



The A4 Interview

DB Consultants launches a new series of brief interviews with prominent people in business, politics and sport - beginning with David Buchler, CEO of DB Consultants and Vice Chair of Tottenham Hotspurs.

After the success you achieved with Buchler Phillips and Kroll, what inspired you to start over again with DB Consultants?

DB: *"I had just turned 50, and in trying to plan my last 10-15 years of full business activity, I wanted a final chance at owning and growing a new business. Also I wanted to move from the arena of helping insolvent companies to proactively being involved with businesses before fatal problems arise. I can help them from an operational viewpoint through to a successful turnaround."*

If you were starting right from the beginning again, would you still choose the same career?

DB: *"I feel I have been very lucky in my career. I left school at 18 and was fortunate to have some great tutors during my business life. I don't believe I have ever stopped learning from other people. On reflection, while I might change some of the decisions I've made along the way in business, I would never change my career."*

In your experience, what are the first indicators of a business moving in the wrong direction?

DB: *"Gosh, there are so many! I suppose the one critical factor I look for is when cash becomes tight and the business starts struggling to meet its commitments. From that moment on, management time gets diverted from running and progressing the business to running and protecting the business."*

When you take on a turnaround appointment, what is usually the first priority you look to address?

DB: *"Again this is probably the issue of available cash. Stabilising the business in order to affect a proper turnaround is key to success and you cannot bring any stability to a business unless that business can meet its commitments."*

As a fan and Vice Chair at Tottenham, what are you hoping for in the coming season?

DB: *"I've supported Tottenham all my life and only want to see them win cups, qualify for Europe and beat the opposition – especially the London ones.... Is that too much to ask?!"*

If money were no object, which player would you most like to see at White Hart Lane?

DB: *"I'm on the look-out for a player who combines the qualities of Dave Mackay, Johan Cryuff and Maradonna....Where are you??? And on a free transfer please!"*

What do you do to relax?

DB: *"I produced the London International Opera Festival for eight years and Opera is a bit of a passion with me. I find music generally helps me to relax. I have very eclectic taste – from Wagner and Richard Strauss to Verdi and Puccini."*

What most stresses you out about business?

DB: *"The amount of red tape we are subjected to. There is a constant stream of forms to be filled in and a wide range of restrictions regarding business purpose resulting from legislation designed to protect but which never seem to achieve its objectives."*

If you could persuade Government to introduce or remove on piece of legislation to assist UK businesses, what would it be?

DB: *"I would seriously urge the Government to change pension legislation which is unduly complicated, and while the principles behind it are laudable, can seriously work against the preservation of businesses."*

What one piece of advice would you offer anyone setting up in business for the first time?

DB: *"Believe in yourself, trust your own judgment, be bold – and pray for that little bit of luck that every business needs on its path to glory!"*