

IOL Strategic Leadership Workshop



Programme Details and Itinerary

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

1. Explore the characteristics of a good strategic leader.
2. Develop an understanding of the theory behind strategic thinking and its practical application within outdoor learning.
3. Discuss the past, present and potential future events that impact outdoor learning.
4. Share and discuss leadership models that support a strategic approach to address the challenges of the outdoor learning.
5. Explore and apply a suitable coaching model to support you in your professional development.
6. Discuss the components of a Theory of Change model and how they can benefit outdoor learning providers.
7. Experience and receive information on the importance of connections with others around the sector and the support available.
8. Consider and reflect on how to influence and inspire change in your organisation

Friday 25th September 2026

9.30	Arrivals	Refreshments Welcome and domestic info	
	THE STRATEGIC OUTLOOK		
10.30	Introductions and objectives • Us • The course, content outcomes • Each other	Shared introductions – walk out and about and then come back & introduce each other. Course aims and programme, and its underlying methodology.	CLO 7
	Leadership for you	‘Natural Leader’ – outdoor session What do you see from a good strategic Leader? What do you hear? How do they make you feel? Explore leadership styles and characteristics	CLO 1
	Taking a strategic approach to managing and leading	Indoor session Operational vs strategic leadership Making sense of strategic leadership in OL contexts – IOL and Blackwell Adventure case studies	CLO 2
1.00	Lunch		

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Saturday 26th September 2026			
8.00	Breakfast Empty rooms		
	INFLUENCE & CHANGE		
9.00	'What's in a name?'	Outdoor name writing and invitation to share 'Your Name' and its meaning to you.	CLO 7
	Influencing upwards and inspiring change – where and how to make a difference	Indoor session Theory of Change in an OL context.	CLO 6
11.00	Break and reflection		
11.15	How might future success be disrupted and what will you do about it?	Peer structured discussion Proactive / responsive approaches to challenge and disruption. Feedback	CLO 8
	Communities of Practice	Theory of Communities of Practice – and where might you find them?	CLO 7
12.45	Lunch		
	LEADING ACTION		
1.15	Active Listening	Cartoon drawing game in pairs	CLO 1
	Reflexive Practice Critical Reflection	Indoor session Reflective Practitioner Reflexive Researcher	CLO 5
	Leading Practitioner of the IOL Award	Self-determined learning and the example of the LPIOL model including Communities of Practice Experience or the LPIOL and beyond	CLO 4
	Coaching conversations and action planning GROW Model Reflection	Preferred locations How does YOUR WORK tie into the future needs of the Outdoor Landscape and your current professional role? GROW Model • GOAL • REALITIES • OPTIONS • WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? 'Postcard to Me' (Private postcard which once written, is put in envelope and addressed as participants' wish. Posted out 6 weeks later) Evaluation Forms	CLO 5
4.00	Final conversations	For personal use as you see fit. Glen & Jo available for 121s	CLO 1
4.30	Participant Departures		

COURSE FACILITATORS

Glen Probert



Glen is a Senior Fellow and Leading Practitioner of the IOL with over 20 years' worth of experience in outdoor learning, leadership & management. His current role is as the CEO of Blackwell Adventure, an outdoor learning charity based near Birmingham and he also serves as an AAIAC Committee member. Glen has also held regional and national roles with the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres and remains an active member of AHOEC. He is a keen mountain biker and mountaineer with a passion for the high mountains of the Alps and the Himalayas.

On the purpose of the Strategic Leadership workshop, Glen says that 'Outdoor learning has so much to offer our society to make a positive impact yet is often overlooked or misunderstood. This Strategic Leadership course allows us to explore how we strategically lead people and organisations within the outdoor learning sector to collaborate, communicate and support high quality provision with purpose and impact whilst at the same time, confirming what makes us great leaders and considering the future actions we can take in developing outdoor learning for the future.'

Jo Barnett



Jo is the current CEO of the Institute for Outdoor Learning. Jo began with teaching, and then she moved to working in residential environmental & outdoor education centres. Her career progressed through delivery to management, then to leadership and advocacy – deliberately within the context and breadth of outdoor learning,

Jo has many years of peer association voluntary work, which began with the Northern Region of the IOL, in the early 2000s. She has held the National Chair role for the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres. Jo has an MA in Management Learning and Leadership which led to an interest in the ethical management of personal motivation at work.

Mike Etherington



Mike is an experienced Regional Operations Manager with a proven track record of driving profit and performance across teams. After 28 years and multiple roles in the gambling industry, he returned to his passion for the outdoors and outdoor learning, joining the Field Studies Council as the Operations Manager.

Mike will join us on Saturday when he will speak about the importance of making connections and how building networks can shape individual and industry success.



PRE COURSE PREPARATION

What makes a good leader? What makes good leadership?

As part of the course, we will be exploring a variety of theoretical leadership models.

Please reflect on **your** own experience of the good, the bad and the useful, of **leadership in practice**

You may have a model(s) of leadership that you identify with and/or use. For example, this may be about,

- the individual in the leadership role,
- the way leaders tackle tasks, or about
- how leaders go about motivating/managing teams and staff.
- Why does leadership matter?

We would welcome you sharing your reflections as part of this course. To assist with this, please prepare an A4 handout to bring with you. * **This is about your lived experience and outdoor learning contexts, rather than theoretical study.**

*Multiple copies can be made by the IOL if your piece is emailed across in advance. institute@outdoor-learning.org FAO Jo Barnett

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