

# CHINA CROSSROADS

Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 16:00 – 18:00

## **An Imperfect *Laoban*: Failing to Win in China over a Decade of Managing an MNC**

**Ian Anderson**

**Former Managing Director of an MNC in China**

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Boxing Cat Sinan Mansions | 519 Fuxing Zhong Lu  
150rmb including drink ticket | FREE for members  
Scan to RSVP or email [editor@shanghai-review.org](mailto:editor@shanghai-review.org)



This talk will discuss Ian's experience over 8 years as the imperfect *laoban* of an imperfect company, both ill-equipped to do what it takes to win in China. He will talk around such themes as “ask not what China can do for you, ask what you can do for China”; “China is not a religion but an atheist will fail”; “Brits build spreadsheets while Chinese build factories”; “if you can't beat them, join them”. He will enhance these themes with his own candid personal insights and learnings, so that others may avoid following too closely in his corporate footsteps!

[Ian Anderson](#) is a graduate of Cambridge University with a major in European Language. He has recently retired from a career spanning 45 years in the chemicals industry, initially in international sales & marketing across all major economic regions before moving into general management, with responsibility for up to 1000 employees, EUR 1 billion sales and 15 factories. He has spent the last 9 years based in Shanghai as China Managing Director for two multinational companies in chemical manufacturing and trading. Ian is proud to hold a pre-Brexit British passport and a post-COVID Chinese Permanent Residence Card. Ian is not proud to have failed to learn fluent Mandarin despite travelling in 26 Chinese provinces, living with a Chinese partner and always being only *laowai* in the company. Ian is now pursuing a third age career in coaching and consulting. He also sits on the advisory board of IMA Asia. This is his third talk for China Crossroads.

[China Crossroads](#) hosts talks on all topics related to China, including business, foreign policy, and other areas as they relate to China, the idea being that China is both already a “crossroads” of the world and itself at a “crossroads” in terms of its future global influence. For more information, contact Frank Tsai at [editor@shanghai-review.org](mailto:editor@shanghai-review.org).