

## **Alistair N. Starling** – International Trade & Investment Expert | Regional Director | British Diplomat

### **SUMMARY**

I am a creative senior leader with extensive international experience and proven achievements across government, private and non-profit sectors. A strategic thinker with the self-confidence to implement business solutions that deliver growth, engagement and team cohesion. Energetic, Agile-certified, innovative and determined to succeed.

*Key Skills:* Global perspective, multi-cultural diplomacy, innovative partnerships, strategic, operational efficiency.

### **CURRENT ROLE**

*March 2016 to current time:*

**Director, Making the Difference (Change) Programme** (*internal 1 year secondment*)

*Cambridge and Berlin: Cambridge English Language Assessment, Cambridge Assessment Group*

- Embedding of the delivery of the Making the Difference Transformation Plan.
- Full accountability for creating and tracking clear KPIs on the progress of those responsible for the 7 Themes of the Plan, and on our 5 strategic 'Big Bets' for the future.
- Communicating a strategic storyline of progress, plus the case for urgency, using simple narrative to do so.

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

*November 2013 to March 2016:*

**Regional Director, Northern Europe, Cambridge English**

*Berlin, Germany: Cambridge English Language Assessment, part of the University of Cambridge, offers qualifications for learners and teachers of English, with 5 million people taking our exams annually in 130 countries:*

- Full accountability for our Northern Europe region, consisting of 16 countries, and £4m revenue.
- Strategic direction in local markets, formulating global strategy, as we move from being a UK organisation with offices overseas to an international, digital organisation.

*June 2010 to November 2013:*

**General Manager, The National Trust, UK** (*on sabbatical from British Diplomatic Service*)

*Carlisle, UK: The UK's leading conservation and heritage charity with over 4 million members:*

- Senior management, leading 250 staff and volunteers to drive step-change in Conservation, Visitor Engagement and Profitability, across the NT's entire north Lake District holdings – exceeding 90% of KPIs.
- Fully accountable for P&L budgets, revenue generation, cost control, strategic planning, business plan.
- Responsible for £3m business, £150m assets, managing 10 Department Heads, personal £150k sign-off.

*February 2010 to June 2010:*

**Chief Operating Officer (COO), The Cambridge Hub Ltd.**

*Cambridge, UK: On secondment from British Diplomatic Service (FCO) - Grade C4 (HEO).*

Private Equity Start-up funded by Cambridge-based multinational corporations to deliver scalable executive search:

- Leading on setting-up and structuring the company's new Cambridge HQ.

*January 2008 to February 2010:*

**British Diplomat - Devolved Administration Stakeholder Manager, Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)**

*London, UK: Stakeholder Engagement Team, Communication Directorate.*

Maximising the benefits of the FCO's engagement with UK civil society in the English regions and Devolved Administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, to help deliver the FCO's strategic objectives:

- Ensuring a positive working relationship between the Devolved Administrations and the FCO, including management of the Head of the Diplomatic Service's high-level outreach visits.
- Ensuring our relationship with the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish governments ran smoothly, adding value to FCO policies; responsibility for the MOUs/Concordats and Calman Commission evidence.
- My work on Ambassadors' engagement for the FCO's Leadership Week, including an online tracker for all UK-wide programmes, won me the Directorate 'Outstanding Achievement Award'.

July 2006 to January 2008:

**British Diplomat - Executive Officer, Investment Team, Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)**

London, UK: Sustainable Development & Business Group; managing 2 diplomatic staff.

Helping spearhead the drive for closer relations between the FCO and business, building improved conditions for private investment and enhanced security for companies around the world:

- Contributing to bilateral investment protection policy, in conjunction with BIS and UKTI.
- Policy input to the major upgrade of SISBO (the Security Information Service for Business Overseas – a JV with business), liaising with security experts in the fields of crime, terrorism, bribery & corruption.

2002 to July 2006:

**Head of Inward Investment, UK Trade & Investment, Italy**

Milan, Italy: British Consulate General - UKTI is the business agency of the UK Government, FCO. Grade LE1.

Inward investment promotion strategy, targets and performance, reporting direct to the Consul General in Milan.

- Winner of 'Outstanding Individual Award' in the UK Trade & Investment/D Group Board Awards 2004.
- FCO appraisal performance rating 'A' - 'Outstanding contribution' for last two years.
- Exceeded all inward investment targets by 150-225% for each of the 4 years.
- Liaising face-to-face daily with high level contacts including CEOs, Industry Presidents, Ambassadors.

2000-2002:

**Marketing Manager Italy, Toolsgroup**

Milan, Italy: Multinational Supply Chain Planning software developer.

Managing Italian HQ budget, events, advertising in most important national trade press, mailings, corporate level image refresh (brochure, newsletter, websites, intranet); clients included Barilla, Castrol, Daewoo, Ferrari-Maserati:

- Management of all corporate websites, e-learning, and Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

1999-2000:

**Human Computer Interaction Ergonomist, IconMedialab (now Lbi, with bigmouthmedia)**

Milan, Italy: Global market leader in digital design, online marketing, communication technology, founded Sweden:

- Lead on usability evaluations of client websites including Deutsche Bank, Gazzetta dello Sport, Findomestic.

1999 to 2013 (now Non-Executive Director):

**Managing Director, BusinessBike.com**, a start-up entrepreneurial venture for the development of a service company to provide bicycle and motor-scooter maintenance at clients' workplaces (Cambridge, UK / Milan, Italy):

- Winner of £10k first prize 'Best business idea internet sector', in the 'Wonderland Contest 2000' sponsored by Mediobanca, Milan Polytechnic, Bocconi University. In 2006 BusinessBike.com changed business sector to become a small partnership of international associates consulting on Web Design and App Development.

1995-1999:

**Head of Research, Vision in Business Conferences** (London) leading a team of 60 multilingual researchers;

**International Tour Guide, Globus Travel Cosmos Tourama**, Lugano, Switzerland;

**Business English Teacher, COFIMP Business School for SMEs**, Bologna, Italy;

**AutoCAD Designer, Architetti De Ferarri**, Turin, Italy;

**Ergonomic and Usability Consultant, Robert Feeney Associates**: Loughborough, UK.

## EDUCATION

- **Loughborough University**, UK (joint DE/UK citizenship):
  - Ergonomics Masters (1 year, full-time **MSc**), 1994-95
  - Industrial Design and Technology **BSc** (2.1), 1991-94
- **Disney Institute** 2012
- **Cambridge Hills Road**:
  - Sixth Form College 1989-91

## PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AND LANGUAGES

Mother tongue **English** / fluent (C2) **Italian** / excellent (C1) **German** (currently studying) / basic (A2) **French**

Founder of The Essential Guide to Bologna / Project Leader for Volunteer Association for underprivileged children

USA Camp Counsellor (BUNAC) / Chairman of Youth Skateboarding Fundraising Committee

Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award / Outward Bound course certificate

## COMPUTING SKILLS

Agile Certified SCRUM Product Owner; expert (EU Computer Driving Licence): MSOffice, PowerPoint, Excel, Word, Access, Lotus, Centra eLearning; HTML Web Design; UK Government secure IT systems; Macintosh OSX.