Discovering the Mindset
to Pursue the Impossible
Lessons learned on
Cree’s journey from startup to
global technology company
My approach to Innovation

Start with People not process

Focus on Mindset not toolset
The Innovator’s Spirit

Beliefs that enable innovative behaviors

• Embrace **risk**
• Strive for **better**
• View crisis as an **opportunity**
Innovation is more than a new idea

New + Solves problem + Creates value
Resetting your core beliefs
Candor

Start with being honest about the facts

Prioritize constructiveness over collegiality

Embrace the Brutal Truth
Initiative

Cycles of learning are critical to innovation

Don’t become so focused on being right, that you miss opportunities for success

Don’t wait for perfection
Resolve

Give yourself no choice but to innovate

Backup plans have negative value

Make success the only option
Courage

There is no innovation without risk

Resiliency must be learned

Become unafraid of failure
Leadership

The future doesn’t just happen

Boundary conditions are a choice

There is no box
Engagement

Answers often lie in the details

Innovation is messy

Get your hands dirty
What is the biggest barrier to Innovation?
The bias against change

“The mind is like a rubber band; you can easily stretch it temporarily, but it snaps back to its resting position. We resist change.”  
- Jennifer Kunst
Leading the LED Lighting Revolution
Taking Lighting to the **next level**

Not better light for the sake of better light

**Question:** Does Human Centric Lighting solve a problem that the customer cares about and is willing to pay for?
How to better translate research to practice?

That is the wrong goal for DOE funded research. Focus on a BIG longer-term problem that needs to be solved.
Opportunity for small companies to lead the industry

The big players are not going to change until they have to change.
This is your chance to start the next revolution!