



Strategic Technology and Innovation Management Programme 2021

# 9. The Shifting Vocabulary of Hacking and its Implications for Practice

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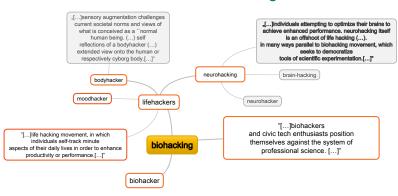
paulo.savaget@durham. ac.uk We examine the meanings and uses of the term 'hack' in areas beyond computer science to reveal different ways of addressing complex issues and driving prompt change.

#### **Aims**

Hacking consists of applying unorthodox, improvised, and potentially disruptive approaches to problem solving. We are interested in how the ethos of hacking evolves, as well as the different ways that 'hacky' approaches can be undertaken to drive positive change.

By performing a systematic literature review of the adaptations of the term hacking beyond computer science, combined with in-depth interviews, we aim to compile an exhaustive list of the variations of the term and create clusters of meaning to discuss prospects for companies and other stakeholders.

# Example of Early-Stage Cluster for Biohacking



## **Progress**

- Systematically cleaning a dataset
- Compilation of exhaustive list of single word variations, like: biohacking, hackathons, etc.
- Identification of first clusters of meaning

### **Deliverables**

- Exhaustive list of all variations of the term hacking in scientific literature
- Clusters of meaning of new terms
- Qualitative analyses of the evolution of the ethos and heuristics of hacking
- Bibliometric analysis of areas of adaptation of term and development overtime
- Discussion about the opportunities for companies and other stakeholders to adopt a hacky approach

#### Industrial relevance

This research can yield valuable insights for encouraging innovative behaviour among a wide array of stakeholders.

This is especially relevant when facing complex and pressing problems, where unconventional interventions might address issues promptly, even if imperfectly.

# Research opportunities

- Qualitative research on the characteristics of hacker subgroups
- Examining the impact of hacker subgroups from a systems perspective
- Engagement with companies to explore hacky approaches towards their pressing issues





