

# MICHAEL HARRIS ON THE HOT SEAT



**Michael D.S. Harris**  
CEO  
David Consulting Group  
[www.davidconsultinggroup.com](http://www.davidconsultinggroup.com)



## WHAT DOES YOUR COMPANY DO?

We help our clients do their software development better. We provide expert consulting to help clients improve their processes and measure their results. We are a world-leading source for outsourced function point analysis.

## WHAT IS YOUR COMPANY'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND HOW DO YOU USE THAT TO MEASURE YOUR SUCCESS?

We are focused on helping our clients in IT to deliver value to their clients. We aim to be a trusted advisor. That means diving in to help when we can solve a problem and stepping out when we can't add value. We measure our success by the length of our relationship with clients whether we have ongoing or occasional engagements. Our largest client has been with us for over 10 years. To underpin our continuous support for long-standing clients, we have just launched the DCG Trusted Advisor service which is an online forum for collaborative research.

## DESCRIBE YOUR CORPORATE CULTURE AND HOW YOU MAINTAIN IT.

Our culture is based on our tag line: Measure. Improve. Deliver. We maintain it by continually asking ourselves if we are delivering value to our customers. We have developed and deployed a model for agile consulting that includes a month-to-month contractual commitment from clients that stops if the clients feel we can't add any more value next month. We do not want to be those consultants who are "part of the furniture."

## WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOUR ORGANIZATION HAS FACED AND HOW HAVE YOU OVERCOME IT?

Listening. We are experts and, at one point in our history, we spent too much time trying to impress our clients by telling them what we knew. We have learned to listen and question to help our clients (and us) understand their pain better before we start to build a solution. Oddly enough, this came through the Sandler Sales process training program. Now we use our expertise to help our clients instead of smothering them with it.

## WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER AND WHY?

David Sandler – He died some years ago but many of his sessions are available electronically.

## WHEN YOU ARE NOT LEADING YOUR COMPANY, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PASTIME?

I travel a lot, so being with my wife and family is my favorite pastime. When I get more time, I like to be out climbing mountains and hills.

## WHAT CHANGES AND/OR INNOVATIONS DO YOU SEE IN YOUR INDUSTRY'S FUTURE?

More and more, the software development industry needs to be focused on maximizing the value from its supply chain. We have seen some symptoms of this in the movements toward commercial off-the-shelf software, outsourcing and the cloud, but I believe supply chain management for value and risk will become as important in software development as it is in manufacturing. For this reason, DCG has joined the Innovation Value Institute (IVI). We are an advocate for, and provider of, the IT-CMF model that has been developed by the IVI.

## IF YOU COULD BE IN ANY OTHER LINE OF WORK, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

I am an engineer and I love the idea of green energy. I still remember visiting the Center for Alternative Technology in Wales when I was young. It is an old quarry in the Welsh mountains filled with windmills, solar power, recycling ideas and low energy ideas for under-developed regions. I would have loved to be able to make a career out of this but it is only now that I have been able to launch a start-up, [www.lean-green.com](http://www.lean-green.com), to start to follow this passion.



david consulting group