

CAREER PROFILE

Over a 14 year period between 2000 and 2014, Dick was Senior Partner and Managing Partner of CMS Cameron McKenna LLP and Executive Partner of its European business, having previously had a successful practice as a mergers and acquisitions lawyer. In those roles, he had significant exposure to the leadership challenges in a people-based business and to the different phases of the economic cycle.

He was elected to be Managing Partner when he was 39. In the following eight years, the firm's fee income and profit per partner increased by 75% and 150% respectively, the latter being greater than in any other City law firm over the same period. The firm also won 'The Financial Times' Innovative Lawyers Award for innovation in management and featured regularly in 'The Sunday Times' Top 100 Companies to Work For.

Dick's experience includes managing the operational aspects of the firm's business; making difficult decisions about office closures and people's pay and jobs; leading the integration of an international business with total revenues of over €935m which now has 59 offices in 33 countries and employs more than 5,500 people.

As Chair of the firm's Board, Dick led the processes by which the firm made important decisions about its new London premises (its biggest investment for 25 years), international expansion, its merger with Dundas & Wilson and re-organised its partner model. The last of these involved fundamental changes to how partner performance is managed, measured, supported and rewarded.

DICK'S APPROACH TO COACHING

My involvement in coaching began when I was based in Frankfurt, as leader of CMS across Europe. In my role there, I was one step removed from operational management and found that the key skills that I needed were persuasion and an ability to build consensus. I undertook the Meyler Campbell Business Coach Programme in order to become better at the job that I was then doing and to codify my previous management experience. I found coaching as an approach to leadership both hugely stimulating and highly effective.

Like coaching, leadership in a professional services organisation is about allowing individuals to set their agendas and to own the outcomes. Competitive advantage usually comes not from the work that leaders bring in and do themselves, but from their ability to build teams that deliver consistent and high quality performance.



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When my term of office as Senior Partner came to an end in 2014, I was clear that I wanted my future career to be as an executive coach. Since then, I have acted as a coach and consultant to business leaders in a variety of professional service organisations, including lawyers in private practice and in in-house positions.

In addition to being a coach, I am a member of the Faculty of Meyler Campbell. In that role, I tutor experienced business professionals either to practice as coaches or to apply coaching skills in their leadership. The Meyler Campbell Business Coach Programme is the premier business coaching programme in the UK.

My role as a coach is to increase my clients' self-awareness, to help them be clear about the choices they have and to close the gap between what they are currently doing and what they are capable of doing. I serve as a sounding board and help my clients discover resources that they already have but may not be using. In order for coaching to work, our relationship needs to be a collaborative one, between equals.

My experience as a leader and a coach gives me a sense of what good process looks like, but no two of my coaching assignments are the same. Above all, coaching needs to fit the client, not vice versa. Ultimately, my coaching is about giving my clients a reflective space to consider and resolve challenges that they are facing as a leader and to leave with a plan of action around each of their goals

My clients can expect me to focus solely on them and their situation, goals and desired outcomes, to listen and question with genuine curiosity, to provide open and honest feedback and to provide support and challenge in ways that will facilitate the achievement of their goals.



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