

## Sahar Hashemi

Co-founder of Coffee Republic and Skinny Candy

Sahar Hashemi, founded Coffee Republic, the UK's first US style coffee bar chain with her brother and built it into one of the UK's most recognised high street brands, and one of the first players in the 'coffee revolution' that transformed the UK high street.

**In 2019 Sahar published her latest book *Startup Forever*.** She explains the purpose of the book. "In my work, I'm always asked the same questions:

- 'How can we grow big but act small?'
- 'How can we encourage innovative thinking and drive growth by finding different and new ways of doing things?'
- 'As we face disruptive change, how can we be more agile? More resilient? Less stuck in our ways?'
- 'How can I get my people to think outside the box, to experiment, and take the initiative?'
- 'How can I get everyone in the company to think more like entrepreneurs?'

The ten shifts in the book are my answers to these questions. The solutions I have picked up on my journey are, in fact, strikingly common sense. They are simple shifts in how to approach everyday work with an entrepreneurial mind-set together with day-to-day actions anyone can take to put this more entrepreneurial mind-set to work.

Sahar left the day to day management of Coffee Republic in 2001 and published a bestselling book called *Anyone Can Do It- building Coffee Republic from our kitchen table*, which has been translated into 6 languages and is 2nd highest selling book on entrepreneurship on Amazon after Richard Branson's book.

In 2011 Sahar Hashemi was nominated by Director magazine as one of the Top 10 Original Thinkers, taking her place alongside individuals such as Sir Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the World Wide Web and Jonathan Ives, Vice-President of Design at Apple and designer of the iPod. It praised her view that, "Entrepreneurially minded talent shouldn't have to leave large corporations in order to achieve fulfilment. Entrepreneurial behaviour, including ideas like bootstrapping, prototyping and celebrating failure, can help turn stuffy corporations into creative environments. They can also transform automatons into valued, engaged employees".

In June 2012 Sahar was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list "for services to the UK economy and to charity". Sahar was named 'Pioneer to the life of the nation' by Her Majesty The Queen and a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in Davos. She is a mentor to Change Please, a charity that provides pop-up coffee bars run by homeless people, giving them the help and support they need to turn their lives around.

In her speeches Sahar outlines the habits that are the basis of *Startup Forever* which encourage entrepreneurial behaviour in organisations of all types and sizes. These habits will make companies nimbler, more creative, more customer-centric more resilient and better places to work. She ignites the audience with a 'can do' spirit and the tools and habits to 'make it happen.'