

ANDREW GRANT | GAIA GRANT

Best-selling co-authors of *Who Killed Creativity?*

# THE INNOVATION RACE

HOW TO CHANGE A CULTURE  
TO CHANGE THE GAME

WILEY

# ***THE INNOVATION RACE***

First published in 2016 by John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd  
42 McDougall St, Milton Qld 4064  
Office also in Melbourne

Typeset in 11/13 pt Bembo Std

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National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication data:

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Creator:	Grant, Gaia, author.
Title:	The innovation race : how to change a culture to change the game/Gaia Grant, Andrew Grant.
ISBN:	9780730328995 (pbk) 9780730329015 (ebook)
Notes:	Includes index.
Subjects:	Technological innovations. Organizational change. Creative ability in business. Creative thinking. Critical thinking. Employee motivation. Success in business.
Other Creators/	
Contributors:	Grant, Andrew, author.
Dewey Number:	658.406

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Cover design by Wiley

Cover image © iDesign/Shutterstock

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Printed in Singapore by C.O.S. Printers Pte Ltd

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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## What people are saying about *The Innovation Race*

*'an inspirational and unconventional look at innovation'*

*'easy to read, accurate, provocative and entertaining'*

*'a fresh insightful tool ... you will be educated and entertained by compelling stories'*

*'thoughtful and engaging'*

*'essential for the human race'*

*'every executive should own a copy of this book'*

Every company in the world is now struggling to define themselves for a future they have yet to imagine. They all know they have to innovate to survive; the best appreciate that innovation is what gives their businesses relevance and drive. But few know how to get there from here. Culture, of course, is key, but what kind of culture? That's what this book sets out to explore and define. No question in business today is more urgent. So read this book before it's too late.

—**Margaret Heffernan**, author of bestsellers *Willful Blindness* and *Beyond Measure*, BBC TV producer, CEO & entrepreneur, *Huffington Post* blogger

The Grants have done it again with another inspirational and unconventional look at innovation. Not a re-hash of worn-out stories about the companies that we all believe are 'innovative' but a fresh look at innovation. This book will turn your idea of innovation and competition upside down and on its head. Be prepared for a great ride!

—**Dr Roger Firestien**, Senior Faculty, International Center for Studies in Creativity — State University of New York Buffalo and author of *Leading on the Creative Edge* and *Why Didn't I Think of That!*

The Grants have nailed it! This book is not only easy to read, accurate, provocative and entertaining but most importantly about people. Creativity—and especially innovation—are only sustainable and authentic with the right mindsets and outlook. Andrew and Gaia have authored a definitive guide to ensure that any reader takes action.

—**Richard Gerver**, UK Business Speaker of the Year, broadcaster, and author of bestseller *Change: Learn to Love It, Learn to Lead It* and *Simplicity: An Uncomplicated Guide to Success*

This excellent new book on transformative innovation brings together the Grants' long time focus on creativity and their extensive experience in working with global teams and organisations. Easy to read, with many diverse and insightful reflections and anecdotes that reinforce the 'why' and the 'how to' in developing purposeful innovation. Highly recommended.

—**Subhas DeGamia**, Former CEO India and  
Executive Director International Banking, ANZ

This book is a must read for whoever has wondered what 'innovation' really means, and what organisations can do about it.

—**Dr Eric Knight**, Sydney University Business School Faculty  
innovation specialist and author of *Reframe: How to solve the world's  
trickiest problems* and *Why we argue about climate change?*

The Grants have provided a fresh and insightful tool that not only explains innovation in a unique way but also helps the reader understand how to apply this to gain competitive advantage in today's business world. You will be educated and entertained by compelling stories about organisations that both failed and succeeded to understand the importance of innovation in their market. Every executive should own a copy of this book!

—**Sam Lasseter-Moore**, Sales Director New Zealand, Salesforce.com

*The Innovation Race* vividly describes the growing importance of innovation to economic performance, and more importantly, provides a comprehensive guide to how to foster innovation in any organization. This thoughtful and engaging book needs to be read by every leader committed to making their organization, and the world, better through creative action.

—**Dr William Wurtz**, Chairman and Managing Partner at Wurtz and  
Company, Past President American Creativity Association

This wonderful book is brought to life through the same latest thinking, in-depth research and tactics on innovation that Andrew and Gaia apply to everything they do. They wrap the book in the metaphor of flying around the world, examining the differences in innovation and leveraging the comparisons to explain key lessons. Too many people use the word 'innovation' too loosely, but not after you have read this book.

—**Robin Speculand**, CEO of Bridges Business Consultancy Int and  
author of *Beyond Strategy: The Leader's Role in Successful Implementation*  
and *Bricks to Bridges: Make Your Strategy Come Alive*

It is difficult to condense my view into a few sentences that will do justice to this book, but, I will try. Many people talk about the importance of innovation, the causes of no longer having it, where we lost it and the imperative of regaining it in order to be successful in today's business world. This book gives us important and clear information on how to actually do it including understanding the barriers that will get in the way. An excellent tool.

—**Mike Braggins**, Regional Manager Marketing Communications  
and Learning Asia Pacific, FujiXerox

*The Innovation Race* is essential for the Human Race. It provides guidelines for improving an organisation's ability to translate novel ideas into new products and services. This is done with a human-centered approach that applies what is known about personal development and growth toward developing a culture of innovation. Whether at the scale of a family, a company, a country, or the whole world, the insights provided in *The Innovation Race* provide a roadmap to sustainable growth.

—**Gino Yu**, Associate Professor School of Design,  
Hong Kong Polytechnic University

The world over, nations are caught-up in 'the innovation race'. All need help and help that is grounded in reality and experience. This book locates practical help within sound principles, offering numerous examples of both success and failure. The authors put the case squarely and robustly. This is a must-read.

—**Dr Kirpal Singh**, Professor at Singapore  
Management University and author of *Thinking Hats and  
Coloured Turbans: Creativity Across Cultures*

The Grants are masterful story tellers and have compiled a rich and diverse set of tools, explained through colourful examples, to stimulate those looking to develop sustainable innovation methods.

—**Derek Laney**, Head of Product Marketing  
Asia Pacific, Salesforce.com

An engrossing journey that gathers insights from the fields of economics, anthropology, ethics and psychology. It also examines when we shouldn't innovate and challenges us to ask what innovation is for.

—**Peter Martin**, Economics Editor, *The Age*



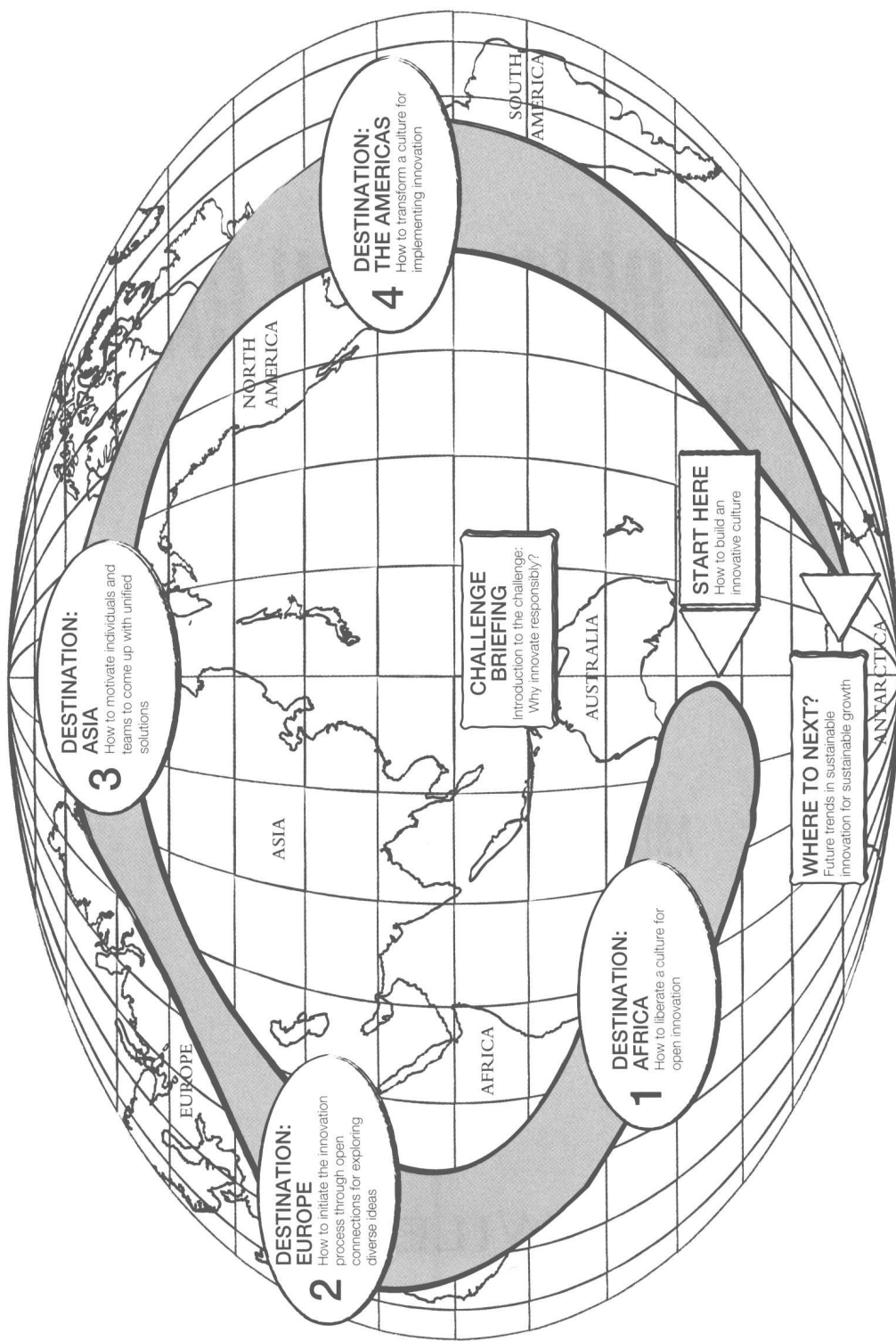
# ***THE INNOVATION RACE***

**HOW TO *CHANGE* A CULTURE  
TO *CHANGE* THE GAME**

**ANDREW GRANT | GAIA GRANT**

**WILEY**





# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Andrew and Gaia Grant are best-selling international authors and the founders and Directors of Tirian International Consultancy. They are a dynamic husband and wife team who have worked together for more than thirty years, initially working in the field of education and working for not-for-profit organisations, before moving on to include corporate work to top Fortune 500 companies for the last twenty years. Andrew and Gaia now focus on bringing organisational culture transformation in a wide variety of contexts—from indigenous communities through to corporate CEOs—to support authentic innovation and growth in all sectors and at all levels.

In the corporate sector Andrew and Gaia have worked with market leaders to assist with creating a sustainable innovation culture for purpose-driven innovation in a variety of regions around the world, including Allianz, Barclays, Citibank, Colgate Palmolive, Disney, Dyson, Estee Lauder, FedEx, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Fuji Xerox, Johnson & Johnson, Mercedes Benz, Nestle, PwC, UBS, Salesforce, Singtel, and Visa.

Their work with not-for-profit development organisations has included assisting with creating a health curriculum designed to reach over 25 million people in India and worldwide (HEPI), drug education for tribal groups in the north Indian tribal area of Nagaland and on the Thai Burmese border (BWA), development in an orphanage in El Salvador (BWA), health education in Sumba Indonesia (Sumba Foundation), and teaching transformational education techniques in the Philippines (The Central Philippines University). They also work with Amnesty International, and with Chilout in advocating to get children out of immigration detention centres.

Andrew and Gaia travelled extensively and worked from a base in Asia for almost fifteen years, and their business continues to operate globally. Currently based in Sydney, Gaia oversees Tirian's international business and works with Sydney University (as a guest lecturer at the Business School, while completing research towards a PhD on creating an innovation culture for sustainability), while Andrew focuses on keynote presenting and executive facilitating. Gaia has previously completed an MSc in Creative Thinking and Grad Dip in Change Leadership (from the State University

of New York Buffalo), along with BA Dip Ed and BD (hons), while Andrew has a Dip Tch, BEd.

The Grants have designed and produced more than thirty unique interactive licensed workshops, simulation games, keynotes and resources, including an investigative simulation game based on their first international bestselling book on the topic: *Who Killed Creativity?...And How Can We Get It Back?: 7 essential strategies for making yourself, your team and your organisation more innovative*. Gaia has also authored *A Patch of Paradise* (Random House, 2002) and *The Rhythm of Life* (Transworld, 1998).

Often requested as keynote presenters and facilitators for international conferences, Andrew and Gaia have delivered feature keynotes at a number of specialist events including TEDx (Hong Kong), World Presidents Organisation (YPO) Global Edge CEO Conference (Australia), The World Innovation Conference (France), HR Summit and WorkTech conferences (Singapore), the Leadership Bootcamp (Middle East), and the American Creativity Association (USA).



In the media, Andrew and Gaia have featured in a number of different international publications, broadcasts including the Harvard Business Review, BBC, Reuters, ABC TV, Fast Company and the Wall St Journal.

For client endorsements and videos:

<http://www.whokilledcreativity.com/authors/andrew-grant/>

<http://www.whokilledcreativity.com/authors/gaia-grant/>

<http://www.whokilledcreativity.com/endorsements/intro-endorsements/>

For more information and resources including about the seminars, workshops, keynotes, articles, blogs, surveys, videos and downloadable tools contact us at [info@tirian.com](mailto:info@tirian.com) or visit:

Websites: [www.the-innovation-race.com](http://www.the-innovation-race.com), [www.whokilledcreativity.com](http://www.whokilledcreativity.com), [www.tirian.com](http://www.tirian.com)

YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCUlq3aSEzDsHDLzkdiKoDMQ](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUlq3aSEzDsHDLzkdiKoDMQ)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/whokilledcreativity](http://www.facebook.com/whokilledcreativity)

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to all the people who have contributed in so many different ways to the process of putting this book together and getting it over the line. We have included a few details about these special people so you can appreciate the unique diversity of backgrounds and ideas that they bring with them that have contributed to the wealth of perspectives in the book.

Our wholehearted thanks, firstly, to the thought leaders who gave us their time to share their perspectives on innovation, including: Adam Bryant (*New York Times* editor and columnist (USA)), Wade Davis (*National Geographic* resident anthropologist (Canada)), Professor Patrick Dodson (Aboriginal Elder and Senator (Australia)), Christopher Norton (President Global Product and Operations at Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts (France)), Claudio Viggiani (Director of Social Responsibility at ABIHPEC (Brazil)), Scott Anthony (*Harvard Business Review* contributor), Sam Keen (*Psychology Today* editor and philosopher (USA)), Ram Raghavan (General Manager Latin America Innovation Centre at Colgate Palmolive (Mexico)), Margaret Heffernan (Chief Executive, TV Producer and entrepreneur (UK)).

Other fascinating people we have appreciated being able to interview to gain more depth into topics we have explored have included: Rick McPhee (TV Series Producer (Australia)), Mohammad Ali Baqiri (law student and former asylum seeker (Afghanistan)), Adrian Belic (Academy Award nominated and Sundance award winning filmmaker (USA)), David Tai (Founder and Chairman Cloud Valley Group and previous IBM Director (China)), Aya Dowidar (Executive Director at Scoreplus Human Resources Consultancy (Egypt)), Ananta Malhotra (Customer Satisfaction and Process Manager Schneider Electric (Malaysia)) and Vijay Kumar Singh (Commercial Manager IT Business Schneider Electric (Singapore)), Matt McFadyen, the late Peter Malcolm and Helen Jomoa (polar adventurers (Australia and the UK)), Jornina (Joy) Sebastian (Senior Vice President Shared Services Transcom (Philippines)), Faridodin (Fred) Lajvardi (educator (USA)), Masoud Al-Maskary (Owner and CEO Ajyal HR Solutions & Services (Oman)), Edgardo O. Madrilejo (Chief Risk Officer Bank of the Philippine Islands (Philippines)), and Grant Henderson (air traffic controller (Australia)).

*(Note that full interviews with some of these people and other thought leaders can be found at [www.the-innovation-race.com](http://www.the-innovation-race.com)).*

Many thanks also to the extremely kind friends and associates who waded through the rough early draft versions of the text and helped to provide invaluable feedback, including: Jane Harvey (corporate creative arts specialist (USA)), Dr Lloyd Irwin (Tirian partner and executive leadership specialist (Australia)), Maegan Baker (entrepreneurship specialist (Canada)), Toni Hassan (specialist in journalism, international development and the arts (Australia)), Rumman Ahmad (entrepreneur and founder of KLIC conference (Sri Lanka)), Paulina Larocca (corporate innovation executive (Australia)), Celia Pillai (executive strategy consultant and creativity and innovation specialist (India)), Prue Robson (creativity and change management specialist (Australia)), Carol Fusek (corporate logistics specialist (Singapore)), Kate Bettes (arts student (England)), Liz Yeo (community organization CEO (Australia)), and Paul McKey (innovation consultant (Australia)).

A note of sincere appreciation too to those who read the final manuscript and provided us with their enthusiastic feedback for the endorsements, to: Peter Martin (Economics Editor, *The Age* (Australia)), Dr Roger Firestien (State University of New York Buffalo (USA)), Richard Gerver (award winning speaker and broadcaster (UK)), Subhas DeGamia (Former CEO India and Executive Director International Banking ANZ), Dr Eric Knight (Sydney University Business School Senior Faculty innovation specialist (Australia)), Sam Lasseter-Moore (Sales Director New Zealand Salesforce.com (New Zealand)), Dr William Wurtz (Past President American Creativity Association (USA)), Robin Speculand (CEO Bridges Business Consultancy Int (Singapore)), Mike Braggins (Corporate Executive FujiXerox AsiaPacific (Singapore)), Gino Yu, (Associate Professor School of Design Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Hong Kong)), and Dr Kirpal Singh (Professor at Singapore Management University (Singapore)), and Derek Laney (Head of Product Marketing Salesforce.com Asia Pacific (Australia)).

Of course producing a book requires a lot of strategic and practical guidance at the conceptual and publishing stages, so a big thank you to the great team at Wiley in Australia for their support through the lengthy process, particularly to: Senior Commissioning Editor Lucy Raymond for her always insightful guidance, to Project Editor Chris Shorten for his tolerant and astute direction, and to our incredibly perceptive and patient content editor Jem Bates.

Finally, as always, we also need to acknowledge the continued love and support of our two wonderful children Zoe and Kallen, who have had to put up with the intense process of mum and dad working together and co-authoring books together over so many years!

## Preface

# INTO THE SHARK TANK

We travel quite extensively, and when we meet new people we are almost always first asked: Where are you from? This question usually helps them make a quick assessment of who we are based on general cultural traits.

Until recently we always answered proudly that we are from Australia, but this response now commonly evokes a fearful reaction: ‘Aargh! Sharks!’ (As daily ocean swimmers we were never especially worried about sharks—until the recent media exposure.) Sometimes the people we meet also raise anxious questions about the deadly spiders, snakes and crocodiles that Australia has become infamous for.

Since *Crocodile Dundee* and Steve Irwin put Australia on the map with their dangerous animal wrestling antics, our country has become notorious for its ‘deadly predators’. Perhaps it is no surprise that such venomous and sometimes fierce animals have survived in our harsh environment, yet we find it ironic that people are so afraid of creatures they are unlikely ever to encounter.

It’s true that sharks can be savage, but in reality you are more likely to be hit by lightning (the odds are one in 3000) or injured by a falling toilet seat (one in 10 000) than killed by a shark (one in 3.7 million). There are also more shark attacks off American beaches than in Australian waters. Australia has little experience of war or terrorism on its home soil and is ranked in the top 10 safest and most peaceful countries to live in, yet it is commonly perceived as an unusually dangerous country to visit or live in. These *perceptions* of reality, mostly based on narrowly focused media stories and movies aiming to shock and entertain, can be so much more compelling than reality itself.

The feeling of terror that can be induced by the *idea* of a shark attack might help you understand the perceptions of the contemporary innovation environment. As one shark attack victim described his ordeal, ‘It’s the fear of being eaten alive, and having no control over it.’<sup>1</sup>

The emotionally charged shark theme was exploited by the reality TV show *Shark Tank*, a title with particular resonance in the Australian context. In this show budding entrepreneurs pitch their innovative new product to a panel of successful high-profile businesspeople: the sharks. The result is a suspenseful, gut-wrenching ride as the contestants struggle to survive the ferocious ‘attack’. The ideas pitched range widely, from home delivery catering through portable washing machines to automated toilets. One we have seen was for a surfboard with a shark repellent device attached; perhaps it is only a matter of time before someone designs a toilet safety device to reduce toilet seat malfunction injuries! Contestants range from young mums to high-tech geeks. As they prepare to make their pitch, each contestant must walk down a long, dark corridor past an equally long fish tank containing—you guessed it—sharks.

When they present their idea to the panel, the camera switches between the varying expressions of the business gurus and their nail-biting victims. Following the pitch, each panellist delivers their personal, sometimes brutal judgement on the idea and declares whether they are prepared to invest in it. Years of commitment and perseverance can, in that moment, be either dramatically vindicated or utterly crushed. Finally the contestant is filmed walking back down that corridor of sharks to be interviewed for the last time. It is at that point that it is possible to consider the impact of the event from the contestant’s perspective, to feel the competitive drive for innovation through one individual’s personal experience.

*Shark Tank* adopts a much more aggressive approach than past ‘inventors’ shows, in which judges were generally polite and encouraging, but it may reflect more realistically just how ruthless the field has become. Today the business environment is harsh and competitive. It’s do or die, the survival of the fittest, the cleverest idea, the best marketing approach, the biggest investment opportunity, finding that slight competitive edge in an already flooded market. Most readers will already be aware of the realities of entering a race like this, and of the sobering statistic that 90 per cent of startups fail.<sup>ii</sup> The drive to innovate seems to have become a mad cut-throat dash towards an apparently unachievable goal.

On our journeys we have asked a broad range of people what they think the popular phrase ‘the innovation race’ has come to mean: including psychologists and philosophers, anthropologists and academics, indigenous elders and business executives, poets and politicians, scientists and social workers. As we have listened to these varied opinions, we have realised that when you break it down, the three words in this phrase are all significant. First, ‘the’ can imply there is only one approach to innovation. Secondly, the concept of ‘innovation’ is itself often bandied around without a clear

understanding of what it means. And lastly, there is the assumption that innovation is a ‘race’. But is innovation always a ‘race’? Does it need to be a race? We use this popular phrase ‘the innovation race’ to set up a discussion for how this concept has shaped contemporary views of innovation, but the ambiguities inherent in this expression soon become clear. It might be only as you progress through to the end of the book that you will realise how important it is to deal with the contradictions and challenges that this phrase evokes.

To be equipped to navigate the potentially perilous innovation race successfully, we believe it is necessary to change *perceptions* about innovation by challenging the common metaphor. Prolific author and *Harvard Business Review* contributor Scott Anthony has told us that he is concerned that the concept of the innovation race is too closely connected to the idea of the rat race, and the notion that we are moving faster but are still ultimately standing still in ‘a race that can never be won.’ Philosopher, professor, author and past *Psychology Today* editor Sam Keen has shared with us that he believes ‘the weapons race and the nuclear race are symptoms of what can go wrong when we assume innovation is just about unbridled competitive rivalry.’ When we asked *National Geographic* resident anthropologist and award winning author, photographer and filmmaker Wade Davis about his thoughts on the concept of ‘the innovation race’, he asked us to emphasise his beautiful and incredibly powerful words from *Wayfinders* that, ‘Our economic models are projections and arrows when they should be circles. To define perpetual growth on a finite planet as the sole measure of economic well-being,’ he has challenged, ‘is to engage in a form of slow collective suicide.’

It will also be important to dive beneath the surface to look at the deeper factors involved—in particular the cultural change needed to create a climate that supports *sustainable* and *less-competitive* innovation. ‘Innovation is more of a relay race than a marathon,’ says corporate executive Claudio Viggiani, now Director of Social Responsibility at ABIHPEC in Brazil. ‘The important thing is that a GROUP of contributors, one relaying on the others is able to hand-off the baton at the right moment so the ideas can “progress” smoothly until they become applicable realities. This concept encompasses collaboration work and common objectives.’ *New York Times* science editor, columnist and author Adam Bryant shared with us his ‘two cents worth’ that, ‘The companies that will win the innovation race will have the most effective cultures—a workplace where the shared ethos and strategies for teamwork are clear.’ Sam Keen also went on to explain to us the deeper commitment he believes we need to make to get past the potentially destructive common competitive concepts, saying, ‘The most creative innovations are not beating someone else or being number one, but



the status quo, but they also need to be visionary enough to rethink the future and conceive of better ways of doing things for long-term survival.

What are some immediate takeaways for the realists and pragmatists? These include tools for surviving the current innovation challenges by building a solid culture of innovation, and this means identifying the roadblocks and detours as well as the fast-forward strategies needed to stay relevant. For the idealists and altruists, the longer-term implications include strategies for sustainable transformational innovation through deeper culture change. All this means challenging the typical assumption that innovation is about designing bigger, sleeker and faster products and services, and exploring instead how it can bring about creative culture change for all of society.

Enjoy the journey!