UK Book Launch - Leading Professionals: 
Power, Politics, and Prima Donnas

Speaker Biographies

Professor Laura Empson

Laura Empson is Professor in the Management of Professional Service Firms (PSFs) and Director of the Centre for Professional Service Firms, Cass Business School, and a Senior Research Fellow, Harvard Law School. Laura’s research into PSFs has covered themes such as leadership, governance, mergers and acquisitions, the professionalisation of management, organisational and identity change, knowledge management, and diversity. In 2013 she was honoured by the Financial Times for her research in this area and has received a series of funding awards from the Economic and Social Research Council of Great Britain.

Laura is lead editor of the Oxford Handbook of Professional Service Firms (2015, Oxford University Press) and is a Member of the Editorial Boards of the Journal of Management Studies and Organization Studies. Her 2007 book, Managing the Modern Law Firm (Oxford University Press), was described by The Times as marking a ‘seminal moment in the development of management theory in this sector’. She was previously a Reader at the University of Oxford’s Said Business School and gained her PhD from London Business School. Before becoming an academic, Laura worked as an investment banker and strategy consultant.

Panel discussion

Margaret Cole

Margaret Cole joined PwC as a partner in September 2012. She is the UK firms Chief Risk Officer, General Counsel and a member of the Executive Board. Her responsibilities include Reputation & Regulation, Risk & Quality and Compliance.

Prior to joining PwC Margaret was Managing Director of Enforcement and Financial Crime at the Financial Services Authority (FSA) and a member of the FSA’s Board. She also held the role of Interim Managing Director of the Conduct Business Unit for a period prior to the creation of the Financial Conduct Authority.

Before the FSA Margaret spent over 20 years in private practice as a Solicitor specialising in commercial litigation with an emphasis on financial services. Margaret led the Dispute Resolution Department at the London office of International Law firm White & Case from 1995 to 2000. Before that she was a partner at Stephenson Harwood.

Margaret is a graduate in Law from Murray Edwards College (formerly New Hall), Cambridge, where she was recently made an Honorary Fellow. She has served as a Non-Executive Director of the National Skills Academy for Financial Services, and since 2012 has been a Trustee of the Institute for Fiscal Studies. In 2012 the College of Law awarded Margaret an honorary Doctorate of Law in recognition of her services to the legal profession.
Speaker Biographies

Sir Gerry Grimstone

Sir Gerry Grimstone is Chairman of Standard Life Aberdeen, the UK’s largest savings and investments business. He chairs Heng An Standard Life in China and sits on the Board of HDFC Life in India. He is also Deputy Chairman of Barclays and the Chairman of Barclays International, which oversees Barclays’ Corporate and Investment Bank and International Cards and Payments businesses. He is an Independent Non-Executive Board Member of Deloitte North West Europe. Within the UK public sector, he is the Lead Non-Executive on the Board of the Ministry of Defence and he is a member of HM Treasury’s Financial Services Trade and Investment Board. From 2012 to 2015, Gerry served as the Chairman of TheCityUK, the representative body for the financial and professional services industry in the UK.

He was previously a senior investment banker at Schroders and ran businesses in London, New York and Asia Pacific. He specialised in mergers and acquisitions and capital-raising for major companies worldwide. Prior to that, he was an official in HM Treasury where he was responsible for privatisation and policy towards state-owned enterprises.

David Morley

David Morley is one of the UK’s most innovative lawyers and is widely recognised as one of the most influential global leaders in the legal profession. He led Allen & Overy LLP from 2003 to 2016, winning three successive leadership elections to become Global Managing Partner and then Global Senior Partner.

He was a member of the Mayor of London’s International Business Advisory Council and the Founder and Chair of Prime, the UK-wide alliance to provide fair access to quality work experience. He joined Cass Business School in 2016 as a Visiting Professor of Practice in the Management of Professional Service Firms.

Following his retirement from Allen & Overy in 2016, David is now pursuing a range of business interests, including chairing Elaghmore private equity fund.

Stefan Stern (Chair)

Stefan Stern has been writing about business, leadership and management for almost three decades. His career has taken in stints at the BBC, Management Today magazine and the Financial Times, where he was the management columnist between 2006 and 2010.

Stefan is a regular contributor to The Guardian, the FT and other titles, and a frequent broadcaster. He was appointed Visiting Professor of Practice at Cass Business School in 2010. He is a fellow of the RSA. Stefan is the author (with Cary Cooper) of Myths of Management: what people get wrong about being the boss, published by Kogan Page in October 2017.