

David Morland

Director, Financial Services Practice

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Not a proponent of the “shiny shoe” school of consulting, David Morland spent several years in banking before becoming a financial services management consultant. By the time he switched from being a banker to advising bankers, he had worked for the United Kingdom’s largest international bank, working in the U.K. as well as the Arabian Gulf states of Qatar and Bahrain.

With the Cisco® Internet Business Solutions Group (IBSG) Financial Services Practice, Morland focuses on seeding and driving fresh, innovative business ideas to boost revenue at lower costs. He has conducted a number of successful pilot programs creating multichannel customer experiences that differentiate banks in their highly competitive markets by delivering greater value to customers. He has also done a great deal of work investigating ways to increase specialist adviser productivity by using new collaboration and communications technologies.

Recently, Morland led an engagement to help a large, North American bank differentiate itself with technology, improve customer experience, and boost revenue growth. The pilot program boosted revenues thanks to technology-supported targeted sales opportunities, shorter sales cycles and more comprehensive deals, with higher customer satisfaction ratings, lower (and greener) operating costs, and increased specialist advisor productivity. One bank executive commented, “...we had a great partnership with the IBSG team in terms of giving us ideas and giving us metrics, and thinking about how best to impact our business with...technology... They’ve been fantastic partners, making the implementation very smooth and very effective.”

Morland brings a zest for diversity and international thinking to his work with Cisco IBSG’s customers. His parents lived abroad, due to his father’s career, and Morland grew up attending school and university in England and holidaying with his family in New York and Portugal. As a child, he attended the Dragon School in Oxford, traveling to the school from London’s Paddington Station on an express train reserved for Dragon School students. Yet Morland insists it was not at all like Harry Potter’s Hogwarts School, nor was he anything like Harry Potter. He says he was good at connecting with all types of people, which is an acceptable substitute for being good at magic. Perhaps due to his many



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visits to Portugal, where he met people from all over the world, he developed an interest in different cultures and over the years has picked up a smattering of several languages, including Portuguese, Spanish, French, and Arabic.

Morland attended the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom, graduating with a degree in modern history and politics. He took a position with the London-based international financial services group, Standard Chartered Bank. Fortunately for him (given his keen interest in different cultures), the bank saw him as a candidate for international management posting, and after a year of on-the-job training, Morland was posted to Qatar, then Bahrain. Unlike many expats, Morland was more interested in socializing with citizens of his host country than with his compatriots. As a consequence, he experienced life in the Middle East as few foreigners do, and fondly remembers camping in the desert with his friends, living off what the land and sea provided. He still retains many relationships from this period of his life.

At this point, Morland decided to take a hiatus from banking and was accepted to the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University in Chicago, Illinois, where he earned his MBA in 1989, specializing in finance marketing and international business. Having achieved his degree, he was once more at a decision point: Should he stay with banking? Perhaps go to Wall Street/Threadneedle Street as an investment banker? Or do something different? He found the idea of management consulting appealing: “Consulting would allow me to work with many different companies, working on many different kinds of challenges and using my experience from banking as well as the things I learned from business school.” He accepted a job with A.T. Kearney, and moved back to London to help Kearney set up its first banking practice.

Morland found he thoroughly enjoyed consulting. “It’s a different challenge every day, so you’ve got to keep learning, you’ve got to keep climbing. The downside is that you’re always an outsider, but the compensation is that there’s always something new to learn.” He also found his experience and hands-on expertise in banking was invaluable to clients.

After two years with A.T. Kearney, Morland and a few of his colleagues spun off into their own specialist boutique management consultancy. Over the next five years he worked in Oslo, Norway; Lisbon, Portugal; Holland; Belgium; and Madrid, Spain before taking an assignment in Johannesburg, South Africa just four days after Nelson Mandela was elected president. After working for 18 months on an enterprise-wide strategy project for ABSA, one of the largest banks in Africa, Morland eventually decided to leave his consultancy and work directly with the bank to drive implementation—“To spend time actually doing it, rather than just talking about it for the next three years,” as Morland puts it. While he loved the work and Africa, he and his wife now had two daughters. The need for a stable base to raise their family led them to relocate to a permanent home in Toronto, Canada—where they have lived happily ever since.

In Toronto, Morland joined KPMG, to help establish and grow the banking consulting practice in Canada. When KPMG spun off Bearing Point, consulting in management and technology, Morland went with the spinoff as a partner. When Bearing Point dissolved, Morland joined Cisco IBSG’s Financial Services Practice.

“I thoroughly enjoy my role at IBSG,” says Morland. “It suits my appetite; to work closely with clients to trigger change and actually move the ball forward. It’s all about our customers and their clients—and gaining their trust to help them be even more relevant and profitable.”

Morland has become a devoted cyclist, and participates in many long charity-ride fundraisers. He is also an avid reader with wide-ranging tastes in literature. But his wife and family continue to be the center of his life; as he says, “If you fail to bring up decent children, then it doesn’t really matter what else you’ve achieved in life, does it?”

More Information

Cisco Internet Business Solutions Group (IBSG), the company's global consultancy, helps CXOs from the world's largest public and private organizations solve critical business challenges. By connecting strategy, process, and technology, Cisco IBSG industry experts enable customers to turn visionary ideas into value.

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