

Hamish Taylor

Former CEO of Eurostar and Sainsbury's Bank

With a CV that the *Times* described as “takes some beating”, Hamish Taylor has an award winning record of driving innovation and change in a number of very different environments and is now recognised as one of the world’s leading experts in innovation/change, customer focus/brand management and performance.

Hamish brings a rare combination of an outstanding CV (someone who has done it!) and a fantastic ability to inspire audiences – delivered through both the use of stories from his own experience, tailored advice and practical tools; and his enthusiastic, humorous style.

Hamish began his career with Procter & Gamble Ltd where he was responsible for the flash brands. He then went on to become head of brand management at British Airways where he was responsible for the airline’s passenger brands: First, Club, Concorde, Shuttle, etc. Innovations included major product relaunches of Club Europe, Club World, and First Class (including introducing flat beds).

In 1997, at the age of 36, Hamish moved to Eurostar as managing director of Eurostar (UK) Ltd. The business was three years old and his remit was to reduce major losses. Two very successful years in, he was appointed CEO of Eurostar Group. By the end of 1999, Hamish was CEO of Sainsbury’s Bank, a joint venture between J Sainsbury’s plc and the Bank of Scotland. Once again, the objective was rapid growth in profit from the breakeven position he inherited. The ability to innovate and move away from traditional Banking approaches to behave more like a retailer proved the key to the significant growth that resulted.

With Sainsburys earning large profits, Hamish moved to his next challenge as CEO for Vision UK. Vision is an innovative consultancy, who first brought their commitment based management techniques to the UK with the building of Intelligent Finance. In 2004 Hamish established his own company which focuses on enabling organisations to achieve breakthroughs by looking outside their current environment. Processes, product, and people development are all part of this mix. In each case, he left behind a record of significant growth/turnaround triggered by a willingness to challenge industry/organisation norms and place the customer at the core of all activities.

Hamish has been dubbed the “master thief” by the Inspired Leaders Network due to his record of transferring ideas between sectors (including Yacht designers for aircraft interiors, Disney to help with airport queuing, and rugby referees for new approaches to risk/compliance). He has also regularly featured in the broadcast media, his most recent project being the “Teen Canteen” television program for the BBC.

Hamish is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Bankers, a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Transport, and was the Rail Professional Business Manager of the year in 1998 for his results at Eurostar. He chairs the EMEA advisory board for Emory University from whom he also received the “Sheth Distinguished International Alumnus” award. Other recent awards include the Inspired Leaders Network award for the management of innovation. He is also a trustee of the Robert T Jones memorial scholarship and a non-executive Director of Chartered Brands, the Edinburgh based Brand realisation company.