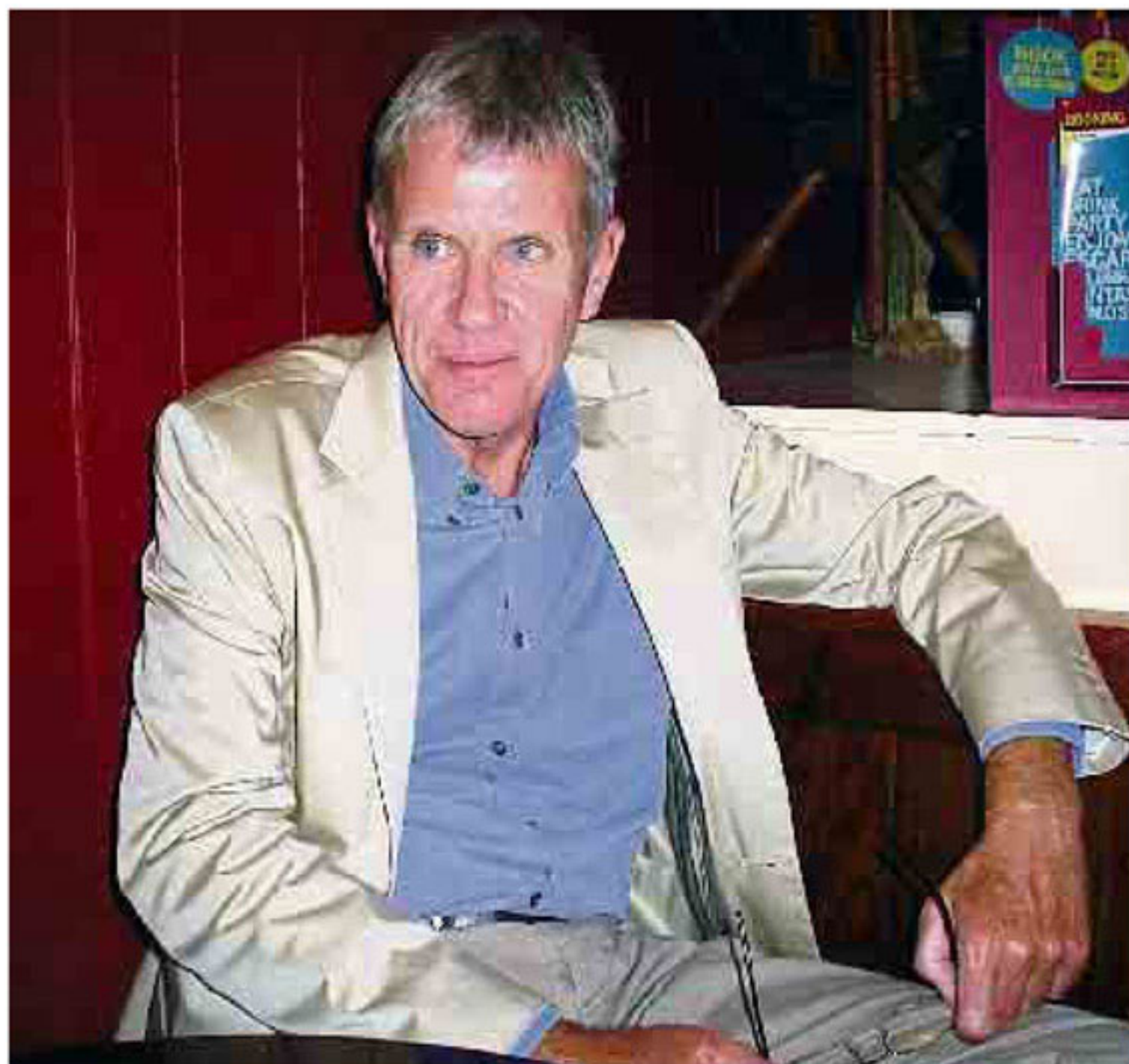


Richard Koch Businessman and author



“Life is very random, from the moment we’re born to when we die”

ANDREW FORBES

Richard Koch, who has a home near Estepona, is a remarkable entrepreneur, consultant and author of 13 books, including *The 80/20 Principle*, which has sold over half a million copies. Richard believes we all can use the 80/20 rule to transform all aspects of life, from business success to personal happiness and fulfilment.

1'In a few words, what is the 80/20 rule??

The 80/20 principle (or Pareto principle) observes that there is usually a profound imbalance between causes and results – a few causes or inputs nearly always hog most of the results or outputs. So 80/20 is convenient shorthand where in many cases, roughly 20 per cent of inputs account for 80 per cent of outputs. An exact 80-20 split is not always true; sometimes it is 99-1 or sometimes only 70-30. Yet it is very rarely close to 50-50.

2'What is the first step to use this to transform our lives?

Identify the 20 per cent of your work that may comprise 80 per cent of the value, and try to focus on doing more of that. Or work out which 20 per cent of your social activities give you 80

per cent of pleasure, do more of them, and cut out the rest! If you are in business, try to double the sales of the key products or to the key customers, and then you'll have 160 per cent of profits for 40 per cent of the effort. Forget the rest. Work a two day week!

3'Who is your inspiration?

Great writers, such as Edward Gibbon, the 18th century historian whose *'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire'* is a model of elegance and wit. I also admire Peter Drucker and Malcolm Gladwell. In fiction, I appreciate Alexander McCall Smith for making me feel better about life.

4'In your life, what do you most value?

Truth, love and sunshine; but not always in that order!

5'What is your greatest extravagance?

I have an assistant to help me with my work and to do things that I don't want to do, such as taking the car in for a service.

6'Has your success been down to luck or the 80/20 Principle?

I don't think of myself as successful, except that I can choose to spend my time the way I like. I believe money is greatly overrated, because you rapidly ad-

just to the level you have, so I don't think having money means you are successful. I have written a few decent books, and that gives me satisfaction. But if you say I'm successful, it's half Pareto and half luck, and 'nil points' for skill! I think luck is greatly under-estimated; in my view some successful people have a knack for being in the right place at the right time, which I suppose is a kind of skill. Yet life is extremely random, from the moment we're born to when we die.

7'Why did you choose a home in Southern Spain?

The climate of course! It is very beautiful too; I love walking in the mountains.

8'What is your favourite restaurant in the area?

I enjoy going to 'Rufino's' in Benahavís village.

9'Do you have a motto in life?

Relax! Life is too short to be stressed or unhappy.

10'Are you writing a new book?

Yes, I am. It's called 'Lucky in Life', but I have only just starting doing the research. My latest book 'Superconnect' comes out a little later this year; it's about how to have a great network without spending much time or energy on it.