



Professor Eve Mitleton-Kelly

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Using the Logic of Complexity Theory to Address Apparently Intractable Problems

The talk will outline some of the key principles from complexity theory used by the Complexity Research Group at LSE, to develop a method to address apparently intractable problems. They often appear intractable (difficult, complex, unsolvable) because of the way they are addressed; they are complex with multiple underlying causalities, yet the approaches used tend to be simplistic and linear, focussing on a single cause. The approach can be used to address organisational problems (SMEs to global), societal issues such as deforestation in Indonesia, and global challenges such as the spread of pandemics across borders.

Time: Friday, July 12, 2013, 09:00 am

Location: Johannes Kepler University Linz, Science Park 3, HS 18

Prof. Eve Mitleton-Kelly is founder and Director of the Complexity Research Programme at the London School of Economics; Senior Fellow in LSE IDEAS, centre for the study of international affairs, diplomacy & grand strategy; Member of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Complex Systems; Fellow of the Royal Institution; member of the Scientific Advisory Board to the 'Next Generation Infrastructures Foundation', Delft University of Technology; on the Editorial Board of the Journal of 'Emergence: Complexity & Organisations'; was Coordinator of Links with Business, Industry and Government of the European Complex Systems Network of Excellence, Exystence (2003-2006); Director of the UK Complexity Society; and Executive Coordinator of SOL-UK (London) (Society for Organisational Learning) 1977-2008.

Her research has concentrated on the implications of the theories of complexity for organizations and specifically on strategy and policy development and on the creation of enabling environments to address apparently intractable problems in business and the public sector. She has led, and participated in projects addressing practical problems using complexity theory. Her latest project is working with a government agency in Indonesia to help them change their organization to enable them to more effectively address deforestation.

She has developed a theory of complex social systems and an integrated methodology using both qualitative and quantitative tools and methods. The theory is being used for teaching at universities around the world, including three EPSRC-funded short courses; at LSE, to train researchers. Publications, incl. a book on corporate governance and complexity (2010) and the work of the LSE Complexity Group are on www.lse.ac.uk/complexity. A new volume, edited by EMK and based on the work of Sociocultural Partners, is forthcoming, to be published by Springer in June 2013.