

Foreword

As the Founder of The Body Shop, I often get asked to talk about entrepreneurship – even by hallowed institutions like Harvard and Stanford. It makes me smile that the Ivy League is so keen to ‘learn’ how to be an entrepreneur, because I’m not at all convinced it is a subject you can teach. How do you teach obsession, because more often than not it’s obsession that drives an entrepreneur’s vision? How do you learn to be an outsider, if you are not one already? Why would you march to a different drumbeat if you are instinctively part of the crowd?

One of the great challenges for entrepreneurs is to sit down, reflect and wait to collect information. We all suffer from hurry sickness. We have an abundance of energy and commitments. We can create something out of nothing, but we’re not very good at organization and follow through. We are essentially outsiders and that is the best definition of an entrepreneur I have ever come across.

So here's my advice to all you budding entrepreneurs. Be optimistic. Successful entrepreneurs don't work within systems, they hate hierarchies and structures and try to destroy them. They have an inherent creativity and wildness that is very difficult to capture.

Finally, be passionate about ideas. Entrepreneurs want to create a livelihood from an idea that has obsessed them. Not necessarily a business, but a livelihood. Money will grease the wheels, but becoming a millionaire is not the aim of a true entrepreneur. In fact, most entrepreneurs I know don't give a damn about the accumulation of money. They are totally indifferent to it – they don't know what they earn and they don't care. They don't care about the nameplate culture. What gets their Juices going is seeing how far an idea can go.

So read this book, learn from other people's experiences, take note of all the helpful hints and tips to help you successfully launch your ideas. This book is to guide you through the transition of starting out on your own and you can use it as a handbook through every process.

Dame Anita Roddick