

Neurosciences, the new frontier of innovation for the craftsman

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Often, what we say and what we do do not coincide exactly, and, in the end, this lack of agreement is decisive in the lives and destinies of people. Words are not sufficient to change things, we have to understand if they are supported by coherent motivations, that is, by awareness.

Words, like “innovation” and “change”, for instance, produce a series of reactions in business people, that range from fear to enthusiasm. And it is likely that within Confartigianato Imprese Varese, there were similar reactions when it was decided to use neurosciences to encourage the member businesses, and even the confederation itself, to innovate. If this were a sports event, it would be like a pike double somersault with a twist (assuming this exists), that is, something entirely new for a trade association and for the range of services it offers its members. There will be no velvety psychoanalysis couches or even exhausting self-awareness sessions, but a scientific method and model developed by **GTechnology**, a research foundation based in Modena, that has worked in the field of neurosciences for years.

The business people will be presented with 50 concepts connected with the theme of tradition and innovation, and will be monitored using an electroencephalogram (EEG-Biofeedback), to detect their cognitive reactions to the concepts.

When talking about the association’s decision, **Mauro Colombo**, the Director of Confartigianato Imprese Varese used the word “discontinuity”, saying that “It isn’t enough to produce a catalogue or to buy a 3D printer in order to innovate; this territory needs a real change, because if, when we think about the future, we just repeat the past, we will become marginalised. We want to place manufacturing into a changed contest, and if, as an association, we want to help business people, we have to design our range of services also on the basis of their inclination to innovate.”

The first testing of the GTechnology model identified **5 types of business person: innovators** (those who are willing to take risks, by buying a new product as soon as it appears), **first adopters** (those who wait, taking the necessary time to collect more information about the new product; usually opinion makers), **early majority** (those who buy a product that is already widespread), **late majority** (those who are sceptical about new products and wait until everybody has them before buying), **latecomers** (those who express a great dislike for change). “The results of the study create new opportunities to learn about whether we accept, or strongly reject (unconsciously, therefore) concepts like technology and social media,” explained **Francesco Gallucci**, the scientific director of the neuroscience laboratory of the GTechnology Foundation.

“Moreover, it allows drawing up a new map of the needs for change, which are often difficult to express in words, and to understand also the uncertainties linked, for instance, to the adoption of new computer technologies.”

According to the researchers, an interesting fact is that business people do not always associate the concept of innovation with certain words, as we would think. One of these words, for instance, is “**sharing**”. This short-sightedness may be explained by the exasperated individualism that characterises Italian businesses. If it is true that “words are important”, as Nanni Moretti shouted in his film “Palombella Rossa”, in the era of social networks, unconscious motivations are maybe even more important.

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