

THE LEADER

From Kenya to Russia with success

By Svetlana Feoktistova
The Russia Journal

Stephen Wilson, the managing director of DTZ Moscow, has devoted himself to commercial realty in four countries: Great Britain, South Africa, Kenya, and Russia.

DTZ is one of the biggest international companies working in the field of real-estate consulting. He has had to be versatile in his career: After living in Kenya, he has proven himself adaptable and has coped well in the unpredictable climate of Russia.

The only thing that he still cannot get used to in Russia is the language.

However, Wilson is doing his best to learn it. He greets people with "zdravstvuite," and says good-bye with "do svidania."

He is an adventurer, whose penchant for traveling has led him to diverse parts of the world. In spite of his wandering life, Wilson is a true professional and interested in his work. His goal is to lead his firm to first place on the Russian market.

Wilson spoke to The Russia Journal about his past and current work as well as his plans for future success.

The Russia Journal: You joined the real-estate business in 1971. Why did you decide to choose this branch of business? Where did you study and did your background lead to your choice of profession?

Stephen Wilson: I entered the profession due to the interests of my father. But my branch is my decision. My father knew somebody who was already in the business, and introduced me to them. After that meeting I understood

that it was exactly what I was looking for in my life. I haven't changed my mind since. I studied at the University of Reading in the United Kingdom. My secondary education background led me to this type of work.

RJ: Looking at your career path, was it going gradually and step-by-step? Or were there great leaps, both up and down?

SW: Like most careers there have been ups and downs. I'm happy to say that my career has generally carried on in an upward trend and I am certainly happy to be here in Moscow with DTZ.

RJ: In 1984 you moved to South Africa, and then to Kenya. What was the reason for choosing these countries? What were your impressions of Africa?

SW: I moved to South Africa in 1984. I decided to emigrate at that time in order to see more of the world, a decision I do not regret. I spent nine years working in the development, leasing and management of commercial property.

In 1993, I traveled to Kenya and liked it so much that I decided to stay for a short time. That turned into another nine years!

RJ: For Russian people South Africa and Kenya seem very exotic. Why did you decide to leave for such a cold country as Russia?

SW: I decided to leave Kenya, because the security situation was very bad; business was also not very good — the economy was very stagnant due to the government's economic policy.

So, I decided to leave Kenya, and essentially, I got in touch with a couple of agencies in London, and one of them suggested that I think about working in Moscow.

The job seemed interesting to me. I thought it over and agreed. It was a great opportunity for me to see another country and visit Russia.



STEPHEN WILSON, managing director for DTZ in Moscow, said his experience in Africa prepared him 'for anything.'

In 2001 I joined DTZ and assumed responsibility for Moscow operations, covering all aspects of business — valuation and consultancy — for a range of international clients.

RJ: Could you tell us about the difficulties and problems you probably meet working in Russia? For example, people and their attitudes, the work environment and

mentality. Do you worry about the nature of business in Russia?

SW: Generally, being in Africa prepared me for anything, so I'm never surprised by anything that happens here.

It's working pretty well, I think. It seems that the specific character of Russian business mostly depends on Russian culture. But of course business in Russia is much

more international than in Africa. And Moscow is a very international city.

What is interesting about business in Russia is that Moscow is so different from the rest of the country. It's almost as if Moscow is a country in and of itself. Of course, it's very much the center

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