



Christian Havrehed

Entertaining Business and Adventure speaker, ocean rower, author, bringing China to the World

Christian Havrehed is an adventurer with solid business experience, having worked in strategy consulting and as a managing director. He uses his adventures to shift perceptions of what is possible, working with culturally diverse teams to reach far out goals. He has extensive China experience and seeks to promote Sino-Western cross-cultural understanding. He combines adventuring with charity and he believes anything is possible.

Christian's biography

Christian Havrehed's Background

Having spent 20 years living and working in China, Christian is well aware of the challenges Chinese and Westerners experience working together. Although Christian's adventures tend to be China-centric his lessons learned are universally applicable to [leadership](#) and team performance.

To test the limits of cross-cultural cooperation, he decided to create the ultimate Sino-Western joint-venture, where the biggest downside was not bankruptcy, but death.

What better way to showcase the power of cross-cultural collaboration than to join an experimental unsupported Trans-Atlantic rowing race in a rowboat built in China, and with a Mainland Chinese rowing partner, who could not row and had never been out of sight of land? In all fairness, Christian could not row either, so they were a well-matched pair.

It took Christian and his Chinese rowing partner Sun Haibin 56 days to row 5,000km across the Atlantic ocean, in a boat the size of a large dining room table, under extreme physical discomfort and at the mercy of the sea. The vastness of the ocean played tricks on their minds, including an out of body experience. Language difficulties, cultural differences, and fatigue testing their resolve to the full. Despite the [adversity](#), the pair managed to turn their differences into advantages and they finished 8th in a fleet of 36, ahead of many experienced mono-cultural rowing teams.

Christian became the first Dane to row across an ocean, and Sun Haibin the first Chinese – and Asian. Their project was the first privately organised sports event to be featured on Chinese national television and on the front pages of major Chinese newspapers. With their project they raised funds for Christian's alma mater, the United World College of the Atlantic in Wales, a school whose mission is to promote

international understanding and a sustainable future.

Christian's book "Beijing to Barbados in a Rowboat" has been published in English, Chinese, as well as Danish, and has sold more than 20,000 copies. The 2020 updated edition can be purchased on-line. Christian has also run the length of the Pyrenees (880km distance, 60km of elevation) from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, raising money for a lifeboat to be deployed in Mozambique, rowed from England to Denmark with three British Royal Marines, and he is currently planning a new row with Sun Haibin from China, via Korea to Japan, in order to retrace the voyage of Xufu, an alchemist who in 210BC was sent by the first Chinese Emperor (now known for his army of terracotta warriors) to bring back the Elixir of Immortality kept by the Gods in the Eastern seas.

In the unlikely event Christian and Sun Haibin should fail to find the Elixir, the project will still bring to life Chinese history in a new and engaging way, for Westerners and Chinese alike.

Christian has 20 years' experience in delivering talks and teambuilding, which challenge the status quo and inspire audiences from all backgrounds. Thanks to his extensive business experience, Christian understands client needs quickly and engages professionally with anyone from C-Level to shop floor. As a speaker Christian is down to earth, humorous, approachable, and his clients rate him highly. Christian can deliver his services in English, Mandarin Chinese, German and Danish.

Christian's talks

- **Grit and perseverance**
- **Overcoming setbacks**
- **Cultural differences as a competitive advantage**
- **Creating a winning team**
- **Risk-taking**
- **Start-up mindset**
- **A China you have never heard of**