

meta

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Editorial

White collars only?

According to *The world in figures 2005*, Italy's financial creativity index, a balanced average between human resources, market incentives and company/research integration, is the lowest out of 28 surveyed countries.

Poor propensity to risks and small dimension of businesses are among the factors trapping our Country. Besides resources, we lack of the mentality and culture needed. Possible escapes could be found by increasing the value of research centres and universities to the extent that some have even suggested that where companies are unable to introduce any innovation universities may on their behalf and even support them through their internationalisation process with their foreign networks (see for instance the debate recently published in *Corriere della Sera* and the notice issued by the Italian Ministry of Production Activities).

There's something a little unclear we need to focus on before suggesting solutions. Basically we need to consider the issue related to the nature of needs: new know-how or rather new methods to originally implement our already available know-how? Making things clear here means providing premises for reliable solutions and for optimised resource utilisation.

There are not many public or private sector research centres in the world where knowledge is built. Time needed for research is reasonably long and significant financial resources are also required. Isn't our Country's research system able to do more than

just that? Is this the highest level of resources we can invest? And above all, is this the knowledge Italian businesses need?

Despite the technology level available, very few new products are today perceived by consumers as useful to the extent of being inserted in their lifestyle. The life cycle of products is faster and faster while the perception of their utility is increasingly insignificant. Product and process innovation are required in this area for the ability to originally and efficiently implement the available know-how. Therefore the problem does not consist in creating knowledge but rather in acquiring what's already there.

In order for this to happen we all need to work at making the entire society "creativogenic" and market-oriented as already suggested in the past by Silvano Arieti and, more recently, by Richard Florida. This phenomenon should involve, at company level, the entire system of business relations among the subjects involved. The methodology and competency here required can only be obtained through training (including self-training) and consultancy. All subjects inside and outside the company play a synergic role to this purpose in developing a strategic and effective relation with the client system.

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