



THE PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE PROGRAM

Since 1976, The Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center (BOEC) has delivered quality outdoor learning experiences to people of all abilities, including people with disabilities, serious illnesses, “at-risk” youth populations, and adult professional groups as well as school-aged leadership groups. Our custom-designed programs focus on professional training and development for people utilizing the outdoors (and indoors when appropriate) as the medium and the experiential learning process as the method.

All BOEC programs are custom-designed with your goals and objectives carefully considered. The BOEC 5-step process ensures success:

1. Needs Assessment and Goal Setting
2. Program Design
3. Program Implementation (*The Experiential Learning Process*)
4. Action Plan for Transference and Evaluation
5. Support Long-Term Relationships and Goals

Step One: We provide an initial needs assessment and goal setting when you first contact our office. You will initially speak with our program director who will gather information about your organization, your objectives and goals, and any other relevant information.

Step Two: A contract is developed and your program is assigned to a BOEC facilitator. The facilitator will “fine-tune” your program design and logistics with you through a series of meetings, phone calls, emails, or faxes (whichever is most effective and convenient for you).

Step Three: The experiential learning process is a dynamic interactive method of learning by doing. It’s an educational philosophy that is learner-centered and is based upon the belief that people learn best through engaging in and reflecting on their own experiences. The experiential process is broken down into five components: action, discussion, reflection, design for change, and implementation of change. Active participation in activities motivates a learner to acquire new skills and use those already in their repertoire. Group discussion provides invaluable time for extending learning derived from an activity. Practicing new skills allows the learner to adapt skills to fit their own needs and styles. Reflecting upon the experience solidifies the learning, bringing “key lessons” to a place where they become a part of the knowledge base from which the learner draws. Once the learner returns to their environment they will use the newly acquired skills, continuing the process of refining as they see fit.

Step Four: We provide reflection time at the end of each program for groups to summarize learnings and develop an action plan to “transfer” those learnings to their lives.



Step Five: Our goal is to create relationships built on the foundations of trust and expertise. We are available to meet your year-to-year training needs in a dynamic, positive, and lasting way.

Program Activities: Team Initiative Descriptions

The following group initiative activities are offered to provide some insight into our programs. Some activities take only five minutes, while other initiatives may take an hour or more to complete. The activities described below may or may not be utilized depending on your stated goals and objectives. Initiatives are often combined with other action-learning activities such as high and low ropes course elements, rock climbing, or orienteering. Because BOEC Professional Programs are conducted away from the workplace in beautiful natural settings, parallels and applications will emerge with a clarity not found in on-the-job problem-solving. The group will be facilitated to discuss work-related issues in conjunction with each activity and then develop a group action plan at the conclusion of the program. The key is not in the activity or task itself (e.g. crossing the “traffic jam”) but in the relevance to team effectiveness, leadership dynamics, and metaphoric parallel to the professional environment or personal development. These outcomes are artfully facilitated by the BOEC professional staff.

- **The Spider’s Web** – This initiative addresses planning, strategy, quality control, group roles, and leadership around a common task.
- **The Traffic Jam** – A difficult physical puzzle that builds collective group memory, and requires creative problem-solving and communication when you cannot “see” the problem. This can help reveal some of the frustrations that arise in the workplace.
- **The Maze** – A problem-solving initiative that requires close focus and observation by the entire group to identify a sequence through a floor maze. Everyone participates with support from the whole team.
- **The Blind Square** – The team is blindfolded and asked to create a perfect square out of a large circle of rope. What unfolds requires clear communication, precise information flow, and emerging leadership. This challenging activity can be useful in learning about the internal dynamics, and communication within the workplace.
- **Mission Impossible** – An excellent metaphor for taking a project from inception to completion, this initiative requires clear and thorough communication and flexibility for success.
- **The “Co-op”** – An exercise requiring a great deal of group coordination to lower a tent pole to the ground. Sounds simple but it is not.
- **Three-Line Communication** – The team is separated into three performance groups; one is blindfolded, one may not talk, and the last may talk but can only look in one direction. The task is to move items from one place to another but the only ones who can move are blindfolded and the people who know the task are the ones who may not speak. The task is simple but requires all three groups coordinating to accomplish the task.



- **Decision-Knot** – An exercise requiring a group to form a consensus opinion. There are a series of seven ropes tied in a loop with one of them connecting the rest. The knot is placed on the ground in a disorderly fashion and the group may not touch the ropes and must decide which one connects the rest.
- **High and Low Ropes Course Elements** – These activities are used to explore team dynamics and interpersonal relationships, as well as personal awareness. High ropes courses, because of their height pose an “actual vs. perceived risk” challenge that is ideal for exploring risk-taking, areas of influence and concern, group support, and personal styles. The actual risk is low however due to the state-of-the-art ropes and harness safety systems used by the BOEC.

SAMPLE ITINERARY

Group Size: 30

Date: Preferred late May or early June. The later we go the warmer and less snow on the ground. Lodging rates in town are most favorable during this time frame.

Full-Day Program:

\$225 per person

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 9:00 AM | Group arrives at the BOEC campus and has a brief program tone set and an overview of the experiential learning process combined with an ice-breaker activity. |
| 9:30 AM | Brief goal-setting session with the group. Introduction of a team effectiveness or leadership model (if congruent with group goals). |
| 10:00 AM | Morning activities based around select team initiatives focusing on group communication and personal styles. A brief discussion follows each team initiative to highlight key insights and relevance to your work. |
| 12:00 PM | Break for lunch (a catered box lunch can be organized for a fee). |
| 12:45 PM | The afternoon will be centered around a high ropes course. The group takes teamwork, communication, and trust to a higher level with the group working together to negotiate a BOEC high ropes course. |
| 4:00 PM | Group debrief on the day’s activities and an action plan for transference to the workplace. Wrap up. |
| 5:00 PM | Group departs. |

*Final program design may change based on weather conditions, fitness level of the group, and course director’s discretion.