



★ PREMIUM SPEAKER

Michael Lyon

ADVENTURER / EXPLORER · ENTREPRENEUR/FOUNDER

Startup Mentor, Global Adventurer, At the Table Managing the U.S. S&L Crisis



VISIT MICHAEL'S WEBSITE

About:

- **Gender:** Male
- **Nationality:** United States
- **Languages:** English
- **Travels from:** United States

Engagement Types:

- Boardroom Advisory
- Coaching
- Organisational Development Programme
- Panel Participation
- Speaking

Biography Highlights

- **Startup Mentor:** Mentor to over 100 companies in the Creative Destruction Lab accelerator program, and author of the book, *Accelerating Startups - Lessons From Mentors*.
- **Space/Ocean/Technology Expert:** Pioneer in the commercial space sector including at Space Adventures, organizer of the world's first space tourist flights.
- **Managing Government Financial Crisis:** Key role in launching the Resolution Trust Corporation during the U.S. Savings and Loan Crisis as Special Assistant to Chairman Seidman - in the room during one of the most important and traumatic days in U.S. financial history.
- **Adventure, Business and Life:** Discovering a strategy to be a global adventurer while reinforcing and strengthening business opportunities, as well as family relationships, including having climbed Kilimanjaro twice (most recently at age 65 with his son), backpacked around the world three times, sailed the Caribbean for a year, dived 2,500 meters the ocean's deep hydrothermal vents, flew Zero G flights in Russia and the U.S., drove from Washington D.C. 15,000 miles roundtrip to Prudhoe Bay Alaska, and cycled across Europe every summer over the last three decades - including a 2,800 km ride along the entire Danube River with his son Joshua.
- **International Business Ambassador:** Assisting companies coming to the U.S., and U.S. companies implementing international strategy, experience in over 100 countries, International History and Economics

Topics:

- Banking & FinTech
- Business Model Innovation
- Organizational Change
- Strategic Planning
- Work-Life Integration

Websites:

- [Accelerating Startups- Lessons From Mentor Book](#)
- [Lyon Capital, Inc.](#)
- [Cycle Touring Books](#)

background.

Biography

Michael Lyon is an accomplished global business mentor, entrepreneur, lawyer, adventurer, and author whose forty-year career spans startups, government, finance, legal roles, and frontier technologies. Since 2018, he has been a mentor with the Creative Destruction Lab (CDL), one of the world's leading accelerator programs, where he has guided over a hundred ventures in ocean, space, and emerging technologies. He advises U.S. and international firms on business development, fundraising, legal strategy and compliance, and transnational growth, integrating practical insights from experience in more than 100 countries.

Mike's experience bridges both pioneering startups and high-stakes government leadership. He played a key role in launching the Resolution Trust Corporation (RTC) during the U.S. Savings & Loan Crisis as Special Assistant to FDIC Chairman William Seidman. The RTC scaled to thousands of employees within months, overseeing assets larger than most global banks and resolving more than 700 failed institutions, including three large bank failures. That first-hand experience with rapid scaling and crisis management - working on a government startup - brings added perspective to his talks on leadership, resilience, and organizational growth.

In the private sector, Mike helped shape the commercial space industry, holding leadership roles at the pioneering Space Adventures - organizer of the world's first space tourist flights - and at Zero Gravity Corp, the company that commercialized weightless flight experiences in the United States. Mike launched Xtronaut, with the leader of the NASA \$1 billion OSIRIS-REx space mission, and together they created five STEM board games on space and the oceans topics. He also served as general counsel to multiple firms across industries: real estate workouts, space, AI, defense, deep-ocean exploration. His combination of legal, operational, and entrepreneurial experience gives audiences a grounded perspective on risk, innovation, and strategy.

Beyond his professional experience, Mike is a passionate traveler and adventurer who has often combined these interests with business ventures and family experiences. He has climbed Mount Kilimanjaro twice (most recently at age 65 with his son), backpacked around the world three times, sailed the Caribbean for a year, dived 2,500 meters the ocean's deep hydrothermal vents, and cycled across Europe every summer over the last three decades - including a 2,800 km ride along the entire Danube River with his son Joshua. These experiences animate his keynotes, presenting how lessons from exploration apply directly to leadership and business growth.

Educated at Harvard Law School, the London School of Economics, and Brandeis University, Mike blends academic rigor with real-world experience. Today he speaks to global business audiences about startup growth and mentorship, international strategy, and lessons from adventure and exploration.

Videos



Michael's Topics

What Every Founder (or Intrapreneur) Should Know - Lessons from Accelerator Mentors

Drawing on years of mentoring high-growth ventures within one of the world's leading accelerator programmes, this talk distils the recurring patterns that separate scalable businesses from those that stall or fail. Michael Lyon shares the strategic questions founders and intrapreneurs must answer early – and the common blind spots that repeatedly undermine otherwise strong ideas.

The session covers how to clarify a value proposition, build a credible go-to-market strategy, assemble resilient teams and make informed decisions around funding, governance and risk. Practical rather than theoretical, it is designed to help leaders move faster with fewer costly missteps.

Key takeaways:

- A practical roadmap for turning ideas into investable, scalable businesses
- How to avoid the most common strategic and organisational mistakes seen in early growth
- Clear frameworks for fundraising, governance and legal decision-making
- Insight into how mentors and accelerators can accelerate (or hinder) progress

Audience:

Founders, intrapreneurs, investors and leadership teams building or scaling new ventures.

Available: In person, Virtually

International Business Strategy: Entering Global Markets

International expansion can unlock significant growth – or become an expensive distraction if pursued at the wrong time or in the wrong way. In this talk, Michael Lyon helps leaders think clearly about whether, when

and how to expand beyond their home market, based on strategy, execution capacity and long-term value creation.

Drawing on experience advising organisations entering the US, Europe, the GCC and Asia, Michael explores the strategic trade-offs involved in global growth, from market selection and entry models to governance, culture and operational risk.

Key takeaways:

- How to decide if international expansion strengthens or weakens your core strategy
- The strategic risks of expanding too early – and the costs of waiting too long
- Practical entry options, including partnerships, licensing, joint ventures and local presence
- How to align boards, leadership teams and investors around global growth decisions

Audience:

Boards, executives and leadership teams considering international expansion or new market entry.

Available: In person, Virtually

Managing the Savings and Loan Crisis - An Insider's Story

This presentation offers a first-hand perspective on one of the most significant financial crises in modern history and the leadership decisions made under intense political, financial and public scrutiny. As a senior adviser involved in the creation of the Resolution Trust Corporation, Michael Lyon witnessed how governments and institutions respond when systemic risk threatens financial stability.

Rather than focusing on history alone, the talk draws out practical lessons for today's leaders dealing with financial instability, regulatory pressure and crisis decision-making in complex systems.

Key takeaways:

- What large-scale financial crises reveal about leadership, governance and risk
- Lessons on acting decisively under uncertainty and public scrutiny
- The dangers of delayed action and institutional forbearance
- Why crisis responses succeed or fail – and what leaders can learn today

Audience:

Financial services organisations, regulators, boards and senior business audiences.

Available: In person, Virtually

Adventure, Business and Life: How to Have It All

Adventure, work and family are often seen as competing priorities. In this talk, Michael Lyon challenges that assumption, showing how exploration, leadership and business decision-making share the same core disciplines: planning, resilience, risk management and perspective.

Drawing on a lifetime of global exploration alongside senior leadership roles, Michael uses adventure as a lens to explore how leaders can make better decisions under uncertainty, maintain long-term performance and design a life that supports both ambition and fulfilment.

Key takeaways:

- The parallels between exploration and leadership in complex environments
- How disciplined planning enables both professional success and personal ambition
- Lessons on resilience, risk and decision-making under pressure
- Why long-term performance depends on perspective, health and priorities

Audience:

Leadership teams and senior audiences interested in performance, resilience and sustainable success.

Available: In person, Virtually

Michael's Programmes & Workshops

A Day of Coaching & Mentoring - With Michael Lyon

Sometimes the most valuable investment a company can make is stepping back for a day with an experienced mentor who has seen hundreds of organizations face a wide range of challenges. Utilizing this approach - thinking outside the box and examining problems through analogy - can spark insights that are hard to uncover from within.

Let's roll up our sleeves and dive into a live mentoring workshop!

In this highly interactive and customized session, Mike acts not as a speaker but as a mentor - helping participants analyze and rethink their own organizations in real time. These one- or two- day coaching and mentoring sessions are designed to help your leadership team sharpen strategy, uncover blind spots, and identify actionable opportunities for growth. Drawing from his experience mentoring ventures through the Creative Destruction Lab, advising startups and established firms globally, and guiding organizations through high-stakes transitions, Mike brings a fresh, external perspective that challenges assumptions and reveals new paths forward.

The session can address such topics as identifying the right problem, squeezing assumptions out of your strategic process, refining a pitch, building a business plan, raising funds, pursuing global expansion, strengthening team dynamics, and addressing legal considerations - tailored to the needs of each group. Leaders walk away with actionable insights tailored to their businesses, along with frameworks they can continue using long after the session ends.

The workshop can be one-on-one with a single company, or a small group of companies leading to interactive discussions.

Available: In person, Virtually

Consulting & Advisory Services

Building, scaling, or transforming a company is never a straight line. With decades of experience mentoring hundreds of ventures and advising organizations across more than 100 countries, Mike offers think-outside-the-box customized consulting and mentorship services to leaders who want to sharpen their strategy, think creatively, and accelerate growth.

Mike has worked with companies from early-stage startups to larger organizations. From helping launch the

Resolution Trust Corporation during the U.S. Savings & Loan Crisis, to guiding commercial space and ocean technology ventures, to mentoring startups at the Creative Destruction Lab, Mike brings a unique mix of legal, strategic, and operational insight.

Startup & Growth Strategy: From business model development and validation to scaling teams and revenue.

Fundraising & Finance: Guidance on bootstrapping, grants, venture capital rounds, and financial positioning.

Business Development: How to plan and execute business development campaigns.

International Expansion: Evaluating markets, entry strategies, and navigating cross-border challenges.

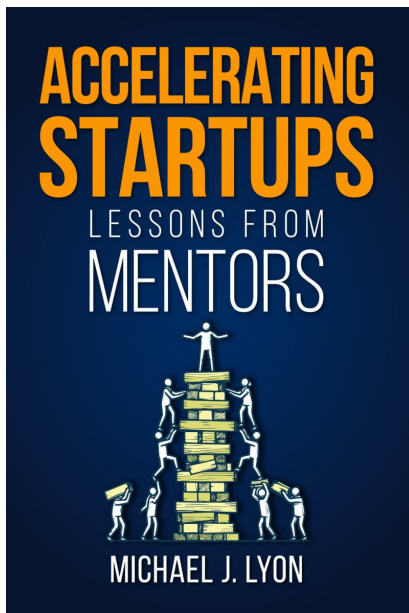
Mentorship for Leaders: Developing founders, executives, and boards to operate with clarity and resilience.

Why Work Together?

Mike doesn't deliver generic playbooks - but provides advice tailored to your company's unique challenges. Whether you're a startup founder, a mid-sized firm preparing to expand international, or an established organization rethinking its structure, Mike brings a mentor's perspective to help you move faster, smarter, and with fewer mistakes.

Available: In person, Virtually

Books

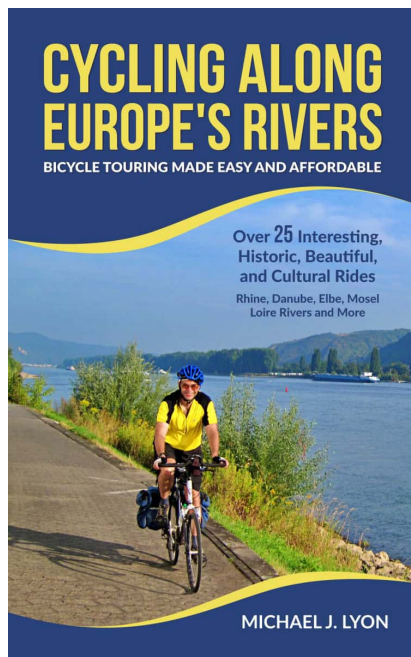


Accelerating Startups-Lessons From Mentors

Business & Entrepreneurship

No matter the technology or product, the same set of mistakes and issues keep resurfacing. After mentoring over 100 startups at the Creative Destruction Lab, I asked myself how can I make this process more efficient and give startups a head start in accelerator programs and as they grow? With my new book, *Accelerating Startups - Lessons from Mentors*, I aim to do just that, bringing together a dozen other mentors for the project, and with a foreword by CDL founder, Prof Ajay Agarwal.

[BUY THE BOOK](#)

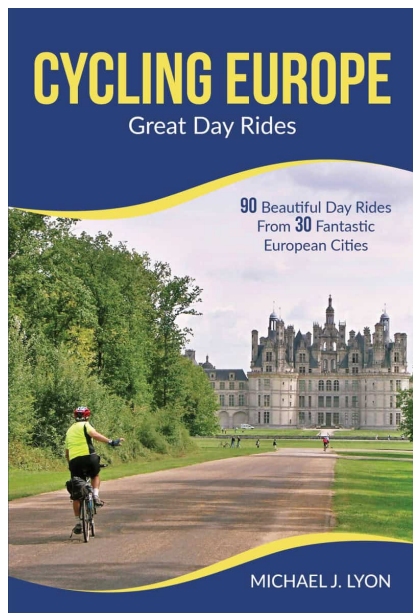


Cycling Along Europe's Rivers: Bicycle Touring Made Easy and Affordable

Adventure and Exploration Travel

Cycling Along Europe's Rivers is a "How To" book on taking self-guided bike trips to Europe that are affordable and easy to organize. The book is based on the author's extensive experience, including over 25 years of annual cycle trips to Europe. Rhine River, Danube River, Elbe River, Loire River, Po River, Neckar River, Mosel River, Main River, and more. - How to plan and prepare. - How to get what you need to the start of a ride and home again -bikes, panniers, and you. - What to bring and what not — how to keep your load small. - How to handle getting around and other logistics. - Bike, Lodging and Eating advice. - Safety, Security, and Communication advice. - Route recommendations and key features. In short, everything you need to know to have a first-class, comfortable, flexible, and interesting riding trip to Europe without spending a fortune or going with an organized package. We budget about \$120 per day per person (less if sharing rooms) plus airfare for hotels, meals, and everything else for rides that are typically 8-14 days in length. Rivers make the perfect touring — flat, easy to navigate, interesting towns, historical sites, and relatively short distances between stops and sites. These trips are for everyone — from weekend warriors to casual riders, from the young to the old. I have undertaken these rides with riders in their 80s, and the last eight years with my son starting at age 8 on a tandem. Our routes guide riders through Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, France, Italy, Switzerland, and, Slovakia, and utilize the detailed maps found in the terrific German Bikeline map guides. "Cycling Along Europe's Rivers" is a companion book to the European Bikeline Map Guides. It will tell you how and where to go, which Bikeline map guide to use for route details, and how to use these maps. That's all you need! Please Note: While the book does provide over 25 routes, suggested overnight stops, associated mileage, hotels and site, it does not provide turn-by-turn details, and detailed maps, because this is not necessary for these trips given GPS, generally well-marked trails, the very detailed Bikeline companion guides, and the rivers themselves providing the ultimate route guide! Cities and regions in Europe you can visit include, among many other: the Danube Gorge, Amsterdam, Leiden, the Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Arnhem, Dusseldorf, Cologne, Bonn, Koblenz, Cochem, Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Strasbourg, Colmar, Basel, the Rhine Falls, Lake Bodensee, Konstanz, Regensburg, Passau, Linz, Melk, Vienna, Bratislava, Gyor, Tata, Budapest, Cesky Krumlov, Prague, Dresden, Meissen, Wittenberg, Potsdam, Berlin, Hamburg, Bremerhaven, Bremen, Hameln, Hann. Munden, Orleans, Chambord, Blois, Amboise, Chenonceaux, Chinon, Saumur, Angers, St. Nazaire, Milan, Cremona, Parma, Mantua, Merano, Bolzano, Lake Garda, Verona, Padua, Chioggia, and Venice. Even a brief mention of the C&O Canal and Erie Canal rides as warm-ups. Cycling Along Europe's Rivers is practical and well-organized. We have loved these trips and think you will, too!

[BUY THE BOOK](#)



Cycling Europe: Great Day Rides

Adventure and Exploration Travel

"Cycling Europe: Great Day Rides" tells you everything you need to know to take interesting and beautiful self-guided single day cycling rides in Europe while staying in any of over 30 fascinating European cities. Rent a bike locally and head out of town on your adventure on some of the great rides in Europe - without having to move your luggage as you would with point-to-point cycle touring. Whether you are on a general European vacation or even on business in Europe, and want to add some riding beyond the standard city tour — this book is for you! Ride on these generally flat routes on your rented bike — maybe even an e-bike. Have your companion join you on the biking, or meet up later in the day while they enjoy these wonderful base cities. Michael Lyon has been cycle touring in Europe each summer for more than 25 years, and is the author of the successful and highly reviewed cycle touring book providing for point-to-point cycle touring: "Cycling Along Europe's Rivers: Bicycle Touring Made Easy and Affordable." "Cycling Europe: Great Day Rides" gives you the information you need for these wonderful day rides: Note that this book does not provide detailed turn-by-turn directions, but rather route overviews with target cities for navigation, interesting stops, and overnights. Most of these routes are well-marked and with easy navigation, and that is all you need, although more detailed maps and GPS are available for more directions. Stay in amazing, beautiful, and interesting cities as a base while day riding — some more well-known, and others open for discovery — plenty to see and do for non-riding companions and for when you are finished riding. In France: Loire Valley (Amboise and Blois), Nantes, Strasbourg, and Colmar. In Germany: Frankfurt, Koblenz, Rosenheim, Trier, Heidelberg, Stuttgart, Passau, Munich, Hamburg, Berlin, Bremen, and Bremerhaven. In Italy: Verona, Venice, Padua, and Florence. In The Netherlands: Rotterdam, Haarlem, and Amsterdam. In Central Europe: Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest, and Prague. Lake Rides: Lake Bodensee, Lake Balaton, and Lake Neusiedl. ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Michael Lyon has been touring each summer in Europe since 1994, first with his uncle and then the last six years with his son on their Pino Tandem. He is the author of the leading cycle touring book, "Cycling Along Europe's Rivers". He has cycled extensively in Western Europe, and several years ago rode from Saigon to Hanoi in Vietnam. When not cycling, Mike practices law with a focus on the new commercial space sector, and was an organizer of the first space tourist flights on the Soyuz rocket. Over 30 base cities and 90 day rides in Europe - with many of these cities possibly already on your vacation literary! Each base city provides up to four suggestions for different day rides without the logistics of carrying your luggage and moving hotels daily. Includes suggestions for using trains or river boats for your return to facilitate longer one-way rides. Cities are all interesting places to stay and enjoy the evenings. Each city provides days of terrific fun and exploration for any non-riders travelling companions. Fantastic routes, mostly flat easy terrain, generally well-marked, and most often along bike trails following Europe's beautiful river network. Much more than city day rides! Where to go, how to get there, where to stay, where to rent bikes, what to bring, when to go, and how to prepare.

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Speaker Bureaus And Talent Agencies

Michael Lyon is available to book via these agencies

✔ **Recommended**



Speaking Agency

Agent: Patrick Nelson