PP-601 [Beekeeping Technology and Quality]
Bringing your beekeeping invention to market

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Beekeepers as a group are particularly innovative. Every beekeeper's situation is unique, requiring each beekeeper to adapt existing equipment and processes to suit their situation. Often this adaptation involves developing new and creative solutions. From bee research laboratories to a beehive on a balcony, surprisingly clever solutions to problems have been developed. Beekeepers and bee researchers are inventors.

Some beekeeper's inventions do more than solve just their own particular problem in their apiary, laboratory or hive. The innovation has broader potential. It could make a difference, could help other beekeepers, could improve bee health, perhaps world-wide.

If an invention will help other beekeepers and, indeed, support healthy colonies of bees, it should be commercialised so that beekeepers and researchers around the world can use it. How does the inventor bring their invention to market? What are the opportunities? What are the hurdles? What help might the beekeeper/researcher/inventor need?

In this presentation Stuart will draw from his experience of co-inventing the Flow Hive and the Flow Super Lifter. He will detail what is involved in bringing those inventions to market. He will describe ways in which the creative process can be enhanced, ethical considerations, how to protect the ideas from being stolen, the options in raising finance, and possibilities in marketing.

To illustrate the bringing of an invention to market, Stuart will use anecdotes from other inventors as well as his own experience. He will describe mistakes and failures as well as successes, as each failure, while being difficult, is a learning experience.

This presentation discusses the fraught area between research, development, innovation and the marketplace. Stuart will outline the Learning Cycle developed by David Kolb (1984) and Action Research as promoted by Kurt Lewin (1944). These research approaches differ significantly from traditional research, but fit well in the area of innovating for improved beekeeping.