

Profile of Matt King, Director Activate

Realising A Vision

Matt has always had a passion for human development and for the outdoor environment through his own experience as a climber and mountaineer. Believing wholeheartedly in the concept of unlimited human potential, Matt decided to 'follow his own star' and create a company that combined these two passions to facilitate the exploration of human potential in others. He set up Activate in 1996, at the tender age of just 23, to bring the benefit of personal growth through emotionally engaging experiences to a wide range of people.

His first achievements were to design and build two unique products – a mobile climbing wall and a mobile high ropes course, both of which received patents for their design. To this day, these products travel the length and breadth of the UK, bringing the climbing experience to a large number of people, through events ranging from corporate team developments to family fun days.

In the early days, whilst working as a sub-contractor and outdoor facilitator for a number of leading training companies, along with his fellow director and partner Philippa, he realised that most development training failed to offer a cohesive, integrated experience. And the vision for the Forest Experience was born. From a standing start 5 years ago, Matt now runs a centre of excellence for experiential learning in the heart of the beautiful New Forest. The Activate team manage the complete experiential process from arrival to departure, meeting the emotional and physical safety and comfort needs of their clients at every moment.

Qualities

Matt's achievements are a mirror of his qualities. Unquestionably a visionary, with a 'can do' attitude, he has turned his ideas into reality. With a fervent belief that you can achieve anything that you put your mind to, his drive and passion for creating emotionally engaging development experiences for his clients has led to him establishing a second smaller residential centre in North Wales giving direct access to a very serious outdoor learning environment.

He was one of the youngest people ever to achieve the Mountain Instructor Award (MIA) which demands a high level of leadership ability, personal awareness and inner confidence, and is 'technical expert' for a number of southern-based outdoor activity providers. Because of their serious approach to Health & Safety, and with an impeccable record, Matt and Philippa run the only privately-owned southern based outdoor learning training centre currently licensed by AALA, the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.

At The Leading Edge

On discovering the concept of Emotional Intelligence, and with further investigation, Matt realised the opportunity he had to put Activate at the leading edge of human development training. Investing in his own personal EI development, he partnered up with a highly qualified EI consultant (Amanda Knight, who subsequently became the CAEI's Director of Programmes) to explore how EI could be combined with outdoor experiential learning to provide true sustainable personal and organisational learning.



Activate now underpin all of their development programmes with EI, and Matt and his team run training interventions at all levels, from graduate programmes with Exxon Mobil and the McKechnie Group, to junior and middle management development modules at Skandia, to outdoor experiential programmes with senior executives within Orange, and leadership and team modules for management teams within the NHS. Activate's latest success is being selected as a training provider for the NHS Leading Modernisation programme, running an EI-based personal awareness programme for chief executives and clinical directors.

Matt's business focus over the last two years has turned to expanding the company's network of like-minded associates. This process is already well underway with a partnering with the Centre for Applied Emotional Intelligence, helping to grow the pool of top level EI practitioners available in the UK. He is currently working on setting up a charitable trust fund to supply bursaries for EI-related personal development opportunities.

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