

## A NEW CONSCIOUSNESS FOR BUSINESS

*“In terms of power and influence, you can forget the church, forget politics. There is no more powerful institution in society than business - I believe it is now more important than ever before for business to assume a moral leadership. The business of business should not be about money, it should be about responsibility. It should be about public good, not private greed”. Quoted from *Business As Unusual*, by Anita Roddick, founder of *The Body Shop*.*

The above quote may have seemed lofty, even unrealistic when it was first made in the 1990s and included in her first book published in 2001. But given the current global economic climate and the accomplishments of the person who made it, the message is now especially relevant. From her first store, opened in England in 1976, Anita Roddick grew a cottage industry into a multi-national corporation by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; by then there were hundreds of franchises in dozens of countries. *The Body Shop* is still going strong worldwide today.

Before her death in 2007 at the age of 64, Ms. Roddick became known as an advocate for the responsibility of business as a force for social change as well as economic good. She walked her talk, traveling the world, growing her business, combining unparalleled zeal and ethical convictions, ‘building bridges’ to poverty-stricken regions and indigenous societies of the globe.

As a small business owner, I have explored the thinking of Ms. Roddick as well as many other successful business people, looking to embrace what has worked for them and what feels right for me. In Anita Roddick, I have found my business hero! I strongly suggest that anyone who has a business, anyone who thinks about starting a business or anyone who has any interest in business, read her book(s) and embrace her model for success. She has set the standard to which all of us need to aspire.

We are all witnessing the damage that businesses driven by ‘greed and fear’ can do to their employees, the economy and even the world. There is more than enough evidence, in my opinion, that business can and needs to be motivated by responsibility for ‘public good, not private greed’.

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