



# LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

Leadership and Team Development Specialists



## The Company

Leadership Resources – a progressive management development consultancy on a mission to help businesses achieve their goals

## The Solutions

- Leadership Development
- Team Development
- Customer Service Development
- Key Account Management

## The Results

- Motivated Teams
- Focussed Leaders
- Effective Operations
- Profitable Clients

## Outdoor Management Development

By Ken Minor, Director, Leadership Resources

Outdoor Management Development is most effective when tied firmly to the basic concepts of leadership and teamworking, not when carried out as an exercise in isolation.

For this reason, our organisation always recommends some degree of "classroom-based" development prior to any outdoor module. It is imperative that participants understand exactly why they are embarking on this type of exercise before they actually do it. In this way delegates are more likely to use the opportunity to relate to and focus on how to apply fundamental management skills and to function effectively as part of a cohesive team. They will then also realise that there is a distinct difference between our programmes and the traditional "outward bound exercise".

We believe that outdoor programmes should be designed to be a powerful and positive experience. They should not be run as a sadistic test of physical fitness or as any kind of survival exercise. They should be designed to combine a large degree of cerebral stimulation with some moderately challenging physical tasks.

To this effect our programmes may take the form of a business simulation exercise, ensuring a very specific and transferable purpose. There is an overall objective to deliver the required result by the end of the programme whilst adhering to time restrictions using limited resources. All exercises are carefully designed to examine and develop the essential processes of management and to promote the strong development of trust within teams. They are formulated to allow participants to adapt, react, to interact and to make fast, informed decisions in an environment of unusual circumstances and rapid change.



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## **WHY USE THE OUTDOORS?**

***A waste of money or a highly effective development tool? Ken Minor explains...***

Quite simply, this environment cannot be recreated in a classroom or work situation because familiar situations do not stretch an individual's frames of reference or put them under the right kind of pressure to create a need for the development of effective teamwork.

In an outdoor environment, everyone is on the same level and delegates soon discover that the privileges normally associated with hierarchical company structures are no longer apparent. In short, if it rains then everybody gets wet! Any barriers present within teams

soon disappear and individuals learn to use the skills and natural strengths of other team members to benefit team performance.

Conversely, they also learn to take into account each other's weaknesses. In this way, an immediate impact is felt, everyone is involved as part of a team and the 'bonding process' is initiated. Delegates learn to trust their fellow team members, which further strengthens real team spirit. People are encouraged to break out of their comfort zones and challenge beliefs about their own psychological limitations. These beliefs often sabotage people by raising mental barriers when they begin to experience new levels of achievement and which must be surpassed in order to achieve their own and company goals. By our methods, new personal capabilities are realised and thinking processes are broadened and deepened.



## **HOW WE DIFFER FROM OTHER OUTDOOR PROVIDERS**

As already explained, LR outdoor programmes often take the form of a business simulation exercise rather than just a series of unrelated tasks set in the outdoors. This helps to relate theories into practice. The programmes are led by

people with solid business (as well as outdoors) expertise to further endorse the transferability of the exercise.

We insist on carrying out a pre-programme research audit to enable us to understand our client's culture, business issues, objectives, morale etc before delegates embark on the training. We also insist on studying each delegate's Belbin SPI Inventory prior to the programme plus a Personal Profile Analysis (psychometric profile) so that we have a more in depth understanding of each person's characteristics and preferred team role.



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To ensure that the programme is managed properly in its own right, close supervision is always on hand and reviews are conducted at intervals throughout the duration of the exercise. Key points discussed at these reviews may include such areas as planning, attention to detail, time management, good housekeeping, use of material resources, use of human resources, handling change, unfamiliarity, flexibility, communications etc, all of which are noted by our instructors. At various times we question the team about its management and leadership styles and the overall team behavior. We comment and coach where necessary i.e. where the teams fail to see an important learning point themselves, we reinforce issues of transferability.

A full debrief and review is arranged approximately one month after the programme to ensure that ideas are being put into action to produce planned results and also to assist in the management of any resulting change.

The time delay between the end of the course and the official debrief is essential to allow for the real messages (those that come through the participants inner selves), to emerge through memories, team discussion and the constant recall of events. We are then able to have a full and frank review, relating to all areas of transferability, in the cold, hard light of day. This session usually takes between 3 and 4 hours.



We are not tied to one location. We have conducted outdoor programmes in various locations, which are tried and tested. Any new venues are strictly vetted prior to use and all of our exercises are subjected to rigorous safety measures and are supervised by qualified personnel. Examples of venues include - Northumberland, Dartmoor National Park, The Peak District, Shropshire, Norfolk and Wales. In Europe we can deliver programmes in Bavaria, Poland, the French Alps and Ireland.

All delegates are required to complete a comprehensive medical questionnaire before embarking on any kind of outdoor exercise. If there are any areas of doubt we also insist on medical certification from their GP. In borderline cases due to age, the effects of a sedentary lifestyle or minor injury or illness, we may allow participation in a less physical but nevertheless crucial team role. We should also point out that when there are female delegates on outdoor programmes, we ensure that female instructors are present in our team.



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## **FEEDBACK CRITERIA**

The effectiveness of outdoor programmes should be quantified by monitoring what people do with newly acquired knowledge and skills in the workplace. We use specific goalposts of three, thirty and a hundred days for action points to be implemented by delegates in order to produce the required result. We also stress the importance of support and commitment of the entire client company to helping their people to achieve their objectives.

Feedback criteria will vary according to each individual's action points decided at the start of the programme (and reviewed during the course) but may include monitoring the rate of staff turnover, observing attitudinal change, a rise in standards, increased efficiency, increased sales, reduced costs, enhanced communication etc.

Our ultimate aim is to create an environment in which people want to change themselves and the way that they work and behave so that our clients can be assured of an improvement in performance and results.