**Jo’s potted Biog, Director of KindleCo Consulting, July 2018**

**I trained as a Musician**, and have spent many years directly coaching **children, young people** (and some adult learners for good measure) in schools, colleges, in extended services settings and privately, **building their capacity & capability** for public performance.

They say the best learning experiences are 'modelled' and I am to this day grateful and appreciative of the commitment **Essex County Council** showed during the 1980s (and still do today, despite funding constraints) to the development of its Young People, particularly outside of School. I count my blessing every day to have been a beneficiary of the vibrant Essex **County Music Service** who funded me on a Scholarship to the Junior Guildhall, J\_RAM and beyond, for the best part of 6 years.

Their illustrious **Essex Youth Orchestra**movement, which celebrated its 60th Birthday in 2017, shaped me for life and probably a few of their staff with it.... (apologies in retrospect to any Youth Service staff, who are still with us, and may still remember a certain trip to Poland when I was a teenager .....).

You learn alot about hard work, self- discipline, collaboration, team work and the nature of Leadership in Orchestras.

I furthered my passion for team work with a BMus. Hons in Conducting(yes the type with the white stick, only I never used one of those) which I appreciate, can seem an odd qualification for '***strategy &*** ***organisational development***'. Hang on in there....

Those **disciplines are very closely aligned**. They pivot on planning ahead, knowing the background - middleground -foreground, understanding your available resources, **getting the best out of people**, enabling **collaboration**and most important, creating an experience for other people's benefit, which is**bigger than the sum of its individual parts**.

I entered the realms of  working alongside the **Public Sector in 1998** when I took on the artistic programming and **business development** of a **community-led venture** in West London, developing its first ever Outreach Programme for Arts & Community Education. We also let in a few Film Crews so I got to hob nob with Joseph Fiennes, Kate Blanchett (once!) and Eric Cantona..... well, it was his post-football phase.

Bitten by the multi-agency working bug, and a commitment to using the Arts for social change, this prompted a move to **a Local Authority** on Merseyside in 1998 to be their first ever Arts Officer.

Spurred on by that organisation's incredible (and still enduring) commitment to Learning as a tool for Social Inclusion, Regeneration & Mobility, I established the towns first ever cross-agency **Cultural Partnership** and with it, a first **Creative Industries business incubation** programme for **Young People.** There followed a new **Youth Theatre,** **Disability Arts** Programme and successful bids to the Government's **Standards Fund**, **Arts Council** (in its previous incarnation)and a first dive into ERDF, all helping tolight the way with resources.

I delivered a stint at **Arts Council England** (as one of their Regional Officers for Lifelong Learning & Skills) in the  in the early 2000s. Tasked with leading the construction of their new three-year regional ***Learning & Skills strategy*** under a new CEO, and the regional roll out of our national programmes, this placed me alongside sizeable clusters of local authorities, public agencies, schools, private sector organisations, employers and artistic stakeholders.

The thrill of multi-agency working was cemented during those years, along with a love of Situational Leadership, as an agent for change.

I was fortunate enough to have a particularly driven CEO, with high expectations of her staff, a robust commitment to in-house CPD and ambitions for the Region on behalf of her stakeholders.

She enabled me to forge a first corporate cross-sector partnership between **ACE**, **BAA** and the then- **LSC,** producing a ***Workforce development*** programme with Local Authorities and FE Providers, using the Arts as a delivery mechanism with **NEETs**. I also has some amazing colleagues who continue to bring moments of joy into my working life today, on the all too rare moments we get to spend time together.

In life, I believe you must **grow where you are planted**. I was planted in **Oxfordshire** through family circumstance in 2004 and **KindleCo was born**.

I have worked hard to keep developing my **knowledge**, **empathy** and **skill set** to continue to support our **Public Sector,** **Social Enterprise** and **Charity colleagues** -  those who strive ever day to enhance the **lifechances of our Children & Young People**. My focus in the last 5 years has been increasingly on Children made ***vulnerable*** through circumstance.

You can read more about my current & previous ***commissions through KindleCo*** in my [**Case Studies**](/casestudies/kindleco-supports-innovative-leadership-at-national-childrens-charity/) section. I also do a spot of Social Responsibility work each year, as and when resources allow. I have contributed through [Young Minds](https://mindedforfamilies.org.uk/) in the past, and am currently supporting some of the [NCB](https://www.ncb.org.uk/)'s efforts.

Two gorgeous children have followed and what a time this has been! **'Co Production'** is now a personal & professional watchword.

It does go rather nicely with '***Collaboration*'**, which given the Orchestral starting point, brings me full circle. ***'Courage'***,like ***'Creativity',*** needs to be nurtured.When your life involves alot of Co Production, you have to marshal it.

I aim to bring a **unique blend of skills** to what I do, along with a sense of humour.

Life is nothing if you can't laugh.