



Detailed Persona Profiles

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1 THE CLUELESS



picture by M. Bauer, unsplash

“Innovation? We don’t really need that—we’re doing fine as we are.”

“Automation and AI sound interesting, but we work with coatings, not software.”

“If we ever need new machines, our suppliers will tell us. We’ve always relied on their advice.”

1.1 Personal Profile

Profession

Managing Director of a mid-sized manufacturing company with around 50 employees, specializing in metal processing.

Education

Completed vocational training in mechanical engineering, later attended various management courses but has no formal academic degree in business or innovation.

Career Path

- Started as a machine operator and worked his way up through hands-on experience.
- Became Managing Director after years in production and operational roles.
- Focuses on efficiency and maintaining stable operations rather than strategic growth through innovation.

Relevant Touchpoints

- Local business networks (e.g., Chamber of Commerce).
- Occasional participation in trade fairs but no structured engagement in innovation ecosystems.
- Gets information mainly from suppliers and industry colleagues rather than innovation networks.

Media Consumption

- Reads local newspapers and industry magazines occasionally.
- Relies on personal conversations and direct recommendations over online research.
- Uses WhatsApp and phone calls more than email or digital platforms.

Personal Traits

- **Pragmatic**
Looks for practical solutions but often within familiar frameworks.
- **Routine-Oriented**
Strong reliance on established processes and past experiences.
- **Unaware of Innovation Opportunities**
Not opposed to change but doesn't actively seek new solutions or technological advancements.
- **Trusts Existing Networks**
Prefers working with known suppliers and business partners rather than exploring new collaborations.

Weaknesses

- **Limited Awareness of Innovation**
Does not actively follow trends or seek innovation-related knowledge.
- **Reactive Rather than Proactive**
Focuses on solving current operational challenges rather than planning for future improvements.
- **Low Engagement with Innovation Networks**
Unfamiliar with government grants, research programs, or startup collaborations.

Work Routine

- Starts early, focusing on daily operations and problem-solving.
- Spends significant time in production and logistics, ensuring everything runs smoothly.
- Does not actively explore innovation but might implement changes if presented with a clear, low-risk benefit.
- Innovation discussions rarely happen because immediate operational tasks take priority.
- Stays reachable by phone but avoids complex digital tools for collaboration.

1.2 Company Profile

Müller Industrial Coatings GmbH is a mid-sized company specializing in high-quality coatings for industrial machinery and tools. With 50 employees, the company provides durable surface treatments for various industries, including construction, mechanical engineering, and electronics.

The company has a strong reputation for craftsmanship and reliability but has never actively explored innovation as a means of growth or efficiency. While digitalization and automation are common in other sectors, Müller Industrial Coatings has never seriously considered these technologies—not out of skepticism, but simply because they lack awareness of their relevance.

Challenges

- **Limited Awareness of Innovation Opportunities**
The managing director has never engaged with innovation networks and is unfamiliar with funding programs, research collaborations, or emerging industry trends.
- **Traditional Business Model**
The company has operated the same way for decades, focusing on quality craftsmanship rather than process optimization.
- **Rising Customer Expectations**
Large clients are starting to demand faster turnaround times and more sustainable coatings, but the company has not explored new solutions to meet these needs.
- **Lack of Digital Expertise**
He and his team do not follow industry discussions on automation, AI, or digital transformation. They rely mostly on suppliers and long-term business partners for industry updates.

Current Workarounds

- **No structured R&D efforts**
New developments only come through suppliers' recommendations.
- **Limited investment in technology**
Existing machines are maintained, but digital tools or automation are rarely considered.
- **Decisions based on personal experience**
rather than industry trends or external expertise.
- **Customer-driven changes**
New solutions are only explored when a client requests them.

Goals

- **Maintain Business Stability**
He wants to keep the company profitable and reliable, but he doesn't think innovation is necessary to achieve that.
- **Meet Customer Expectations Without Disrupting Operations**
If clients demand changes, he is open to practical improvements, but he will not initiate innovation himself.
- **Find Skilled Workers for Traditional Roles**
He looks for experienced craftsmen, not digital or automation specialists.
- **Explore New Technologies If They Are Clearly Beneficial**
If someone shows him a simple, low-risk way to improve efficiency or quality, he might be interested—but he won't actively seek it out.

Needs

- **Visibility into Innovation Opportunities**
He needs basic exposure to innovation—not through complex presentations, but through simple, relevant examples.
- **Concrete, Practical Benefits**
Abstract innovation concepts won't convince him. He needs clear, tangible benefits that directly impact his daily business.
- **Trustworthy, Hands-On Guidance**
He won't read industry reports or attend innovation conferences. He needs trusted ways to introduce him to new solutions in a direct, practical way.

2 THE MOTIVATED



picture by ThisIsEngineering, unsplash

 *"The industry is evolving rapidly – if we don't keep up, we will lose relevance."*

 *"If we invest in new technologies in the wrong direction, we risk wasting money and time."*

 *"I know innovation is crucial, but I want to make sure we start in the right place—where it creates the most impact."*

2.1 Personal Profile

Profession

CEO of Wyss + Partner Vehicle Technology GmbH, a medium-sized company for vehicle technology in the canton of St.Gallen.

Education

Diploma in Engineering (Mechanical Engineering) from ETH Zurich, specializing in vehicle technology and mechatronics.

Career Path

- Started as a development engineer at a major automotive supplier
- Project manager for innovative drive technologies
- After ten years in the industry, founded Wyss + Partner Vehicle Technology GmbH
- Focus on customized vehicle technologies

Relevant Touchpoints

- Information sources: Business magazines, industry news, local business events.
- Networking: Industry associations, personal contacts.

Media Consumption

- Uses a desktop computer for professional purposes.
- Engages with email, newsletters, industry portals, and trade publications.

Personal Traits

- **Analytical**
Quickly identifies technical weaknesses and optimization potential.
- **Strong Leadership Skills**
Encourages personal responsibility and motivates her team.
- **Driven by Innovation**
Passionate about new technologies, especially electromobility & autonomous driving.

Weaknesses

- **Perfectionism**
Sometimes gets lost in detail.
- **High Workload**
Handles many projects and is often under pressure.
- **Impatience with Slow Processes**
Frustrated by bureaucracy and lengthy decision-making processes.

Work Routine

- Starts at 7:00 AM with a leadership meeting.
- Balances strategic planning & operational tasks.
- Engages in customer discussions, project management & technical oversight.
- Relies heavily on her personal network.
- Innovation is often postponed because daily business takes priority.

2.2 Company Profile

Wyss + Partner Vehicle Technology GmbH is a small but specialized company focused on the development, testing, and improvement of vehicle technologies. Its customers are companies that build cars or other vehicles.

Wyss + Partner Vehicle Technology GmbH is recognized as a testing facility by the Swiss Federal Roads Office (ASTRA) and supports its clients in complying with legal regulations as well as optimizing vehicle components.

Challenges

- **Supplier Issues**
A company in the vehicle technology sector relies on external suppliers to obtain parts (e.g., engines, electronic components). If a supplier experiences difficulties (e.g., delivery delays or quality problems), the entire production process can be delayed or become more expensive.
- **Innovation in Vehicle Manufacturing**
Vehicle technology is constantly evolving, especially in areas such as electromobility and autonomous driving. The company must ensure that it keeps up with the latest technologies and does not fall behind the competition.
- **Price Pressure**
Customers demand cost-effective solutions, leading to intense price and cost competition. A small company with less production capacity than larger firms faces greater financial challenges.
- **Shortage of Skilled Workers**
There is a lack of specialized engineers. The vehicle technology sector requires highly skilled professionals, especially in areas like electric vehicle technology, software development for autonomous systems, or testing technology. These experts are difficult to find and are often recruited by larger companies that offer higher salaries.

Current Workarounds

- Active networking with industry and research partners.
- Utilization of public funding programs.
- Participation in research and innovation initiatives.

Goals

- **Technological Innovation & Competitiveness**
The company must remain financially stable and continue to grow without taking excessive risks.
- **Financial Stability & Sustainable Growth**
The company must maintain financial health and expand steadily without engaging in high-risk investments.
- **Attracting & Retaining Skilled Workers**
She needs a strong team of highly qualified engineers and technicians to implement the company's complex projects.
- **Customer Acquisition & Long-Term Customer Relationships**
She must attract new customers while ensuring long-term loyalty from existing ones.

Needs

- **Well-Founded Risk Assessment**
Since she is perfectionist and strategically minded, she needs reliable expert opinions to assess risks effectively.
- **Highly Qualified Team**
She values a motivated, technically skilled team that actively supports innovation.
- **Data-Driven Decisions & Clear Planning**
She requires reliable data and clear roadmaps to determine which sustainable technologies make sense for the company.
- **Balancing Sustainability & Economic Viability**
Since she thinks entrepreneurially, she must ensure that sustainability and profitability can be achieved together.

3 THE HESITANT



picture by Peter van Eijk, unsplash

"If we invest in new machines or software, but the expected benefits don't materialize, it could jeopardize our financial situation."

"I want to maintain control over our core processes and not become dependent on external partners for new technologies."

"Price pressure is increasing – if we don't become more efficient, customers might switch to cheaper suppliers."

3.1 Personal Profile

Profession

CEO of Brunner Metalltechnik AG, a small to medium-sized enterprise (SME) with 70 employees in metal processing.

Education

Bachelor of Science (Mechanical Engineering) at the University of Applied Sciences (HSR) Rapperswil, with a focus on manufacturing technology & automation.

Career Path

- Started as a project engineer in an industrial company.
- Promoted to production manager at Brunner Metalltechnik AG.
- Has been a CEO in various companies for several years, leading the business pragmatically & with risk awareness.

Relevant Touchpoints

- Industry associations and networks
- Financing & funding
- Trade fairs & events

Media Consumption

- Daily: LinkedIn, newsletters, trade magazines, SME magazine.
- Occasionally: Podcasts on SME strategies & innovation.

Personal Traits

- **Risk-Averse**
Only makes decisions when the risk is precisely calculable.
- **Pragmatic**
Relies on proven solutions & gradual changes.
- **Structured**
Clear planning, process security & long-term perspective.
- **Skeptical**
Initially cautious towards new technologies and external partners.

Weaknesses

- **Hesitant**
Struggles with making quick decisions, especially in uncertain situations.
- **Skeptical of Innovation**
Relies heavily on tried-and-true solutions, takes a long time to evaluate new technologies.
- **Micro-Manager**
Reluctant to delegate responsibility & slow to trust external partners.

Work Routine

- Starts early in the morning with an overview of ongoing projects & production processes.
- Allocates ample time for planning, cost calculations & strategic decisions.
- Regular meetings with the leadership team.
- Customer inquiries & supplier coordination take up a large portion of his day.
- Innovation initiatives are often postponed if urgent operational tasks arise.
- Leaves the office in the early evening but remains available via email & phone.

3.2 Company Profile

Brunner Metalltechnik AG is a medium-sized company with 70 employees, specializing in metal processing and mechanical engineering. It primarily supplies the automotive, construction, and medical technology industries with precisely manufactured components. The company relies on proven production processes but faces the challenge of integrating digitalization and automation more extensively. Despite high quality and stable customer relationships, management remains cautious with innovations and carefully evaluates investments.

Challenges

- **Uncertain Investments**
He hesitates when it comes to new machines and digital processes because the amortization period is unclear.
- **Skills Shortage**
There is a lack of qualified employees, especially for automated and digital manufacturing processes.
- **Rising Price Pressure**
Low-cost suppliers from Eastern Europe and Asia put pressure on the company to produce more efficiently.
- **Skepticism Towards New Technologies**
He is cautious with automation and digitalization due to a lack of practical experience.

Current Workarounds

- Gradual process optimization instead of major leaps.
- Testing phases & pilot projects for new technologies in small areas.
- Close cooperation with trusted partners instead of open innovation platforms.
- Focus on economically sound investments with quick amortization.
- Long-term customer relationships & quality assurance to compensate for price pressure.

Goals

- **Efficient Processes Without Unnecessary Risks**
He wants to optimize production processes but without costly experiments. Every investment must pay off quickly.
- **Remain Competitive**
He wants to ensure that Brunner Metalltechnik can compete with international rivals without having to drastically lower prices.
- **Utilize Future-Proof Technologies**
Digitalization and automation interest him – but only if they offer practical benefits and can be integrated without major disruptions.
- **Retain and Attract Skilled Workers**
He needs motivated employees who understand new technologies but also fit with the company's existing values and workflows.

Needs

- **Clear Prospects of Success**
He needs concrete figures and best practices that demonstrate an investment's profitability and minimal risks.
- **Reliable Partners & Network**
He does not want to embrace innovation blindly—partners must be trustworthy and not overwhelm him with unrealistic or overly complex ideas.
- **Financial Security & Funding Opportunities**
If financing or funding programs are available, he is more willing to take bigger steps.
- **Simple, Step-by-Step Solutions**
He does not want radical changes but prefers small, controllable improvements that integrate into existing operations.