

## # Paper Summary

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Title: In Search of an Alternative Framework for the Creation of Actionable Knowledge: Table-Tennis Res

Authors: Niclas Adler, Rami Shani

DOI: n/a

Year: 2001

Publication Type: Book Chapter

Discipline/Domain: Organizational Studies / Management Science

Subdomain/Topic: Participatory Inquiry, Actionable Knowledge, Knowledge-Based Firms

Eligibility: Eligible

Overall Relevance Score: 95

Operationalization Score: 90

Contains Definition of Actionability: Yes (explicit and implicit)

Contains Systematic Features/Dimensions: Yes

Contains Explainability: Yes

Contains Interpretability: Partial (through intermediate theories)

Contains Framework/Model: Yes (Table-Tennis Research process model)

Operationalization Present: Yes

Primary Methodology: Qualitative, Conceptual with Longitudinal Case Study

Study Context: Knowledge-based firm (Ericsson), participatory research projects (10 projects over 6 years)

Geographic/Institutional Context: Sweden (Ericsson HQ), Chalmers University of Technology, Stockholm

Target Users/Stakeholders: Academic researchers, practitioner researchers, organizational leaders in knowledge-based firms

Primary Contribution Type: Conceptual framework and methodological innovation

CL: Yes

CR: Yes

FE: Yes

TI: Yes

EX: Yes

GA: Yes

Reason if Not Eligible: n/a

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**\*\*Discipline/Domain:\*\*** Organizational Studies / Management Science

**\*\*Subdomain/Topic:\*\*** Participatory Inquiry, Actionable Knowledge, Knowledge-Based Firms

**\*\*Contextual Background:\*\*** The chapter addresses how actionable knowledge can be generated through

**\*\*Geographic/Institutional Context:\*\*** Sweden; Chalmers University of Technology, Stockholm School of B

**\*\*Target Users/Stakeholders:\*\*** Organizational researchers, knowledge managers, R&D leaders, academ

**\*\*Primary Methodology:\*\*** Qualitative, conceptual with longitudinal case study

**\*\*Primary Contribution Type:\*\*** Methodological framework and process model

## ## General Summary of the Paper

The paper develops and illustrates the “Table-Tennis Research” approach — a participatory inquiry frame

## ## Eligibility

Eligible for inclusion: **\*\*Yes\*\***

## ## How Actionability is Understood

Actionable knowledge is defined as knowledge that both advances scientific understanding and directly in

> “Actionable knowledge was defined as new knowledge that advances our scientific body of knowledge

> “In the context of generating knowledge for action, it is vital that many perspectives are used... and tha

## ## What Makes Something Actionable

- Relevance to “red and hot” issues (strategic importance, timeliness, perceived as critical by both academi
- Iterative testing and refinement of intermediate theories through actual experiments
- Boundary-spanning integration of perspectives, domains (action/reflection), and phases (design, data, v
- Close alignment with organizational decision-making and strategic discourse
- Mutual ownership of research questions, process, and interpretation

## ## How Actionability is Achieved / Operationalized

- **\*\*Framework/Approach Name:\*\*** Table-Tennis Research
  - **\*\*Methods/Levers:\*\*** Iterative jam sessions, intermediate theories, real-time experimentation, boundary-
  - **\*\*Operational Steps / Workflow:\*\*** Identify red/hot issues → form mixed teams → conduct jam sessions
  - **\*\*Data & Measures:\*\*** Qualitative data from organizational settings, observations, experimental outcome
  - **\*\*Implementation Context:\*\*** Multi-project, multi-year collaboration at Ericsson involving engineers, man
- > “Research in real-time and on red and hot issues... provides opportunities for validating actionability in

> “The jam sessions... act as the enabling context within which actionable knowledge creation occurs.” (p

## ## Dimensions and Attributes of Actionability (Authors' Perspective)

- **CL (Clarity):** Yes — clarity in research focus, intermediate theories, and communication of findings is
- **CR (Contextual Relevance):** Yes — must be tied to organizationally strategic “red and hot” issues.
- **FE (Feasibility):** Yes — actionable theories must be testable within organizational constraints.
- **TI (Timeliness):** Yes — focus on issues that are immediately relevant and urgent.
- **EX (Explainability):** Yes — intermediate theories serve as shared explanatory frameworks between o
- **GA (Goal Alignment):** Yes — mutual goals of scientific contribution and practical improvement.
- **Other Dimensions Named by Authors:** Boundary-spanning integration, iterative adaptability, mutual t

## ## Theoretical or Conceptual Foundations

- Knowledge-based view of the firm (Grant, 1998; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995)
- Action research and participatory inquiry traditions (Lewin, 1946; Argyris & Schön, 1974; Reason, 1995)
- Habermas' three cognitive interests (technical, practical, emancipatory)

## ## Indicators or Metrics for Actionability

- Degree to which research produces both scientific publications and local theories for action
- Uptake of intermediate theories in organizational practices
- Sustained learning systems post-project

## ## Barriers and Enablers to Actionability

- **Barriers:** Loss of red/hot focus, turnover of key decision-makers, role ambiguity, imbalance between
- **Enablers:** Mutual trust, joint ownership, iterative validation, strategic relevance, boundary-spanning p

## ## Relation to Existing Literature

Builds on and integrates multiple participatory research streams (action science, clinical field research, ap

## ## Summary

Adler and Shani's chapter advances “Table-Tennis Research” as a participatory methodology optimized f

## ## Scores

- **Overall Relevance Score:** 95 — Explicit definition of actionable knowledge, comprehensive set of en
- **Operationalization Score:** 90 — Detailed process model with concrete steps, but context-specific to l

## ## Supporting Quotes from the Paper

- “Actionable knowledge was defined as new knowledge that advances our scientific body of knowledge a
- “Research in real-time and on red and hot issues... provides opportunities for validating actionability in k
- “The jam sessions... act as the enabling context within which actionable knowledge creation occurs.” (p
- “By integrating practitioners and different academic disciplines to address an organizational issue, the m

## ## Actionability References to Other Papers

- Argyris & Schön (1974) — Action science
- Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) — Knowledge creation theory
- Reason (1995) — Participative inquiry paradigm
- Habermas (1981) — Cognitive interests framework
- Gibbons et al. (1994) — Transdisciplinarity