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'A recruitment agency ran an ad in the Cabinet Maker magazine – it was the wrong job, wrong location and I was the wrong kind of salesman. But I got the job at BDG. My boss was as mad as a box of frogs but with a huge heart. I went to the interview in my brother's pale blue suit. I thought, 'I'm 30, I've got kids, it's about time I got a proper job.' I doubled my salary, and from that moment I haven't looked back. Put it down to an incompetent employment agency placing a round peg in a round hole.

'Back then, BDG had an odd reputation in the market, but I will defend to the end the company and its people – they had great values. I really enjoyed my seven years at BDG ('88-'95), and still keep in touch with many ex-colleagues such as Phil Hutchinson and Mark Myers.'

Time for Nick to shoot off back to Bristol. 'It's quite a drive every day from Reading to Bristol, so I try to work remotely or take the train – but I often have to succumb to the car. What a carbon footprint – I'm the enemy of the people!' grins Nick. This Reading season ticket holder finished by chatting about his musical tastes ('I'm sadly stuck in '70s prog rock'), before turning seriously to the big issue of the day. 'Sure, we'll go back up this season, maybe via the playoffs. And Coppell's a top, top man.' ●