



Anita Roddick – the Queen of Green

Dame Anita Roddick, the founder and owner of the *Body Shop* cosmetics chain was for many years the most famous and successful businesswoman in Britain. In 1976, she borrowed £4,000 to open her first *Body Shop* in Brighton, on the south coast of England. In 1984, the *Body Shop* chain was valued at 8 million pounds.

In the 1970s, when she started, Anita Roddick was aware that women were starting to worry about the powerful, artificial chemicals contained in the creams which they were putting on their skins and the shampoos they were using for washing their hair. Women were also worried about the fact that these products were usually tested on animals causing them a great deal of pain and distress.

The first *Body Shop* in Brighton sold just 15 different cosmetic products. These were all made, not with artificial chemicals, but with natural products from fruits and vegetables. The shop was a relaxed and happy place, quite unlike the formal atmosphere of the typical cosmetics departments in big stores. Traditional cosmetics departments made women feel guilty because they were not as slim, charming and beautiful as the assistants who worked in the store.

The traditional approach to make-up was to paint a beautiful face on top of the ordinary face which was underneath. Anita Roddick's approach was different. She wanted her customers to **reveal** their beauty, not to hide their beauty under thick layers of coloured creams and powders.

Her ideas were immediately popular and the *Body Shop* chain started to grow. They opened new shops and added more products; shampoos, soaps, creams, perfumes, body scrubs and bathing salts. 15 years after opening her first shop, nearly every High Street in Britain had a branch of the *Body Shop*.

Anita Roddick appeared regularly on TV talking about her ideas. She wrote articles for newspapers and magazines about the cruelty of animal testing and the importance of the environment.

Although Anita Roddick was the public face of *Body Shop*, her husband Gordon was the business genius, creating the franchise system which helped *Body Shop* to grow so quickly. . "He's the do-er, I'm the dreamer" she said.

In September 2007, Anita Roddick died at the age of 64.

You can read more about Anita Roddick and other successful businesswomen in [Women in Business](#) by David Evans Penguin Readers Level 4.





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Glossary

cosmetics	cosmetics are the creams, soaps, shampoos which people use on their skin to make them beautiful.
chain	a chain of shops are a group of shops with the same name and sell the same things.
founder	the person who started a business or activity.
franchise	a business which operates as a franchise allows other businesses to use its name and sell its products.

Before reading

Discuss Do you ever wear make-up? Which make up products do you use? What are they made from? How are they tested?

After reading

A] Choose the best answers to the questions

1. What did Body Shops sell?
a] chains b] chemicals c] cosmetics
2. Where did the first Body Shop open?
a] in Brighton b] in London c] in New York
3. What were the cosmetics in Body Shop made from?
a] artificial chemicals b] natural products c] shampoo
4. How did women feel in traditional cosmetics departments?
a] happy b] guilty c] beautiful
5. What did Anita Roddick want her customers to do?
a] paint their faces b] reveal their beauty c] test their animals
6. What was her husband's name?
a] Dame b] David c] Gordon





B] Find the words in the dossier which have these meanings.

- 1 known by many people
- 2 took from somebody else for a short time
- 3 not natural
- 4 soap which is used for washing hair
- 5 liquid which is put on the surface of something to change its colour.
- 6 not fat
- 7 a liquid with a very nice smell
- 8 the natural world around us
- 9 a very clever person

C] Discuss. How do you feel about make-up and cosmetics? Do you think they are useful? Do they help you to keep clean? Do they help you to stay healthy? Do they help you to feel better?

