Abstract

Companies of today need to stay competitive in order not to lose market shares to competitors. Continuous change is essential in this and innovation is in turn, a central feature of change. For large, well established companies however, it might not be as easy to carry out change since these already have well embedded structures, systems and ways of working.

Closely connected to innovation is entrepreneurship, which in this study is referred to coming up with something partly or completely new, may it be new products, production processes or even groundbreaking technological innovations. Moving further into how this can look inside organisations, the main theoretical framework in this research concerns the term corporate entrepreneurship. With this we mean entrepreneurship in already existing companies; the organisational processes that encourages creativity and innovativeness among the employees in order for the company to be able to change continuously and gain competitive advantage. That is, to stay competitive in the ever changing business environment.

As mentioned earlier, large established companies run a greater risk of suffering from inertia when it comes to these issues and the mining industry and its architecture meet the requirement for both being in an environment where entrepreneurial behaviour is important, but also an environment where this might be hard to pursue. Consequently, the research question for this thesis has been: How is corporate entrepreneurship perceived in the Swedish mining industry?

To answer this question we have focused on two large companies in this particular industry. We aimed to see how corporate entrepreneurship is perceived in these and what actually is done to foster and support corporate entrepreneurial behaviour within their organisations. The research approach has been of interpretative character and therefore, qualitative interviews have been carried out with four employees in different managerial levels at both companies. The deductive approach has been relied on as we had the theories as basis for our research process.

Empirical findings lead to the conclusion that the necessity for entrepreneurship has been recognized by the companies and that basic corporate entrepreneurship structures have been established. Several activities have been introduced and management works on an adapted entrepreneurial culture. Though it in both cases becomes obvious, there still is a long way to go to become a real entrepreneurship challenging firm according to theories.

Keywords
Corporate entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship, innovation, creativity, mining industry, Sweden