

Deon Basson

Founder of reClnate | Chairman of Spatialedge

Keynote Speaker | Leadership Strategist | Extreme Endurance Athlete

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Keynote: The Munga Mindset

Endurance Lessons for the Age of AI

AI is transforming how we operate, but not how we connect. In a world of automation, the competitive edge remains deeply human: communication. Influence, trust, empathy, and clarity still shape critical decisions especially when technology reaches its limits.

This is where The Munga Mindset becomes more than a metaphor. The Munga is a five-day, 1,148-kilometre ultra-endurance race across South Africa's harshest terrain. It tests not just physical strength, but also mental focus, emotional control, and adaptive thinking - the same qualities needed to lead in complex, high-pressure environments.

In this keynote, Deon Basson shares a structured communication model designed to perform under pressure. Drawing from his work with AI-driven organisations and his personal endurance racing experience, he shows leaders and teams how to communicate with precision, empathy, strategy, and resilience even when systems falter.

Deon's framework integrates data, structure, emotion, and vision, equipping organisations to stay connected and clear while navigating uncertainty and innovation.

Audience Takeaways

1. Endurance lessons under extreme conditions in sport.
2. Four principles to be successful in the Munga and AI
 - a. Strategic intent vs strategic plan.
 - b. Agile and Lean
 - c. High Agency

- d. The importance of human relationships
 - 3. How decision making (especially micro decisions) influences the success of both
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Who This Is For

- Executive and leadership teams navigating AI transformation
 - Innovation, strategy, and digital transformation leaders
 - Teams operating in high-stakes, AI-supported environments
 - Offsites and forums exploring the future of human performance at work
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About Deon Basson



Deon Basson is an extreme endurance athlete and a seasoned executive and board member operating at the intersection of AI, leadership, and human performance. With more than 35 years of experience in technology, strategy, and high-pressure decision environments, his career has spanned technical roles, sales, sales leadership, executive leadership, CEO and Chairperson responsibility. This breadth gives him a full-spectrum view of how AI strategy translates into commercial and organisational reality. He serves as Chairperson of Spatialedge, the largest AI company in Africa, and is the founder of reClnate, a structured communication framework built to strengthen leadership judgement when complexity, data overload, and time pressure are high. His work centres on a critical truth: AI changes systems quickly, but people still make the decisions that determine success in complex, fast-moving, and high-stakes organisational environments.

His perspective is shaped by what he calls The Munga Mindset, drawn from competing in The Munga, a five-day, 1,148-kilometre ultra-endurance mountain bike race across extreme and unforgiving terrain in South Africa. Riders must make continuous decisions while fatigued, uncertain, and under sustained stress, where small mistakes compound rapidly and consequences escalate quickly over time. This mirrors AI-driven environments, where leaders

face accelerating information, incomplete visibility, competing priorities, and constant change. In both contexts, outcomes are shaped by the same capabilities: mental clarity, emotional control, disciplined judgement, and the ability to adapt without losing direction or strategic intent.

Deon works with leaders and teams navigating AI transformation to improve how they think, decide, and align under pressure. His focus is not on technology alone, but on the human decision-making that sits around it. He integrates systems thinking, data awareness, and emotional intelligence to help leaders remain clear, consistent, and effective when stakes are high and conditions are uncertain and evolving.

Through this work, Deon shows organisations how structured communication and sound judgement ensure that AI investments translate into real performance, rather than confusion or misalignment. When pressure increases and the margin for error narrows, it is the quality of human decisions and alignment that determines whether AI delivers its promised value. His work reinforces the principle that while AI can enhance capability, leadership clarity and communication remain the decisive factors in sustained success over time and at scale.

Speaking Requirements

- Audio and video will be played from Deon's Windows laptop
- Microphone and screen required
- Recording permission: Approved

Testimonials

"This isn't a future-of-work talk. It shows you how to operate right now."

- CEO, Generative AI Platform

"It changed how our team communicates, especially when the pressure's on."

- CTO, Deep Tech Company

"Finally someone made sense of AI, people, and communication in a way we could actually use."

- Head of Product, AI Infrastructure Startup