

DAVID HARMER

When the wise Gods at Unilever decided to sell off non-core business, EDS grabbed the chance to get a foothold in the UK, and in the aftermath I was - like everyone - else “transitioned” in the “Transition room” where I learned how to say “**Have a nice day, Y’all**” properly, before being allowed to leave. In the great “Job Explosion” that ensued, I was invited to find a position for myself in the new organisation - my old one having been made null and void.

I found a temporary “home” for three months, preparing a presentation to EDS International staff with the wife of one of the “Gung Ho” Americans who had gone in to rescue EDS employees from the Middle East. Then I became Marketing manager for the UTN central Voicemail - the new and “revolutionary” service at that time - while visiting all the old UCSL payroll customers at the same time and telling them to pay double or “Go Elsewhere” since EDS no longer wanted their business.

I had enough of the Vietnam Vet. running that operation after about eighteen months, so followed Nick Smith into Logica Consultancy where I spent ten very rewarding years working with some of the top UK companies as a management consultant. (*A short spell leaving to work with Butler Cox, before returning to UCSL, had shown me the possibilities of Consultancy*). Among others I had long stints at HM Customs and Excise specifying a new VATII system - which was shelved - at Nat. West Bank and then BSI for a couple of years or so.

A new man was then appointed and promptly sacked the director and his team of consultants - some fifteen people (me included) saying something like “‘Ere. I dunno wot this Consultancy lark is, cor blimey”. No joke. He was a Neanderthal! - and so we all left (with a generous “package”) and went freelance.

I then had six years of the most interesting and **profitable** work, advising some very prestigious clients. The most bizarre role was that of Millennium Director for BBC News. Then the same for BBC’s division which made the educational material for the Open University and were based in Milton Keynes “On Campus” - some 250 staff. A stint at Channel Five followed, then a year at United Carriers - my (tenuous) links to SPD having secured that contract - and then an *eye-opening* contract at the then Public Trust Office (Lord Chancellors Department).

My most satisfying time, and my final contract, was at British Airways, coaching their own Management Consultancy group, of all things, using some of the very practices we had introduced at UCSL. They were really a great team, nice people, and most appreciative too. However, when the planes hit the towers in 2001 BA, already experiencing some financial difficulty, got rid of 760 Freelance Contractors, and so I went home and took a break.

That lasted two years before I decided I was too busy to work again, and so I drew in my pensions and formally retired.

I now design and manage Seven websites, run two eight voice A Cappella groups - if you have heard the Swingle Singers, or King’s Singers you will know the style - singing unaccompanied music for weddings, after dinner entertainment, themed events and fund raising. The cash we earn goes largely to fund music and the occasional slap up dinner or party. Want to buy the latest CD recorded in 2010? My wife and I also sing in “Invitation” choirs of professionals and amateurs, as required.

In the meantime I publish local newsletters, design publicity material/business brochures and cards, do some charity work repairing tools to send out to Africa, and in my spare time work a 300 sq. yd. allotment and large garden, and show vegetables and dahlias later in the late summer.

I have a smashing wife (second marriage) and between us we have four children and nine grandchildren too. Both healthy but with a few twinges, which I work off on the allotment.

Oh Yes - I also take wedding photographs as a professional.

So - **“Have a nice day, Y’all”**. **Yee Haa!**