

'How to Innovate'

Synopsis of Seminar

The objective of the seminar is to help potential innovators to understand how they can translate their inventions into consumer relevant innovations that can deliver a profit. The main thesis for the seminar is that one way of developing innovations is to constantly search for *connections* at multiple levels – the consumer, the technology, and market levels.

At the consumer level, it is necessary to identify connections between different aspects of consumer behaviour, which can lead leads to insights into potential concepts for innovations; what would be easier, cheaper, quicker, better, faster, or radically different?

At the technology level, connections between different technologies can very often give rise to entirely new categories of product, especially when coupled with a deep understanding of consumer behaviour and unspoken needs. And having done this, it is necessary to literally connect with the consumer through powerful claims.

At the market level, a different set of connections occurs – competitors, regulators, or anyone else who may not have your best interests at heart. How are they going to view your innovation and what can you do about it?

The seminar is a blend of presentation, interactive experience, and feedback so that attendees can understand and practice some techniques for exploring different connections. It is a 2 hour session for up to 50 people, and costs start at £490 plus VAT for UK clients. The seminar is complemented by a short booklet summarising the concepts and techniques presented.

First presented at Venturefest Oxford in 2009:

'Listening to Ian Walton on "how to innovate" made me realise how many entrepreneurs I know simply rely on native talent to innovate, and how many would benefit from having a few more tools in their mental toolbox. This was a session that was clearly at the core of what Venturefest is trying to do for entrepreneurs, and which added well to its networking and innovation focus'

Dr Ian Walton

Ian started his career as a research scientist with a PhD from Manchester University in England, and spent the next 25 years working for Unilever in a variety of research, product development, and senior management roles. Ian's involvement in new product development took him to over 30 countries around the world, including 3 years working in Japan, and 7 years working in Thailand.



During his time in Thailand, Ian was the R&D Director responsible for developing new products for Unilever's Hair Care products throughout Asia – a business with a turnover of over \$1 billion. This involved leading multifunctional product development and market research teams, and working in partnership with local company Chairmen and Marketing Directors to define and implement brand development strategies.



Ian is now the owner of Coaching Ideas Limited, an Innovation Consultancy which helps companies to generate and implement new ideas. Ian's unique insights into and experiences of Eastern and Western cultures, together with his experience of innovation, marketing, leadership, and coaching of multicultural teams in Asia enables him to advise FMCG companies on innovation projects in the Home, Personal Care and Foods sectors.