

## **topic -innovation management**

The automotive industry is renowned for its competitive pressures. The importance of brand differentiation through product innovation is paramount to avoid competing on cost alone. Within this context, a product development expert from Intelligentsia Consultants assisted an international automotive components group with the development of new air conditioning equipment for a French automotive manufacturer. Support was provided over the full duration of the product development cycle – concept, design and validation phases – and resulted in an innovative technology that has been implemented in over one million vehicles and awarded several international patents.

Innovation management techniques are important for small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as large multinational enterprises. However, due to time and staffing constraints, SMEs often under exploit such techniques. Within this context, an innovation management expert from Intelligentsia Consultants assisted a Maltese development agency to provide hands-on training on innovation management techniques to local SMEs. Thanks to the training, the companies were able to understand and apply practical techniques – including quality function deployment, design failure modes effects analysis and project management – to their new product development projects.

