

# **Neil Laughton**

## **Entrepreneur & Adventurer**

**Neil Laughton** is a highly successful entrepreneur and adventurer. He has a knack of making people believe that they can follow their dreams if only they stepped out of their comfort zone and gave it a go.

Neil Laughton trained as a Royal Marine Commando and was then selected for UK Special Forces (21 SAS Regiment). Neil achieved the rank of Captain and Troop Commander in the SAS before launching his business career.

Neil Laughton's business success grew from humble beginnings; he worked first as door-to-door office equipment salesman (on commission only). Eventually, Neil sat at his dining room table with a friend and started a new business with a £4k investment. Their first client wanted an office refurbishment and they undertook this themselves over two weekends to maximise profit. Now Neil is Founding Director and Executive Chairman of OPL Group a multi-million pound property development, construction, commercial interiors and office furniture group of companies. Clients include AXA Insurance, BAA, BMW, Balfour Beatty, Cobbetts LLP, Costain, Discovery Channel, Land Securities, Home Office, OFT, Rolls Royce, Philips, TfL, University of Derby, Virgin, Walt Disney and World Duty Free.

During his spare time Neil has organised and led expeditions and adventures all over the world. An experienced mountaineer, Neil has scaled at least 12 previously unclimbed peaks and has completed the 7 Summits (the highest mountain on each of the 7 continents: reaching the summit of Mt. Everest with a young Bear Grylls in 1998). Neil has lead expeditions in some of the most hostile environments on earth. Neil was caught at 26,000ft on Everest during the infamous storm of 1996 that killed eight people and injured many more from frostbite.

Neil has featured in two TV documentaries. In 'Mission Everest' (2008) Neil was in charge of safety in the first ever attempt to fly motorised paragliders

over Everest with Bear Grylls and Gilo Cardozo. In 'The Flying Car' (part of Channel 4's Daredevil series, 2009), Neil takes the world's first road legal bio-fuelled flying car designed by Gilo on a 9000km journey from London to Timbuktu. The expedition includes flying across the Straits of Gibraltar, crossing minefields in Mauritania and a North to South traverse of the Sahara's Empty Quarter.

Neil continues to help raise awareness and funds for various charities and spends much of his time encouraging disaffected and disadvantaged inner city youth realise their potential. The Royal Geographical Society recently presented him with the Ness Award in recognition of his leadership and development skills.

Neil has a postgraduate diploma in business and he has other commercial interests in aviation, manufacturing, property and event management. He is also a qualified paraglider, airplane and helicopter pilot.

**Speaking Style** - Neil Laughton tailors each talk using awe-inspiring imagery and footage from his expeditions and has powerful messages about leadership and teamwork to share. His style is very understated considering the incredible stories he shares. He passionately believes ordinary people can achieve extraordinary results and entertains with humour and modesty as he describes his unique life experiences.

Speaking Messages can be tailored around topics such as:

- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Embracing Change
- Surviving Tough Times

Neil offers after dinner as well as conference keynote presentations.