



## Defining Workplace Innovation: *The Fifth Element*

Longer-term members of the EUWIN community will be familiar with the origins of The Fifth Element as a means of sharing practical knowledge about workplace innovation. You can read more about The Fifth Element [here](#) or watch our animated film [here](#).

In this article Peter Totterdill and Rosemary Exton, originators of The Fifth Element, ask for your help in taking the concept to the next level. The Fifth Element is a unique collaboration between researchers (setting their work in the wider context of evidence about innovative ways of working) and practitioners (providing a framework for sharing experiences, dilemmas and outcomes). Your articles, stories and insights are essential!



*by Peter Totterdill*



*and Rosemary Exton*

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# Demystifying Employee Engagement

## Guest Essay



*An occasional series in which practitioners and researchers from across Europe contribute personal perspectives and experiences of workplace innovation.*

*“Employee engagement” has become a fashionable concept in some parts of Europe. There is a growing body of [evidence](#) to show that organisations with engaged employees perform better in terms of profit, productivity, innovation, customer service, wellbeing, absence, turnover, and health and safety.*

*But how does employee engagement relate to workplace innovation? Critics argue that engagement is the wrong focus, and that the benefits attributed to engagement actually result from adopting workplace practices that empower employees and give them a real voice. There is a real danger that the focus on engagement may encourage HR managers and consultants to focus on quick fixes which, although visible, sidestep difficult issues relating to fragmented work organisation, spreadsheet management and an autocratic senior-level culture.*

**Doug Crawford**, an active member of the Engage for Success movement, believes strongly in its power but argues that there is a need to demystify employee engagement and focus on the basics.



*by Doug Crawford*

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## The voice from Mars: everyone has a role to play in innovation



Employee-driven innovation is increasingly recognised as a driver for sustainable competitiveness. Experience from Mars shows that this cannot be achieved by means of a single initiative – rather it requires a pervasive culture of empowerment and enterprising behaviour supported by a system of mutually-reinforcing practices. And HRM has a key role to play as guardian of such a culture.

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## Workplace Innovation in Germany and its Policy Framework

How do you create a balance between the flexibility required by employers in an increasingly volatile business environment and the employment security sought by workers? This dilemma has lain at the heart of European employment policy for some time.

Flexicurity is described by the European Commission as “an integrated strategy for enhancing, at the same time, **flexibility and security** in the labour market. It attempts to reconcile employers' need for a flexible workforce with workers' need for security – confidence that they will not face long periods of unemployment” (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=102>) but in practice the concept is often hotly contested.

In Germany, it is recognised that balancing the needs of employers and their employees goes well beyond flexicurity.



by Claudius H. Riegler, PT-DLR, German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

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# Advanced Workplaces for Advanced Business

29th September 2014: EUWIN's Sofia Workshop



An exciting, interactive event bringing one hundred leading enterprises, policymakers and social partners together from across Europe to show how new ways of working can transform business performance and enhance working lives. You will explore inspiring cases from European companies and discover practical tools and resources to implement workplace innovation in your organisation.

Speakers include: Gary Holpin – **The Met Office (TBC)**, Jeremy Ling - **Bristan**, Ton Driessen - **Resato**, Jérôme Bertin - **ARAVIS**, Egoitz Pomares - **Sinnergiak Social Innovation** and Inge Arents - **IWT**.

This free, not-to-be-missed Workshop is organised by [EUWIN](#) (the European Workplace Innovation Network), established by the European Commission to stimulate and resource better ways of working. It is held in conjunction with [European SME Week 2014](#).

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# How is quality of work connected to the competitive strength of companies?

6th November 2014: EUWIN's Rouen Workshop



This is the theme of EUWIN's regional workshop in Rouen which will now take place on 6th November 2014. Six national and international companies will share their experiences and participants will also be able to join a series of 'practical ateliers'. You can even experience workplace innovation in a 'cooking experiment' performed by Flanders Synergy. Social partners will discuss the French approach to workplace innovation, and there will be plenty of opportunities for discussion and networking.

More details can be found [here](#) and on our French partner sites ([ANACT](#), [ARACT Haute-Normandie](#), [CARSAT](#)).

## Please Forward

Thank you for being part of [euwin](#). Together we bring together the knowledge, experience and enthusiasm of enterprises, employees, unions, employers' organisations, policymakers and researchers from across Europe. Spread the word! Please forward this briefing to your colleagues, associates and suppliers. Ask them to sign up [here](#). Make sure they don't miss out.



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