

The USA risk on innovation, Italy doesn't

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Reasons for which Italians emigrate are always the same, it is not important if you are a labourer, a graduate or a hopeful entrepreneur; uncertainty, lack of prospects, few capitals of risk and a system which does not honour qualities are a considerable incentive to go away.

Roberto Dolci, after he had graduated in Engineering at the Polytechnic of Torino, emigrated two times: the first in **England**, the second in **Boston**, in Massachusetts, one of the six countries which compose the New England. Here, he set up **AizoOn USA**, an enterprise which furnishes technological innovation, especially industrial IoT (Internet of Things,) to more than 100 multinational corporations, including **Amazon**.

Dolci accompanied the **TechMission** of Univa, Confindustria and Digital innovation hub Lombardia, in the land colonized by the pilgrims in 1620, considered one of the universal poles of the technological innovation.

“In England they work more and less like in Italy,” began the entrepreneur, “but in the USA, it is completely different.”

What is this difference?

“In the US, business there isn't love for the enterprise, there is a considerable turnover so holding people is very difficult. In addition, here, the bureaucracy is well organized.”

Is it a positive or a negative thing?

“The bureaucracy is functional to the educational system, which is very procedural. All the Italian students learn the same methods of operation, none get out from them and therefore they are well appreciated for their forma mentis which is critical and creative. The key difference is that in the USA, children, from the early age, are used to the autonomy and the business: they make some markets outside their house and get busy to earn some money. Here, in summer, no-one stays at home for three months with nothing to do and, if they do, they get dumped. Finally, in the USA, failure is well tolerated, it is indicative of capacity of risk. In this regard is interesting to know that the 67% of failures are caused by health problems, although the health system is quite expensive, I spend \$20,000 per year.”

Which advice do you give to an Italian entrepreneur who must relate with the US market?

“Here, the client doesn’t give you any spaces to expand and you always have to say that you do well only one thing per time. And then there is the rational aspect which is important too. I give you an example. An Italian enterprise, specialized in a product for dams, is contacted by an American client who send an offer with a substantial description of 160 pages and the Italians engineers answer with a document of only 6 pages, so in a pragmatic way. The Americans won’t be heard anymore because they interpreted the answer as offensive. You have to learn to communicate considering the context.”

How do you explain that Italy, although all the “ill” you have just said, is the second manufacturing country in Europe, after Germany?

“There are many enterprises, especially middle-size ones, who are still investing in R&D and they make high quality products. Having said that, in Italy, for those who innovate, there isn’t a certain prospective for the middle term at least. The classic example is the photovoltaic sector, where countries such as Spain and Germany grew up in a coherent way, in contrast to Italy that suddenly changed her politics, creating an uncertain situation among foreign investors who gave up on the Italian market. We are among them.”

According to you, is there an Italian way to innovation?

“I think so, but the system must change as a whole, break away from the logic of calls and supporting enterprises which carry out innovation, research and development.”

FOLLOW THE TECHNOLOGICAL MISSION OF UNIVA, CONFINDUSTRIA LOMBARDIA AND DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB LOMBARDIA, IN THE USA.

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