

# EASIER, FASTER, BETTER?

How social media facilitate tacit knowledge sharing practices between employees within governmental bodies.

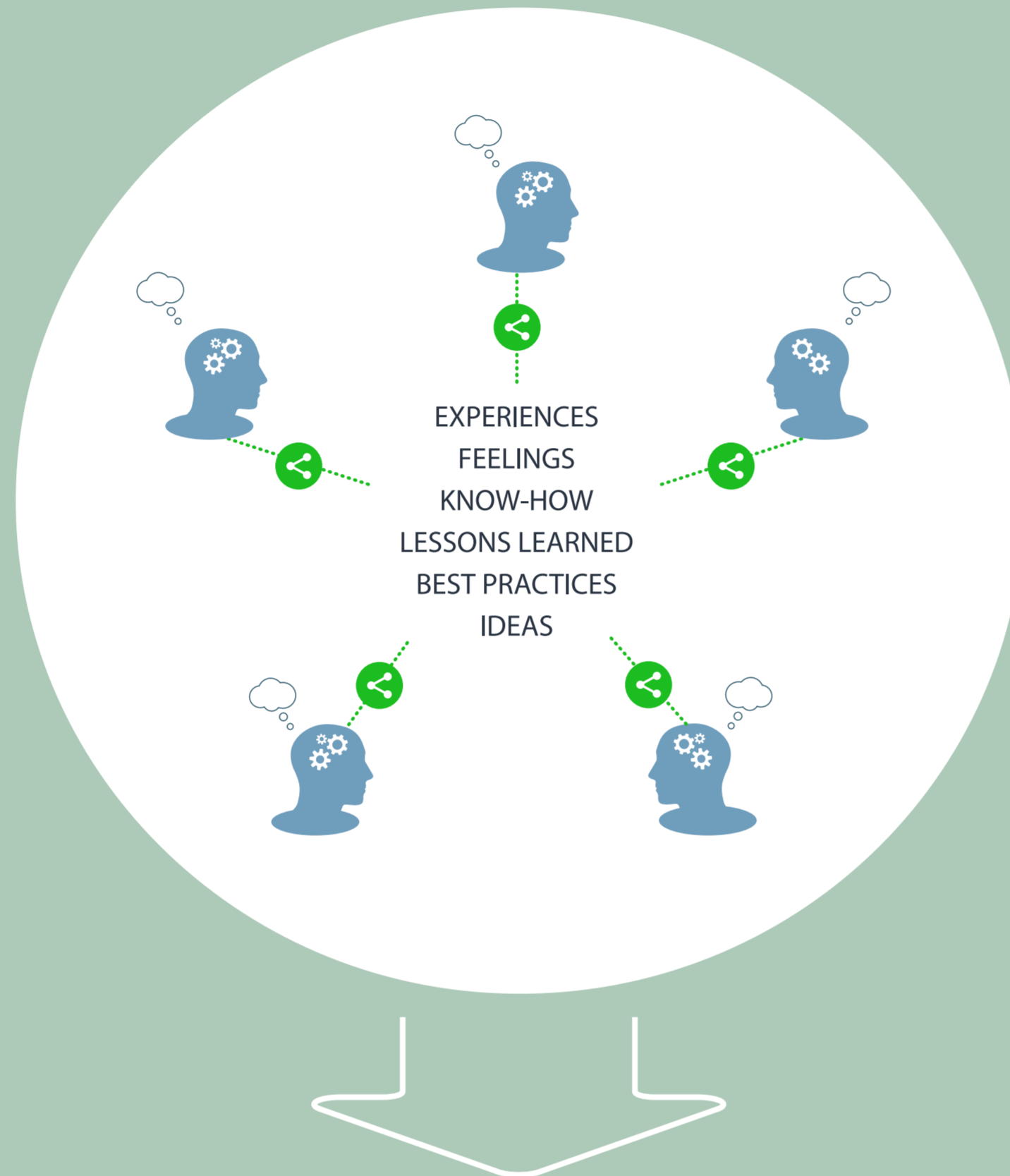
## 1. THE ISSUES

- ✓ Tacit knowledge has a lot of value for organisations, because it is made of people's experiences, ideas, feelings, wisdom.
- ✗ It is difficult to share, because it first needs to be made explicit (expressed, codified) before being transferred.
- ✓ The easiest way to share tacit knowledge is when two people (or more) are directly facing one another.
- ✗ Employees who work apart from each other (different buildings, areas) do not have time to meet each time they need to share knowledge.
- ✓ Knowledge which is shared collectively creates an added value (intellectual & social capital) from which the entire organisation can benefit.
- ✗ Employees need the appropriate tools to enable the creation of this new knowledge.
- ✓ Social media enable social interactions between people wherever they are located.
- ✗ There is a lack of awareness on how well they facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge.

## 2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ? How do social media facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge between employees?
- ? To what extent do social media bring new capabilities in the sharing of tacit knowledge?
- ? Which environmental factors may provide the appropriate context for using social media to enhance tacit knowledge sharing practices?

### GOVERNMENTAL BODIES



- ✓ PROBLEM SOLVING
- ✓ COLLECTIVE KNOWLEDGE CREATION
- ✓ ENHANCED WORK PRACTICE

### ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTION

There is very limited evidence on the role of social media within governmental bodies in facilitating the sharing of tacit knowledge. This thesis will bring new understanding on this subject.

### PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTION

This work will provide governmental bodies with an understanding of the place of social media in the context of knowledge work.

## 3. KEY THEMES

### TACIT KNOWLEDGE

- Intangible by nature, knowledge that is implicit in our minds and ourselves, not expressed.
- Made of our experiences, observations, thoughts, intuition, feelings.
- Tacit knowledge needs to be made explicit (codified, normalised, expressed) so that it can be easily shared with others.

### KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Different techniques can facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge:

- Video conferencing, Communities of Practice (CoP), Story-telling, Informal discussions.
- Existing models of knowledge sharing can serve as guidance.

### ORGANISATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

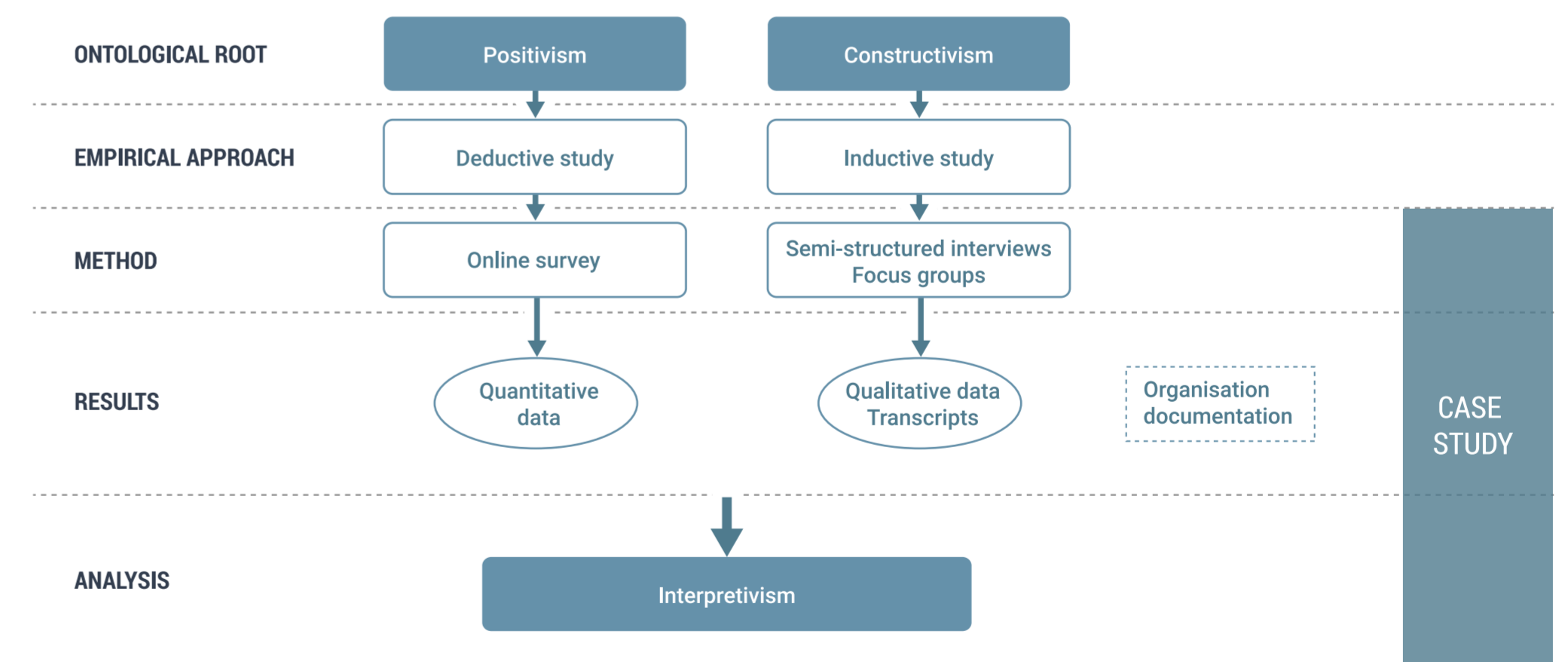
- The learning process that occurs in individuals, teams, and on the organisational level.
- Made of 'lessons learned', 'best practices'.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media tools which benefit from Web 2.0 technologies potentially facilitate tacit knowledge sharing through:

- online social interactions (chat, video conferencing),
- online collaboration (wikis, blogs),
- online communities of practice (extranet, forum).

## 4. METHODOLOGY



### IRIS BUUNK – First year PhD student

Prof. Hazel Hall (Director of Studies)  
Centre for Social Informatics

Dr Colin Smith (Supervisor)  
Centre for Social Informatics

### CONTACT DETAILS

Iris Buunk  
Email: I.Buunk@napier.ac.uk

IIDI profile: [www.iidi.napier.ac.uk/i.buunk](http://www.iidi.napier.ac.uk/i.buunk)  
Blog: [www.theknowledgeexplorer.org](http://www.theknowledgeexplorer.org)  
Twitter: @irisbuunk