

A new energy in training



FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN ENERGY PRODUCTION there are two keywords that inevitably go hand in hand: continuity and innovation. In a fast-paced and hyper-connected world, the supply of energy can never be interrupted. But change is happening fast and the ability to adapt is essential, not only to take on the competition, but also for the system itself to stay up to date. Continuity and innovation are, therefore, also key to interpreting and understanding the history and prospects of a giant like Eni, which in Italy and in Europe has a reputation as the energy company par excellence.

Eni was founded in 1953 as a public company, and over the years has become a world-class energy provider. Today, with over 30,000 employees in 66 countries, Eni is among the top 100 companies in the world in terms of both market capitalisation and turnover. It has enjoyed almost 70 years of continuous operation, surviving the many vicissitudes of the Italian state and the Western world, culminating in the period of privatisation in the 1990s. However, innovation, which is in the very DNA of a group that has always focused heavily on research and development, is now at a critical juncture in this era of profound change. The keywords have therefore become: climate change, decarbonisation and the

circular economy. To adapt to these new paradigms, it is not enough just to do research, but a profound cultural change is needed.

♥ It is from this perspective that the current role of Eni Corporate University (ECU) must be interpreted. Since the time of our former president, Enrico Mattei, training has played a strategic role in the company, not only in terms of technical training, but in a cultural, managerial, all-encompassing sense. So much so, in fact, that it led to the foundation of an actual University in 2001. This institution has been a pillar of the business for two decades, however, the changes taking place also require a change of pace and it is crucial that a robust entity like the University embraces this change with continuity and innovation.

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♥ “The first thing we understood was that being an institutional partner in such a cultural change means providing people with the tools to build their own path and proactively embrace the change: a bottom-up approach, secured and supported by the University.” The words of Monica Neboli, the manager responsible for the ECU’s Innovative Methodologies, who tells us about some of the most recent developments. “In this context,” says Monica, “in 2016 we launched ‘Open’, which is still an embryonic platform but has some digital content available to everyone, and is symbolic of the fact that we are moving in the right direction.” In the meantime however, a second aspect has become obvious: if on the one hand, it is necessary to revolutionise the approach to processes, energy and the economy, on the other hand the digital transformation is also forging ahead with new media, tools and potential. The two revolutions have become two sides of the same coin. It’s impossible to imagine one without the other: each is a necessary condition for the other. “It’s no coincidence that the first step towards bottom-up training was digital,” explains Monica, “but we needed to focus on the digital aspect itself to encourage its mass adoption. Thus in 2018 the Digital Transformation Center was



Monica Neboli, Manager Metodologie Innovative, ECU

created, a portal with news, videos, and insights into the digital revolution.”

♥ However, in 2019, the various pieces of the puzzle remained disconnected, expressions in an equation that had not yet been solved. A profound cultural transformation was underway, people wanted to be involved and digital could be the way, if embraced with enthusiasm. Then came the intuition: the content. There is a confusing ocean of superb educational content out there, on all aspects of the revolution. Can technology be used to give people an accurate compass with which to navigate that ocean? It was in the midst of this quest that Monica’s team met up with OfCourseMe. Together, the two teams made a non-trivial decision: the aggregation and classification service of external online content provided by OfCourseMe was to be integrated into the Digital Transformation Center, so that it would all be available in the same place and (at the same time) act as a gateway to other worlds. “This is exactly how we came up with the product’s name, ‘Stargate to the Web,’” recalls Monica. “We had finally figured out how to combine people’s proactive approach and the new digital world: we just had to provide them with a way in.”

♥ 11 months after the launch of Stargate to the Web in mid-2019, one figure really stands out: to date, Eni employees have benefited from over 2,250 items of content. This figure is even more impressive if we take into account that many courses covering complex topics in-depth: over half of the courses (52%) are on scientific subjects at the heart of Eni’s core business, from mathematics to software development, from IT to

Data after 12 months of use

10k

People
involved

2.300

Items of content
accessed

24h

Hours of training
per employee



physics and engineering. "Even today, only a small number of Eni's staff visit the Digital Transformation Center on a regular basis," admits Monica, "but the fact that it has been used so many times to study topics central to Eni tells us that we're on the right path. More and more people are using digital resources to train proactively on the new topics that are becoming important in our sector."

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So what are the next steps? How can we move forward? "We must take digital beyond digital," explains Monica. "If digital is a necessary cross-functional condition, then we must go beyond the conception of the Digital Transformation Center as a niche for in-depth study. It must become a resource that everyone can use, with in-depth sections dedicated to fundamental topics. With the OfCourseMe team, we're already producing curated content dedicated to decarbonisation, climate change, the circular economy and many other topics. We're working together, and we'll launch the next phase soon."

Monica's words are well considered and detailed, but they take on a very profound meaning if we consider the context they are made in. In fact, the Eni Group recently published the new "Long-Term Strategic Plan to 2050", which insiders are referring to with the iconic title "the new Eni". The cornerstones of this plan range from

sustainability to energy transition, passing through decarbonisation, forestry, etc. Each of these keywords has been assigned a measurable but ambitious goal to be achieved over the next 30 years. A North Star, or perhaps it would be better to say a guiding constellation, destined to lead the transformation of the business from its foundations. This transition, which internally is being called "the largest reorganisation since Eni began", will have profound implications for the skills development strategy. Monica and her team are aware of this and are ready, as always, to channel this vision into a series of high-impact initiatives, designed for people by people.

When speaking with the Eni Corporate University team, the feeling is that we are on the brink of a new paradigm shift. There is the typical fermentation process, in which a new system of concepts and methods, initially promoted by a few, starts being embraced by many and is eventually accepted by all. The road is long because it requires continuity as well as innovation. But energy for us all will come from taking this pioneering journey together.



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