident in Walton's (1999) strategic approach to learning and development. All in all, learning should be seen as a core competence organization-wide (Walton, 1999) and therefore employees are treated as the organization's intellectual capital (Gilley & Maycunich, 2000). The core values lead to a coherent interaction of human resource development strategies supported by different systems. These contribute to the interaction of different HRD strategies, as stated by Walton (1999), which includes individual development, organizational learning, team development, training activities and learning climate interventions. Furthermore, in order to function within competitive landscapes it is essential to innovate, which is supported by Rademakers (2005) statement that it is important for corporate universities to integrate the transfer, exchange and innovation of knowledge.

Thus, the requirements that the characteristics of a CU that strives to be a model for SHRD should meet are the following nine: (a) the CU must be strategically aligned, which means providing training that is tailored to the company's needs; (b) the CU must have a structure that is centralized, decentralized or a combination of both depending on the organizational context; (c) the CU should reflect, develop, or support the company's culture,



because it must be strategically aligned; (d) a CU must decide on a target audience, depending on the organization's aim and business field; (e) the CU should also implement programs that provide value added; (f) the CU should implement and manage change; (g) the CU must focus on individual and organizational learning; (h) a CU should integrate the transfer, exchange and innovation of knowledge and (i) the CU must treat learning as a core competence throughout the organization and treat its employees as their intellectual capital.

## Study one

In the following section the prevailing theoretical concepts for corporate universities are summarized. Different CU concepts exist that fit within different organizational contexts reliant on their sector, market conditions, competitors, suppliers and customers. The most famous concepts derive from Fresina (1997), Stauss (1999), Deiser (1998), and Aubrey (1999) who have drawn on typologies in order to cluster the scope of different CU concepts in models (Glottz, 2002).

Fresina's introduces three prototype models which are summarized in Table 1 in Appendix A. The *first prototype's* primary intention is to strengthen the operational activities through focusing on the delivery of training experiences to reinforce the paradigm. The courses provided need to reflect the culture, the value and the philosophies of the particular organization (Fresina, 1997). In the *second prototype* corporate universities are integrated that focus on managing change. Assisting or even leading organizational change initiatives are the primary task of this prototype (Fresina, 1997). The introduction and promotion of learning programs and corresponding activities are used to facilitate that change. To achieve a successful implementation of strategic change, obsolete business beliefs and practices have to be reviewed and optionally eliminated to bring in new insights and views fitting the organization's current environment (Prince & Beaver, 2001). The initiative to consider change and its direction comes from the top management (Fresina, 1997). The CUs in the *third prototype* drive and shape the direction in which the change initiatives are going. During programs the exploration of new business contexts and future alternatives are central (Prince & Beaver, 2001).

According to Stauss, there are five types of CU concepts that enclose different scopes. An overview of the five different types is presented in Appendix A by Table 2. The first type of a CU is characterized by its focus on the top management as a target audience. Usually, these CUs work together with traditional universities (Glottz, 2002). The next type represents the ideal form of a training department that focuses on all employees and at the same time caters the strategic aims of the organization. Self learning opportunities such as e-learning are

much more popular than in the first type. Handing out certificates is of interest in order to get an incentive for employees (Glotz, 2002). The third type needs a critical number of participants for programs to reach economies of scale. In addition to that, the aim is to reach a standardization of the educational product to secure the quality of knowledge delivery. Such standards can be reached easily through e-learning (Glotz, 2002). Lorscheid (2004) adds that within this type the CU is responsible to stabilize, strengthen and, if required, adjust the organizational culture. In the fourth type the generation of new knowledge is in the focus to set out existing structures and values. The organizational strategies can be reconsidered to entail new visions. It conduces to a culture of learning and can be seen as an instrument for the learning organization. Nevertheless, this requires the openness and willingness of the organization to create new ideas and insights. The target audience is therefore composed of working and project groups or teams (Glotz, 2002). The last type of CUs is a profit center that aims to serve training internally and externally. That means that customers and suppliers along the value chain can be involved and the learning opportunities are regulated by the market conditions (Glotz, 2002).

Deiser's *four types* of CUs estimate the role of the corporate university within the organization in a third theoretical model. The aim is, as Deiser put it, to create an integrated learning architecture, which is connecting individual, organizational, learning- and change processes with core business processes. Ideally, this learning architecture produces strategically proper knowledge, makes existing organizational knowledge accessible, develops and cares for the systematic core competences and increases the overall strategic competences of the organization. From the core functions of the learning architecture Deiser formulates the four ideal type models for corporate universities. The core functions are: qualifying employees, cultural education and system-integration, implementing strategic initiatives, using trans-sectoral synergies and downsizing organizational barriers, standardizing core practices and executing restricted business units. Therefore, corporate universities are not just qualification instruments, but also a generator of culture, a standardization mechanism and a platform for the structural, cultural organizational alteration (Lorscheid, 2004). Table 3 in Appendix A gives an overview of Deiser's four types.

Aubrey's *three types* differ in their core function (Lorscheid, 2004). Aubrey states that a CU is the most significant indication for an integrated human resource development strategy. Table 4 in Appendix A provides an overview of this classification. The first type is emerged because of the deficit in skilled labor for technological developments and they used the CU to close their organization's gap between demand and supply of skills (Lorscheid, 2004). In the second type a CU needs to standardize quality and service throughout the

organization to establish, develop and maintain that knowledge (Lorscheid, 2004). In the third type fast growing companies that have a shortage in young employees and general staff, are to invest in the education and development of their employees. These CUs create and endow culture to anchor a new mentality in the organization (Lorscheid, 2004).

### ***Evaluation of the Characteristics from Study one***

The theoretical models above focus on essential characteristics important for corporate universities. The authors introduce models, which show how the CUs can be managed best in order to establish, maintain and improve the processes it should focus on. The model's characteristics will be evaluated at the hand of the theoretical framework to see, whether these meet the requirements of the theoretical framework. When the characteristics are in alignment with the requirements stated in the theoretical framework, then those characteristics describe a CU that can be a model for SHRD.

The 11 characteristics are: (a) the choice over a target audience, (b) the cooperation with traditional universities, (c) e-learning is used to standardize knowledge, (d) handing out certificates as an incentive, (e) the role of top management is to lead change, (f) innovation must take place, (g) standardizing knowledge essential, (h) the primary focus depends on the organization, (i) facilitating change is an important task of a CU, (j) reflecting the organizational culture and (k) employees must be willing to adapt to change.

The target audience is a characteristic evident in Stauss's model. Stauss provides different approaches to what the target audience can consist of. The theoretical framework stated that the target audience may include the top management only, which is evident in Stauss's first type. Further, the theoretical framework stated according to Glotz (2002) that it might include all employees, which is evident in the second type, or it might include all employees and external partners as stated by Meister (1998), which is the case in the fifth type of Stauss's model. In addition to that, Stauss's third and fourth type provide an extra view, as in the one type CUs concentrate on a critical number of employees to reach economies of scale and in the other type they include working-, project groups or teams.

The cooperation is the next characteristic evident in one of the four theoretical models. In Stauss's first type the CU works together with traditional universities. In Stauss's fifth type training should be served in-house or externally, which shows that the CU has to cooperate with other external businesses or universities to provide external training. This characteristic is not stated explicitly in the theoretical framework, but it extends the programs and provides additional learning and development programs, which contributes to individual and organizational learning. This in turn, is stated in the theoretical framework.

Furthermore, is e-learning a characteristic used in Stauss's model as a methodology for delivering knowledge, and it is used for standardizing. This characteristic serves the requirement of the theoretical framework for providing knowledge organization-wide and for providing value added programs through different methodologies.

The following characteristic is that handing out certificates to employees is important for the CU, as in Stauss's second type. The certificates should be seen as an incentive. The theoretical framework does not provide any requirements that a CU must hand out certificates thus, again, it is evident that further research must show whether this characteristic is important in the health care sector.

Next to this, is the role of the top management important for Fresina and Deiser. For example in Deiser's third type the top management defines standards and thus, it might be important to define the role the top management within organizations. The role of the top management can be important for the strategic alignment of a CU. Therefore, there might be a connection between the role of the top management and the organizational strategy. Stauss's second, third and fifth types of CU model mention strategy. In the second type Stauss's stresses that strategic aims are set from the CU. The third type stresses the importance of reconsidering organizational strategies and the fifth type implies that training is regulated by market conditions, which holds that training is strategically aligned. Nevertheless, Stauss's model makes an additional contribution in stressing that reconsidering strategies is important. Thus, whether the role of the top management fulfills the requirement of the theoretical framework for being strategically aligned is the task of further research.

Innovation is the next characteristic; this aspect is also stated as a requirement in the theoretical framework, because it is important for CUs to integrate the transfer, exchange and innovation of knowledge (Rademakers, 2005). Stauss's third type places an emphasis on generating new knowledge. This is important, because acting proactively is supported when new knowledge is created. Stauss shows further, that the fourth type concentrates to a lesser extent on the delivery of knowledge, but rather on generating new knowledge. Delivering knowledge and generating new knowledge are both important for CUs, because individual and organizational learning is also stated in the theoretical framework as a requirement. In Deiser's model innovation becomes important in the second type, but it is not stated in any further detail how this is to achieve.

Furthermore, standardizing knowledge is a characteristic found in the models of Stauss, Deiser and Aubrey. For example, CUs in Stauss's third type standardize knowledge through e-learning and in Aubrey's model the aim is to standardize quality and services. Nevertheless, a CU must go beyond standardizing, as Walton (1999) says that highly skilled

people can make a contribution to the long-term sustainability of an enterprise and therefore support strategic processes, which is stated as a requirement in the theoretical framework. Thus, in how far standardizing knowledge is relevant for a CU has to be shown in further research.

The next characteristic that is evident from the theoretical models is the primary focus. The theoretical framework also indicates that the primary focus is important. The difference is that in the theoretical framework it is stated that the core competence should be learning, but in Aurey's model the primary focus is not learning, but for example closing the gap between demand and supply.

Facilitating change is the following characteristic that is found primarily in Fresina's model. Fresina's second prototype concentrates on facilitating change through learning programs which assist and lead operational change. Prince and Beaver (2001) write that the management of change is important for a CU to become a central agent by means of facilitating knowledge management practices. Further, Allen (2002) states that strategic values of CUs are amongst others managing change proactively. It is evident that additional literature and the theoretical framework place the emphasis on managing change instead of on facilitating change. This leads to conclude that facilitating change alone is not enough for a CU and that the responsibility for implementing and managing change is asked. Fresina's third prototype comes closer to this approach, because it shapes the direction in which change initiatives should be going and therefore the CU can take initiatives to change processes.

Consistent with the theoretical framework Fresina (1997) underlines, that strengthening the operational excellence through reflecting the organizational culture, its values and philosophy is an important aim of a CU in the first prototype. Meister (1998) states as well that distributing an organization's culture is the chief vehicle for a corporate university which is evident in the theoretical framework.

The last characteristic is the willingness and openness of employees and the organization to change imprinted views. This is realized by Fresina's model and Stauss's model. For the authors it is necessary to be aware that employees should be willing to change their views before change processes can be implemented in the organization. This is not stated in any form in the theoretical framework and thus additional sources have to show whether this characteristic is important.

Overall, the theoretical models comprise of several good approaches, but their major limitation is that they split up these ideas and do not integrate them within one type of CU model. Furthermore, the first types of each theoretical model have little to do with how a CU is defined and should be organized when it strives to implement SHRD.

## Study two

### *Method*

**Respondents.** The case-study research was conducted with five “STZ” (association of tertiary medical teaching hospitals) hospitals. STZ hospitals commit themselves to education and training in general, the advancement of high quality patient care, tertiary medical care and tertiary referral functions, applied scientific research, health care innovation and cooperate with universities (STZ). The choice to work with these hospitals guaranteed that the hospitals used for the case-study will meet certain standards, which helps focus on smaller differences while analyzing their CUs. The STZ instruct criteria which are reviewed every five years to test whether the CU still maintains these. Four of the five hospitals were a member of this association and the fifth was an associative member and became a full member during the research process.

The participants for the case-study research were either managers of the hospital’s CU or employees of the CU when it was not possible to speak to the manager. Four of the participants were female and the participant of the other CU was male. An overview of the general statistics can be seen in Table 5. For the reason of confidentiality the sources of the information in Table 5 are not provided.

Table 5. Overview of the Statistical Numbers About the Five Hospitals

Hospital	Statistical Numbers			
	Turnover (2009)	Employees	Beds	Inhabitants to cover
Hospital 1	316.433.000€	4.000	1070	264.000
Hospital 2	175.167.000€	2.600	444	280.000
Hospital 3	401.000.000€	5.407	994	744.000 +
Hospital 4	147.676.000€	2329	390	225.000
Hospital 5	316.433.000€	5.113	955	600.000

**Design and procedure.** The design is a semi-structured interview. For the case-study I selected five of the 27 STZ members and approached them by e-mail or by phone depending on their accessibility. In order to give my participants a general insight of my research I sent them a short summary of my research perspective (Appendix C). I received positive feedback from all five respondents that they were willing to participate in my research and therefore an appointment was set with them or through their secretary. A day before the appointment I sent them a standardized document of 34 questions (Appendix B). The questions were formulated on the basis of the generated knowledge from the literature research and were sent in English.

These questions were sent beforehand to give the respondents the possibility to prepare so that all questions could be answered during the interview. Further the questions had the purpose to lead the interview, so the same questions were answered by the five participants and thus facilitate repeatability. During the interview, I repeated each question in Dutch to assure that these were understood correctly. The respondents agreed to participate in the study without any reward in return. Before each interview, I visited the website of each hospital and prepared myself through reading each business plan. Two of the five participants provided me with the annual plan of their corporate university (not included in the appendix for the reason of confidentiality). The remaining three CUs did not possess or were willing to provide me with an annual plan of their CU.

The research design is a semi-structured interview which I conducted through a personal interview with four of the five contact persons and through a telephone interview with the fifth. All interviews took one hour and proceeded comparably. After a short introduction of the researcher and the participant the researcher worked along with the standard questions which assured that all questions were answered by each participant, even though in different order. After the last question was answered the researcher closed the interview. During the personal interviews there was little note taking to assure a fluent conversation. Immediately after the interviews, all information was written down before leaving the hospital in order to prevent the researcher from information loss. During the telephone interview, continuous note taking was possible.

**Measurement.** To measure whether the requirements in the theoretical framework can be approved a qualitative analysis was chosen. Thirty-four open-end- and closed-end questions were formulated to gather in depths information about the characteristics stated in study one and additional questions arising from literature review. These questions did not give a direction, but were formulated so that as little threats as possible were included. The answers to questions number one, three, four, seven, eight, 10, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 28, 33 (Appendix B) were essential in order to discover what kind of characteristics are relevant for the five CUs in practice. The remaining questions gave an overview of the CUS or served as attendant questions.

The answers of the participants to the questions in the interview were evaluated through the requirements from the theoretical framework. A comparison was made of the results found from the case-study and the evaluation of the theoretical model from literature. I compared the answers the participants gave during the interview with the statements in the

business plan or in the annual report. These were always consistent over both sources and thus not stated separately in the Results section.

The use of a statistical analysis program was not possible since a semi-structured interview was conducted and thus the answers of the participants could vary widely. Therefore, the reliability and validity of the questions cannot be measured.

### ***Results from Study Two***

In the following section, the answers the participants gave to the most important questions in the semi-structured interview are presented. The most important questions concern the: target audience, cooperation, methodology, e-learning, handing out certificates, role of the top management, innovation, standardization, the primary focus, curriculum, structure, feedback loop, strategy development, measurable analysis and the hierarchical layer. The direction these characteristics have varies between the corporate universities. The answers given by the participants were in alignment with the information gathered from their websites, the business plans and the annual plans. Therefore, this information is not discussed separately, because it is included in the information the participants gave during the semi-structured interviews.

The five participants gave the same answers over their CU for each of the first three characteristics (target audience, cooperation and methodology). The target audience includes all employees and partly external customers and suppliers. Concentrating on the top management only, as Stauss (1999) did in his first type of CU concept, was not an option for CUs in practice, because all employees need to receive further training at some point (e.g. fire protection). The hospitals cooperate with traditional universities, colleges and external businesses. In addition to that, the methodology offered by the five CUs is a mixture of all kinds of training, ranging from ex-cathedra teaching to role plays and learning-by-doing in a skills laboratory. E-learning was stated to be very important for all CUs, but only one CU has already implemented e-learning to support or lead specific training programs. The CUs cannot hand out nationally approved certificates, but four of the five CUs hand out certificates for attending or passing a training program. Nevertheless, they admitted that employees do not see them as incentives according to their own research. The fifth participant stated that their CU does not hand out certificates, because especially the employees that are highly educated do not see a use of these certificates. They save all data and can hand out certificates on demand.

The next important question the participants answered concerned the role of their top management. All five participants said that the hierarchical layer is responsible for the kind of



communication the CU has with the top management and thus also to what extent the concerns of the CU are discussed and implemented throughout the organization. About the characteristic innovation the five participants said that generating new materials and ideas is mainly dependent on the kind of research the universities and businesses do that the CU cooperates with next to their own research. The participants stated further, that within the hospitals certain standards must be met, but that this characteristic is discussed within the characteristic curriculum.

Concerning the answer the participants gave to the question what their primary focus is, the first, fourth and fifth participant said that they concentrate on training and development (TD). The second participant stated that their corporate university was primarily concerned with TD but also with change management (CM). The third respondent said about their CU that its primary focus is next to TD and CM, also business development (BD). This participant said that when a CU is concerned with BD it has the opportunity to drive and shape strategy.

The curriculum is the same for all CUs. The five CUs provide personal development (PD) training in improving their employee's soft skills. Hard skills such as the technical knowledge of utilities and machines are also very important and are developed and improved by the trainings offered. The knowledge about organizational and sector specific information is included as well. In addition to that there are standard courses all employees have to attend.

The five CUs have a centralized structure, which facilitates strategy implementation for them. As stated above, the STZ has several demands their members have to meet, among which is the fact that all CUs need to have a centralized structure. In contrast to that, the fifth participant said that they want to decentralize more in order to reach their employees better.

The following topic is about the feedback loop. With feedback loop is meant that on the one hand there is a communication path for feedback from the CU to the top management and on the other hand there is also a feedback path from the top management to the CU. The first participant said that their CU has a top-down structure, which is thus not a feedback loop. The third and fourth participant answered that their CU works in a diagonal structure. The second and the fifth CU use a combination of top-down and bottom-up structure. They work along organizational goals, but, in addition to that, the CU itself can influence the strategy of the hospital and therefore facilitate strategy implementation in the HRD processes and serve to transport strategically relevant ideas.

The first and the fifth participant said that in their hospital the strategy development, which is the next characteristic discussed, takes place within the top-management only. The second CU can provide some input for strategy development. The third and fourth participant stated that strategy development takes place within several departments in order to be able to

give input and ideas from all levels.

The measureable analysis is the subsequent characteristic. Evaluating the processes of CUs is important, because it “determines the effectiveness of the organizational communication” and “the operational efficiency” (Gilley & Maycunich, 2000). It shows in how far the CU leaders evaluate the effectiveness of their CU. All five CUs conduct personal development plans with their employees to see how the employees judge their CU’s programs. In addition to that, the first participant stated that their CU evaluates informally at some point in time. The second participant answered that their CU uses a SWOT analysis, but not on a yearly basis, ad hoc evaluation and that they are beginning to implement the use of benchmark analysis. The third CU uses a balance scorecard in order to evaluate their processes. The fourth and the fifth CUs use a SWOT analysis on a yearly basis.

The last characteristic is the hierarchical layer. The interviewee of the second CU said that they are located within HRM. Here, the manager of the CU has direct communication paths to the board of directors, but underlies the manager of HRM. The other four responded that their CU operates at the first hierarchical layer which is that they are located directly underneath the board of directions, so that communication has no mediating ways, which implies that it is independent of other departmental issues and ensures effective communication with the board of directors.

***Relevant characteristics.*** Through the answers of the participants from the hospitals it becomes clear that five of the characteristics are not necessarily important to them or fall within another characteristic. The characteristic of handing out certificates was not important for the participants. According to all participants, the role of the top management is important, but it is dependent on the hierarchical layer the CU operates on. Innovation is especially important in the health-care sector, but, according to the participants, it relies on the kind of cooperation a CU has with other institutes. Furthermore, what knowledge is standardized and how this is done is the part of defining the curriculum. For the proceeding reasons the characteristics of handing out certificates, role of top management, innovation and standardization are not individual characteristics for the CUs, but are covered by the remaining 11 characteristics.

Hence, the relevant 11 characteristics for the CUs from the Dutch hospitals are: target audience, cooperation, methodology, e-learning, primary focus, curriculum, structure, feedback loop, strategy development, measureable analysis, and hierarchical layer. Table 6 gives an overview of the answers the corporate universities gave to these 11 characteristics.

Table 6. Answers of participants to different characteristics a corporate university can have

Dimension	Corporate University				
	CU 1	CU 2	CU 3	CU 4	CU 5
Target audience	all employees and partly external	all employees and partly external	all employees and partly external	all employees and partly external	all employees and partly external
Cooperation	Universities/ colleges and external businesses	Universities/ colleges and external businesses	Universities/ colleges and external businesses	Universities / colleges and external businesses	Universities/ colleges and external businesses
Methodology	mixture	mixture	mixture	mixture	mixture
E-learning	Specific plans to realize within next months	Specific plans to realize within next months	Specific plans to realize within next months	Already implemented	Specific plans to realize within next months
Primary focus	T&D	T&D, CM	T&D, CM, BD	T&D	T&D
Curriculum	PD, soft skills and hard skills	PD, soft skills and hard skills	PD, soft skills and hard skills	PD, soft skills and hard skills	PD, soft skills and hard skills
Structure	centralized	centralized	centralized	centralized	centralized
Feedback loop	Top-down	Top-down and bottom-up	Diagonal	Diagonal	Top-down and bottom-up
Strategy development	top-management only	Top management + input from CU	several departments	several departments	top-management only
Measureable analysis	at some point (only informally)	sometimes SWOT, ad hoc, begin to implement benchmark analysis	Balance scorecard	SWOT analysis	SWOT analysis
Hierarchical layer	directly underneath board of directions	Within HRM	directly underneath board of directions	directly underneath board of directions	directly underneath board of directions

### *Evaluation of the Characteristics from Study two*

In this section the aforementioned characteristics are evaluated to provide further insights to answer the sub-question: *what characteristics describe corporate universities that implement strategic human resource development in the health care sector?* They are evaluated at the hand of the theoretical framework.

The answers of the five participants of the CUs from the hospitals were in alignment with the theoretical framework where Meister (1998) stated that the target audience has to include all employees and people along the value chain. Through the cooperation with traditional universities and external businesses the CU can extend its programs and provide learning and development, which maximizes the organization's performance. This contributes to the individual and organizational learning required by the theoretical framework even though cooperation is not explicitly stated in the theoretical framework.

The methodology includes a broad variety of different methods to deliver learning and development programs tailored to the learning content such as learning by doing, which is evident from the practice and serves to increase to contribute to value added programs. E-learning is stressed to be tailored to the learning content and can thus serves beyond standardization. For the CUs in practice, it was important that e-learning is never used as the only source of training, because the health care sector needs practical training to provide adequate skills to the employees. The theoretical framework does not state that a CU has to implement e-learning, but e-learning provides added value to programs so this characteristic is in alignment with the theoretical framework. The CUs in study two have a primary focus on training and development, change management and business development. The theoretical framework requires a core competence on learning which is in alignment with the primary focus of the CUs.

The characteristic curriculum contributes to the requirement of the theoretical framework that the learning content addresses individual and organizational learning. Further, in alignment with the theoretical framework all CUs have a centralized structure, but as advised by one participant it is also possible to decentralize the operations of the CU. The feedback loop is the next characteristic discussed. The first participant said that their CU underlies a top-down structure. A top-down structure is not a feedback loop and even though the CU aligns its activities at the values and philosophies of the hospital, the CU has no opportunity to decide about ideas discussed with the board of directors. The other CUs have a diagonal feedback loop feedback loop or a top-down and a bottom-up structure at the same time, this gives CUs the possibility to have an input in important decisions or strategies to manage change, which is a requirement of the theoretical framework.

The feedback loop leads to the following characteristic, the strategy development. The first and the fifth participants said that the top management develops strategies on their own. In contrast to that, a corporate university should be able to act proactively and thus the CU should have some input in the development of organizational strategies, as it is the case with the second hospital. The third and fourth participant stated that strategies are developed by

several departments including the CU. This makes it possible for the CU to contribute to strategy development, which is likely to serve the requirement that learning is a core competence. The measurable analysis is another important characteristic that serves the requirements of the theoretical framework. In order to maximize the organization's performance by detecting and eliminating errors through evaluation, the learning and development programs get added value. The CUs have a measurable analysis that includes a SWOT analysis, a benchmark analysis or a balance scorecard. The last characteristic is the question about the hierarchical layer at which a CU operates. This characteristic is in alignment with the theoretical framework, because locating the CU underneath the board of directors shows that the organization sees learning as a core competence. Thus, all 11 characteristics serve the requirements of the theoretical framework.

## **Evaluation of the Research Question**

### ***Answering the Sub-Question***

From the evaluation in study one, 11 characteristics resulted that serve the requirements of the theoretical framework. The evaluation of study two showed that partly different 11 characteristics were important for the CUs in practice. The second study also showed that four of the characteristics from study one, are irrelevant to CUs in the health care sector. As I strive to identify the characteristics that CUs organize themselves around in the health care sector, I am going to exclude these four characteristics from further consideration. Four other characteristics identified by study one, were judged to be important by the participants in study two. The last three characteristics of the 11 characteristics identified in study one, are in alignment with the theoretical framework, but they are not discussed as separate characteristics in study two. These are the willingness of employees to adapt to change, the importance of managing change and that a CU should reflect the organizational culture. It was impossible to evaluate in the second study whether the willingness of employees to adapt to change is important for CUs in the health care sector, because the present study does not address the employee's opinions. The importance of reflecting the organizational culture and the importance of managing change are not discussed as single characteristics in study two. According to the participants in study two, is managing change a primary focus of the CU and the primary focus is aligned with the organizational culture, thus, there is no need to consider these characteristics.

This leaves 11 characteristics that serve the requirements of the theoretical framework and are judged to be important in the health care sector. Thus, the answer to the sub-question

is that the CUs that implement SHRD in the health care sector can be described by the following characteristics: the target audience, cooperation, methodology, e-learning, the primary focus, the curriculum, the structure, the feedback loop, the strategy development, the measurable analysis and the hierarchical layer.

### ***Answering the Research Question***

By giving the 11 characteristics specific indicators, the characteristics indicate a direction and become dimensions. A corporate university needs to have these dimensions to be a model for SHRD. I decide that the target audience should focus on all employees and suppliers and customers along the value chain, because CU's in the health care sector said that focusing on a narrower range of people as the target audience is not an option. The CUs must also cooperate with traditional universities, colleges and external businesses as this was stressed by the literature and the CUs in practice. The methodology must include a broad variety of different methods to deliver learning and development programs tailored to the learning content such as learning by doing, which is evident from the practice and the literature. Both, the models in the literature and the CUs in practice, see e-learning as an important methodology to deliver learning and development. In the literature it is primarily used to standardize. In practice e-learning is stressed to be tailored to the learning content and can thus serves beyond standardization. In alignment with the CUs in practice I decide that e-learning is an important characteristic of CUs in the health care sector and should be implemented to support and facilitate existing learning and development programs.

Furthermore, for the reason giving in the evaluation by the characteristics from the study two, I decided that the primary focus of a CU should be that it concentrates on training and development, but also on change management. If a corporate university wants to go one step further, in aligning their processes at SHRD, it can focus on business development as well. The characteristics curriculum and structure were each answered in the same way in study two. Thus, I conclude that the curriculum covers personal development skills, technological skills (all hard skills necessary for a job or project) and the organizational and sector specific skills to contribute to the aim of the theoretical framework of covering individual and organizational learning. In alignment with the theoretical framework all CU have a centralized structure, but as advised by one participant it is important to lower organizational boundaries to communicate effectively, which is especially important for implementing change. Further, a CU must have a diagonal feedback loop or a top-down and bottom-up feedback loop with the board of directors, because only having a top-down structure makes it impossible for the CU to provide input to important decisions or strategies.

The CU must give input to the development of strategies to meet the requirements of the theoretical framework thus I conclude that a CU should have input in the development of organizational strategies. For the reasons stated above, a CU must evaluate through a SWOT analysis, a benchmark analysis or a balance scorecard. As a last aspect, the CU must be directly located underneath the board of directors which is the first hierarchical layer to guarantee that learning is a core competence.

Thus, the dimensions with its indicators are: (a) a target audience that includes all employees, and external stakeholders; (b) the CU must cooperate with universities, colleges and external businesses; (c) the methodology must be broad; (d) e-learning is used to support and facilitate learning; (e) the primary focus must be at least on TD and CM; (f) the structure must be centralized with decentralized communication paths; (g) the curriculum must include personal development skills, hard skills and organization- and sector specific skills; (h) the feedback loop must be at least diagonal; (i) strategy development must also take place within the CU; (j) the measurable analysis must include a SWOT analysis, a balance scorecard or a benchmark analysis and (k) the CU must be located at the first hierarchical layer underneath the board of directors. Therefore, Table 7 in Appendix D shows that a CU implements SHRD when it realizes all indicators stated. The table shows in the first column the different dimensions or, as referred to earlier as, characteristics. The second column includes the indicators a corporate university must realize when SHRD activities are implemented. The third column shows possibilities for CUs to improve. Some of these requirements in the third column are the same as in the second, because in these cases no improvement is possible.

***Underlying relations.*** In this section, I am going to outline the underlying relations between the dimensions. Figure 1 in the Appendix D might help as an illustration. The board of directors is located at the top of the figure with a direct path to the CU, because the hierarchical layer must be direct and thus unmediated. The feedback loop between the board of directors and the CU is a communication path that must be diagonal. The diagonal or top-down and bottom-up feedback loop leads to joint strategy development. The business strategies must be partially developed by the CU. Furthermore, the CU is centrally structured underneath the board of directors which lowered organizational boundaries for effective communication. Further, the CU has to align all its activities according to its primary focus, which is in turn aligned with the business's values, philosophies and strategy. The primary focus of a CU that implements SHRD must be the concentration on training and development and on change management. The primary focus can be extended so that it concentrates on business development as well.

The CU offers a mixture of different methods of delivering its learning and development. These methods must include learning-by-doing, classroom learning, a skills laboratory and it should use e-learning to support and facilitate learning. It is important that e-learning is not used for all programs, but it has to be evaluated whether it is effective to use it. The methodologies that the CU offers are dependent on the cooperation it has with universities, colleges and other external businesses. Some programs, the CU offers, should be given by specialists, which means that the CU has to decide which training can be provided in-house and which training is best be given from outside the hospital. The methodology that is used needs to be tailored to the curriculum the CU offers. The learning and development programs must at least consist of organization- and sector specific knowledge, provide technological skills (hard skills), soft skills and quality and service skills. The curriculum must then be tailored to the target audience. The target audience must consist of all employees of the hospital and it must include customers and suppliers as well. The learning and development that the target audience receives must be evaluated through a measureable analysis. A CU must evaluate its activities through a SWOT analysis, a benchmark analysis, or a balance scorecard. The results of the evaluation have to be communicated to the management of the CU in order to adjust processes through developing new strategies.

***Conclusion research question.*** From the first study, it is evident that no conceptual framework is present that shows the above identified dimensions with the indicators the CU must have to implement SHRD. In order to answer the research question whether *it is possible to generate a corporate university model for strategic human resource development in the health care sector*, I extend the current research through the framework in Table 7 in Appendix D. The dimensions in Table 7 must be seen in relation to each other, as it is shown in Figure 1 in Appendix D. Each dimension within this model has an indicator that is a requirement for having SHRD activities within the CU. The dimensions cannot exist by themselves; therefore all dimensions must be present within a CU in order to effectively implement HRD strategies.

## **Discussion**

### ***Non-Technical Summary***

The present research has shown that through the evaluation of study one and two, characteristics can be found that describe CUs in the health care sector that strive to be a model for SHRD. These characteristics had to meet certain requirements stated in the



theoretical framework. The requirements were established by combining the definitions of CUs with the definitions of SHRD. The first study has shown that there is not yet a theoretical model that provides requirements a true CU must meet, which implies that it implements SHRD.

The most prominent models from Fresina, Stauss, Deiser and Aubrey have shown that several, even though not all, characteristics appear in the models that meet the requirements in the theoretical framework. In addition to that, a case-study with five CUs in the health care sector has shown that some of these characteristics appear in practice as well. Next to these characteristics the case-study provides new characteristics that have not been stated in the four models in the literature. Thus, the answer to the sub-question: what characteristics describe CUs that implement SHRD in the health care sector- could be given by providing 11 characteristics identified. These characteristics are the answer to the sub-question.

The 11 characteristics have specific indicators, which gives them a direction and they become dimensions. To answer the research question, these dimensions are related to each other to provide a CU model for SHRD.

### ***Implications for Results***

Since the literature does not yet provide a CU model for SHRD, the results of the present paper give a new insight in the demands true corporate universities must meet. Meister (1998) stated that CUs organize themselves around similar characteristics; this can be proved by the dimensions presented above. These dimensions can be used to measure to what extent CUs in practice, are a model for SHRD. Most of the conclusions are drawn from the CUs in the health-care sector, thus it is especially attractive for hospitals to compare the organization of their CU to the model generated in this research. The model may help CUs in practice to orientate themselves along the dimensions in order to improve its functioning.

In order to discuss external validity, it is interesting to see to what other context or population the findings can be generalized to. Another hospital or another organization can use the model to look for suggestions on how to develop their CU further into the direction of a true CU and thus of one that implements SHRD. The model serves as a guideline which means that each CU has to translate the dimensions into their organizational context. The problems that might occur involve the realization of the dimensions. A CU might for example states that it is committed to learning and that it has a diagonal feedback loop with the board of directors, but it does not act or is organized accordingly.

In the theoretical framework it is stated by Gilley and Maycunich (2000) that programs need to maximize the organization's performance. Long-term research will have to

show whether CUs that meet the demands in the model maximize their organization's performance more than other CUs.

Further, the model can help organizations to distinguish between training departments and corporate universities, because CUs implement SHRD. The literature states that the major difference between the two is the CU's strategic orientation. The term strategic is quite abstract but through the characteristics I identified, which meet the requirements of the theoretical framework, the term can be understood in more practical ways.

In addition to that, the results may draw increasing attention for research about learning and development in the health-care sector. This is important, because a service intensive sector, as the health care sector, is determined to provide a lot of learning and development to its staff.

Organizations outside the health-care sector can use the model and translate the dimensions into organization-specific goals and strategies. The dimensions can also serve as a basis for further research to see whether a change in the method does result in the same dimensions. Alternatively, the dimensions can be used to formulate questions about them to receive answers from quantitative research.

### ***Suggestions for Further Research***

The research has shown that the existing literature does not yet provide a model that states requirements a CU must have when it implements SHRD. It is important to see that the model provided by this study is based on the literature on four theoretical models and information from five semi-structured interviews. The low number of interviews leaves little room for generalizing the findings. Therefore, further research is necessary to test to what extent the 11 dimensions apply to other sectors or to other hospitals throughout the sector. The hospitals under research are teaching hospitals that are members of the STZ, which means that they are especially committed to learning and development. Within the health-care sector other characteristics might thus be important for different sorts of hospitals. Interpreting the answers from the semi-structured interview was risky since the participants could have answered in a socially desired ways. In addition to that, the participants might have been influenced by the way the researcher asked the question and might receive suggestions through verbal or nonverbal cues.

Further research has to show whether the model generated is really necessary, because it might be too static in comparison to the organizational context which are changing constantly. In addition to that, further research has to show whether the CU's configurations vary per type of organization or context. It has to be taken into account that human resource

development interventions are influenced by the size of the organization, the sector, the age and the history, the number of customers, the ownership and the products or services of the organization (Walton, 1999). This will certainly influence the kind of demands a CU must meet and thus influence the organization of a CU, which makes further research on these aspects evident. Furthermore, the question arises whether CUs are even broader focused than SHRD and what this broader focus could consist of.

A limitation of the present research is that the procedure was changed throughout the case-study. Four personal interviews were conducted and due to budget restraints one telephone interview was conducted. When CUs are compared in further research the method should be invariable.

For further research I suggest that the dimensions identified need to be approved through several implications. First of all, the present study uses as little as five corporate universities; therefore more interviews should be conducted. These interviews can be improved by carefully rewriting the questions into exclusively open-end questions. Recording the answers from the interviews can facilitate interpretations and the analysis of the answers to counteract information loss. The second implication is that quantitative research should be used in order to be able to cancel out biases that qualitative research brings with it such as the interviewer bias. Through quantitative research it is possible to test for reliability of the questions and the validity in order to get a more standardized research procedure. After conducting quantitative research it is possible to draw conclusions about causal relationships and generalizations may come into focus. A third implication is to gather the information from more than one person within a corporate university. This may lead to a comparison of how the corporate university is structured officially and in how far the perception of the employees about their CU is consistent with this. The next implication is to conduct research by comparing teaching hospitals that are STZ members with regular hospitals. Comparing the budgets both types of hospitals have in general and what they spend on training and development might be insightful.

Organizations in private sectors have different demands to their CUs (Dresner, 2005). Hence, it is of interest as to what extent CUs in other sectors show similar findings. Furthermore, there are other theoretical corporate university models such as that from Rademakers (2005). The approaches to strategic human resource development are still very abstract and even though CUs clarify the processes of SHRD further, it is important to compare further approaches of CU models to the model generated in this study.

***Conclusion and Comment***

All things considered, this research paper provides a first approach to cluster general dimensions in order to generate a corporate university model for strategic human resource development. The answers the five corporate universities gave shows that these are far away from being the model generated. In order to approve this model, quantitative research is necessary, hence no conclusions can be drawn. I advice managers of corporate universities to strive to translate the dimensions in my model to realizable goals tailored to their organization. That way they are able to improve their corporate university's impact on facilitating the implementation of strategic human resource development.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A

Table 1

*Fresina's three Prototypes for corporate universities*

Name	Aim
1. Prototype I- Reinforce and Perpetuate behavior	-Strengthen operational excellence -Courses reflect culture, value and philosophies
2. Prototype II- Managing Change	- Learning programs used to facilitate change -Primary focus: managing, leading change -Review and eliminate practices to bring in new insights and views that fit the organization's current environment
3. Prototype III- Driving and Shaping the organization	-Shape direction in which the change initiatives should be going

Table 2

*Stauss's five corporate university types*

Name	Aim/focus
1. Top Management Lesson	-Target audience: top management -Development through exchange of ideas -Work together with traditional universities
2. Qualification Center	-Target audience: all employee -Ideal form of training department -Caters the strategic aims of organization -E-learning popular -Certificates for incentives
3. Standardization Engine	-Target audience: critical number of participants to reach reach economics of scale -Aim: standardization to secure quality of knowledge delivery -Stabilize, strengthen and adjust organizational culture e-learning

4. Learning Lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Target audience: working and project groups or teams delivery of knowledge less of importance</li> <li>-Generation of new knowledge to set out existing structures and values</li> <li>-Reconsider organizational strategies to entail new visions</li> <li>-Conduces to culture of learning and instrument for the learning organization</li> <li>- Requires the openness and willingness of organization to create new ideas and insights</li> </ul>
5. Educational Vendor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Target audience: customers, suppliers along the value chain</li> <li>-Profit center aims to serve training internally/ externally</li> <li>-Learning opportunities regulated by the market conditions</li> </ul>

*Table 3.*  
*Deiser's four corporate university concepts*

Type	Core Function	Business logistic	Role of Top Management	Example
1. Profit Center Outsourced	Positive contribution margin	Independent business field	Supervisory board	Training department
2. Qualification Center	Conveying mission critical Knowledge	Innovation, quality	Supplying standards	Motorola
3. Standardization McDonalds, Engine	Transfer of core practices	Economies of scale	Defining standards	Disney
4. Strategic Change Enabler	Support transformation processes	Core instrument of management	Architect & Change-Leader	General Electric



Table 4  
Aubrey's three types of corporate university concepts

Name	Aim
1. Source of technological development	Close gap between demand and supply of skills
2. Source of quality and service development	Standardize quality and service
3. Source of employee development	Counteract staff shortage

### *Appendix B*

Standard questions used to conduct the semi-structured interview:

- 1. How is the corporate university structured? Centralized/ decentralized?**
2. What is the aim of the corporate university?
- 3. What is the primary focus of the corporate university?**
- 4. Who is the target audience of your corporate university?**
5. Does the target audience of the corporate university also include external partners, suppliers, customers?
- 6. What kind of information is delivered?**
- 7. How is the material delivered?**
- 8. Are there standard courses everyone has to attend?**
9. Is there a specific amount of hours an employee has to invest in training each year?
- 10. Is e-learning implemented in the training and development process?**
11. Are "offline" and "online" trainings combined?
12. Is there a difference between attending trainings and getting a good grade on it?  
Quality vs. Quantity?
13. Who can view the outcomes of the trainings?
- 14. Does your CU hand out certificates?**
15. Do employees have the chance to ask for training?
16. How are demand and offer combined?
- 17. Do you have cooperation with universities?**
18. Are there external companies concerned with training and development?
- 19. On what kind of hierarchical level is the corporate university placed within the hospital?**
20. Within what kind of department is the corporate university organizationally integrated?

**21. What kind of role does the top management play?**

22. How does the communication take place between the top management and the corporate university?

**23. Is there a feedback loop from the top management to the CU and back? How are these communication channels organized?**

24. Is there a strategic background behind the functioning of the CU?

**25. Where does strategy development take place within the hospital?**

26. Do recent trend of health interventions (e.g. obsolescence) determine which trainings are given?

27. How do trainers know about recent developments?

**28. Where does innovation take place? Internal vs. external to the hospital?**

29. Does the CU has an influence on these innovations?

30. Is there a connection between personal development and the training demand?

31. Do the criteria from STZ play a role?

32. How does the feedback occur between training delivery and demand of the individual departments?

**33. How does the corporate university evaluate the processes?**

34. What are the next steps your corporate university wants to achieve?

*Appendix C*

*Bachelorthese*

**Inhoud afstudeeropdracht**

**Beschrijving onderzoeksthema, achtergrond en aanleiding**

Het onderzoeksthema van deze bachelorthese is de bijdrage van corporate universities (CU) aan het strategisch human resource management (HRD). De Corporate University is een model voor strategisch HRM dat een verband legt tussen de organisatie strategie en het opleiden en leren van medewerkers. Het strategisch HRD beleid zal daardoor effectiever kunnen functioneren. Het doel is om werknemers, continu en vooral toegesneden op de organisatie, nieuwe kennis te overbrengen, hun vaardigheden te verbeteren of te innoveren. In de literatuur is er sprake van diverse CU concepten die verschillen qua doelen, doelgroepen en methoden voor overdracht. Die doelen voor corporate university concepten zijn in theoretische zin meest soortgelijk geformuleerd en richten zich op de economische uitdagingen of op de organisatiecultuur.

De scope van Corporate Universities kan variëren op verschillende dimensies. De inzet van een corporate university kan in organisaties intern en extern zijn. De doelgroep kan beperkt

zijn tot het top management, gericht zijn op alle medewerkers (intern )of zelfs openstaan voor externe leveranciers en klanten (extern). De instrumenten van de Corporate University zijn de leer- en ontwikkelactiviteiten voor medewerkers en teams. Deze kunnen verschillende vormen aannemen. Kennis overdracht kan door middel van persoonlijk contact, in werk groepen, door on-the-job training of door zelf studie programma's plaatsvinden. De resultaten van dit onderzoek kunnen een basis zijn voor een diepergaand masterthese die meer op kwalitatief onderzoek gericht zal zijn.

### **Beschrijving probleemstelling en onderzoeksvragen**

Door middel van literatuur onderzoek ga ik de belangrijkste theoretische CU concepten en hun link met strategisch HRD identificeren. Het doel is om de verschillen en overeenkomsten van de concepten te specificeren. Het resultaat zal dan een raamwerk uit de verschillende dimensies kunnen zijn. Door case-study onderzoek zullen ongeveer vijf verschillende Topklinische opleidings Ziekenhuizen benaderd worden om informatie over hun CU concept (“Teaching Hospitals”) ter beschikking te stellen en vragen te beantwoorden.

Het is van interesse om de CU concepten uit de praktijk onder het aspect van de eerder geïdentificeerd dimensies nader te beschouwen. Verder zal nagegaan worden in hoeverre de ziekenhuizen een link leggen van de ondernemings strategie na het HRD-beleid maar ook of er feedback bestaat van de CU terug naar de organisatiestrategie. Ten einde kunnen overwegingen gemaakt worden over de relatie tussen het Corporate University model en innovatie.

### **Onderzoeksvragen:**

- Wat zijn de voornaamste theoretische corporate university kenmerken en modellen?
- Wat zijn de belangrijkste dimensies die uit het literatuur onderzoek blijken?
- Wat zijn de dimensies die in de praktijk gevonden kunnen worden?
- In hoeverre komen de theoretische dimensies overeen met de resultaten uit het case-studie onderzoek?
- Kan op grond van de dimensies een raamwerk voor corporate universities opgesteld worden?

*Appendix D*

Table 7

*Corporate university model for strategic human resource development*

Dimension	Depth of strategic human resource development	
	SHRD implemented	SHRD implemented further
Target audience	Internal and External	Internal and External (further along the value chain)
Cooperation	Universities, colleges and external businesses	Universities, colleges and external businesses (more intensive)
Methodology	many different methods (e.g. learning by doing)	Many different methods, library
E-learning	implemented	implemented
Primary focus	TD and CM	TD, CM and BD
Curriculum	Org.-& sector specific, soft-, technological- and quality/service skills	Org.-& sector specific, soft-, technological- and quality/service skills
Structure	Centralized with low barriers to other departments	Centralized with low barriers to other departments
Feedback loop	diagonal	Top-down and bottom-up together
Strategy Development	Board of directors and CU	Several departments
Measureable analysis	SWOT analysis, benchmark analysis, or balance scorecard	SWOT analysis, benchmark analysis, or balance scorecard
Hierarchical layer	Direct path to board of directors	Direct path to board of directors

Figure 1.

Figure 1 presents the characteristics stated in the sub-questions with its specific indicators related to each other

