

# Course Description

## Executive Leadership Expedition

### National Outdoor Leadership School

#### Features Of This Course:

- Designed for executives
- Field-base learning transferable to the executive work place
- Group Size: 10 Students & 2 Instructors
- Dates: October 18-27, 2012
- Trip Duration: 10 Days
- Mileage: 35-45 miles
- Average Pack Weight: 45 lbs.

#### The Expedition

On this course, you will backpack through the beautiful red rock canyons of the Colorado Plateau in southern Utah. This area is characterized by rugged terrain and delicate beauty, with red sandstone and green junipers adding color to the arid landscape. Relics of the Anasazi culture may still be seen in the form of ruins, petroglyphs, and potshards. At times you will travel across the mesa tops with spectacular views in all directions while at others, you'll wind your way through the labyrinthine depths of deeply incised waterways. This is an opportunity to immerse yourself in the natural environment and learn with executive coaches and outdoor skill experts.

Once in the canyons, you will learn fundamental wilderness travel skills. Travel days may range from three miles of bushwhacking through vegetation and wading through water to ten miles of flat mesa walking. Learning and traveling by Leave No Trace standards you will be work to minimize your impact in an area where the soil is fragile and the water can be scarce. While navigating the technical and environmental challenges of field-based learning, the course provides opportunities for reflections that can be translated back into the workplace.

Leadership is an important component of your canyon course. You will be given more and more responsibility for the structure of the course as your skills and expertise improve. Student leadership teams may be responsible for planning the day's activities. The experience provides an invaluable opportunity to see yourself in a dynamic setting and strengthen your skill set.

NOLS Instructors will play evolving roles as participants' knowledge, experience, and abilities increase during this self-contained expedition. Participants will take on increasing levels of personal and team responsibility for the technical and interpersonal — what we at NOLS call “EB” or expedition behavior — aspects of the course. NOLS Instructors will provide structured briefing, debriefing, feedback, technical expertise, risk management, evaluation, classes, and participant leadership opportunities.

We've found that successful expeditions require many of the same skills that are essential in the professional world—effective communication, problem solving, influencing others, and strategically delivering results. After 10-days, you will return to your organization with practical and transferable strategies to improve your effectiveness as a leader.

#### Personal Communication Device Use on Course

NOLS does not permit students to use personal cell or satellite phones or other communication devices including personal tracking devices (e.g. SPOT), while in the field.

#### Executive Leadership Expedition Course Objectives

Each course is unique due to variables such as route, group dynamics, and environmental conditions. While we recognize and work with these educational variables during the course the learning outcomes include:

- Enhance your executive capabilities
- Begin behavioral changes that will deliver long-term value for you and your organization
- Understand how to pay attention to the emerging micro-interactions of group dynamics
- Understand the importance of reflective and reflexive practice as a key component of leading
- Broaden your network of executive colleagues



## Leadership and Teamwork

Participants are exposed to the theory and practice of outdoor leadership, teamwork, and expedition behavior. NOLS teaches a situational leadership that demands different decision-making styles depending on group skill, task urgency, and outcome predictability. At NOLS, expedition behavior involves commitment to the group, acceptance of others, and cooperation to achieve goals. Each participant is expected to:

- Function effectively in all four leadership roles: self-leadership, active followership, designated leadership, and peer leadership
- Practice and develop competence in NOLS' seven leadership skills
  1. Continually increase technical competence in all skill areas
  2. Display strong expedition behavior by working effectively as a member of a team and serving group goals with a positive attitude
  3. Maintain flexibility, commitment, and positive attitude in the face of adversity and uncertainty
  4. Accurately identify personal strengths and areas for growth
  5. Work to understand the leader's vision and when appropriate develop your vision as a leader; follow through with appropriate action to help the group achieve its potential
  6. Employ leadership styles and decision-making strategies appropriate to the situation
  7. Effectively communicate ideas and concerns on an individual and group level
- Take responsibility for learning through setting and attaining personal goals
- Respond to problem situations using decision-making and planning skills
- Provide effective oral and written feedback
- Focus on practicing exceptional communication skills, including giving and receiving growth-oriented feedback and conflict exploration
- Increase self-awareness of personal leadership strengths and growth areas
- Make efficient and effective decisions individually and as a team
- Increase self-confidence in leadership abilities
- Demonstrate sound expedition behavior, including commitment to group decisions and a positive attitude
- Effectively communicate and problem-solve on interpersonal and group levels
- Employ leadership styles appropriate to the situation
- Practice multiple leadership styles with their peers as each person navigates and leads others during hiking days in the canyons

## Risk Management

NOLS teaches wilderness users to practice responsible habits that promote the health and safety of self and others. Each participant is expected to:

- Recognize and perform appropriate techniques to reduce or avoid hazards in a remote canyon environment, for example rock-fall, weather, steep terrain, etc.
- Practice effective peer decision-making to mitigate hazards
- Display sound judgment and an awareness of team and self-limits

## Wilderness Skills

NOLS students learn to live and travel in the wilderness within a framework of personal safety and care of the environment. Each student is expected to:

- Live comfortably in the canyon environment, learn to camp, cook, and dress for a variety of conditions
- Travel competently using map and compass skills, off-trail navigation, hazard evaluation, route-finding techniques, bear camping, and river-crossing techniques
- Accurately assess skills, strengths, and endurance in self and others and conservatively apply those limits to given situations
- Practice Leave No Trace™ minimum impact camping skills



## **Staffing & Qualifications**

If you want the best results, you need the best staff. NOLS instructors are among the most highly trained groups of wilderness educators in the world. Carefully screened applicants take our 35-day Instructor course, considered to be the gold standard in the field of outdoor education. The top graduates then apprentice a course, and if they are successful, become certified NOLS Instructors. More than half of all instructors have spent at least 60-weeks teaching for NOLS in the field.

The NOLS Staff Seminar program provides continuing education for instructors to stay up-to-date with their technical skills and teaching tools. The NOLS Instructor Development Fund supports staff expeditions that keep instructors in touch with the personal reasons people go to the wilderness to learn.

NOLS Instructors come from highly diverse backgrounds, education, and experience, but they all must have a common expertise when it comes to first aid. The minimum first aid requirement, to work as an instructor, is Wilderness First Responder (a 72+ hour course), or equivalent, and bi-yearly CPR certification. Many instructors are certified as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT). Additionally, the majority of our instructors are graduates of the Hartford Insurance Company's defensive driving course.

## **Risk Management at NOLS**

We are very proud of our excellent record managing the risks of wilderness travel. At NOLS, the recognition and management of the inherent risks and hazards of living and traveling in remote wild areas is taught and practiced on every course. NOLS is committed to helping promote a positive learning environment and physical and emotional well being for all students.

NOLS courses are isolated expeditions. The remoteness of the areas in which we travel can create complex emergency situations that have no simple solutions. It is not uncommon to be days from medical help. NOLS has comprehensive wilderness emergency response and evacuation procedures and is a leader in the use of appropriate field communication technology in remote wilderness locations. This does not guarantee reliable communication from the field to our support bases. When you come to NOLS, you will be attending the school that sets the standards in wilderness risk management.

## **Course Location and Logistics**

The Executive Leadership Expedition is a Backpacking expedition in the Canyonlands of southeastern Utah from October 18 – October 27, 2012.

NOLS will supply vehicles capable of transporting participants and their gear during the program, including re-supplies of food/fuel, if needed. The program begins and ends at a to be determined hotel in Moab, Utah.

On October 17, NOLS will meet participants at the hotel at 8pm for a pre-course meeting and orientation. The first day, October 18, will be spent preparing for the expedition by issuing all necessary equipment and rations for the course at the hotel. The course will leave for the canyons by 12pm on October 18. Each day will have goals and opportunities for participants to take designated leadership roles with their peers. On the morning of October 27, NOLS will transport everyone back to the hotel in Moab, Utah to deissue equipment and celebrate with an end-of-course banquet. The course officially ends after the dinner banquet. Participants are responsible for all pre and post course meals and travel.

Participants will need to plan on arriving in Moab the day before the course begins, October 17, and leaving the day after the course is over, October 28. Please reference the Executive Leadership Expedition Travel and Logistics document.

