

## SAHAR HASHEMI OBE

“In the face of disruptive change, how do we become more agile? More resilient? More open to change? And how can we encourage innovative thinking?”



Lawyer-turned-entrepreneur, Sahar Hashemi has used her deep knowledge of both the corporate and start up worlds to become an internationally recognised **thought leader on entrepreneurial mindset**. She has been described as a **change agent** and **problem solver**.

As founder of two disruptive businesses and the author of a bestselling book on entrepreneurship, she understands entrepreneurial behaviour to the core. However, she also understands corporate behaviour to the core, evolving out of her early corporate law career, then seeing the transformation of culture when her start up grew into a big company, and this last decade speaking to over 400 large organisations. This combination of personal experience in both worlds gives her a unique and deep perspective into entrepreneurial behaviours, what blocks it in big organisations and what it takes to unleash it.

Sahar left her legal career in a top London law firm after five years to start **Coffee Republic**, the UK's first US style coffee bar chain with her brother Bobby. In 5 years, they built it into one of the UK's most recognised high street brands with 110 bars and a turnover of £30m.

She left the day-to-day management of Coffee Republic and published a bestselling book about her journey, **Anyone Can Do It**, to demystify the idea that entrepreneurship is an innate personality trait, which has been translated into 6 languages and is the 2nd-highest selling book on entrepreneurship after Richard Branson.

She then founded **Skinny Candy**, a market-segment defining brand of sugar free sweets which was sold to confectionery conglomerate Glisten PLC in 2007.

Her latest booked **Start-Up Forever, How To Build A Start-Up Culture In A Big Company**, released in March 2019, was named The Financial Times *Best Business Book of the Month*. **Start Up Forever** has been much acclaimed in the corporate world by throwing away the excuses which normally stifle entrepreneurial culture and providing a practical easy to implement toolkit to unleash the agility and innovation of entrepreneurial thinking which all large companies need.

Sahar was nominated by Director magazine as one of its **Top 10 Original Thinkers**, alongside Sir Tim Berners-Lee and Sir Jonathan Ive. She has been named “**Pioneer to the life of the Nation**” by Her Majesty The Queen and **Young Global leader** by the World Economic Forum. She was listed in the Maseratti 100, a definitive list of Britain's most successful philanthropists, investors, mentors and advisors. In June 2012 Sahar was awarded an **OBE** for services to the UK economy and to charity.

Sahar is currently working on her exciting new project **Buy Women Built** launched in March 2022 to boost economic recovery by bringing consumer support and recognition to female founded businesses. She sits on the board of the Scale Up Institute and on the advisory board of Digital Boost, Change Please Coffee and The Hundred Cricket.

### Testimonials

*Sahar was absolutely sensational. The perfect balance between personal and inspirational. So many learnings. Thank you.*

- Dan Ram, Moderator, TED speaker, Speaker Coach

*Sahar, you are the talk of town! You were by far the best speaker of the day and people cherish you highly. Thank you so much for your contribution.*

- Marcel Scacchi, Founder, Medtech

*What a fabulous talk. The team was on fire and we all enjoyed having you.*

- Richard Saynor, CEO of Sandoz

*A very engaging and emotional presentation also confirmed by the high number of questions and comments from the team which for us, is a great achievement especially as it was virtual.*

- Products Up

*Inspiring and actionable talk. The feedback has been tremendous*

- L'OREAL

*Your talk was the best part of the day*

- LinkedIn Talent Conference

*Her passion for innovation energises a room – it's the equivalent of a double espresso from the coffee chain she co-founded*

- London Innovative Forum

*It was my absolute pleasure to have that conversation with you! I've received very positive feedback from people across the team, in fact someone on my own team said you were her favorite guest speaker she's ever heard... she learned so much.*

- Microsoft

*“Sahar Hashemi has a gift for storytelling. These pages radiate the warmth and humour with which she has passionately spoken so many times about her own experiences as an entrepreneur and subsequent conversations with ‘big business’. There’s an oversupply of frameworks and tools at the disposal of the 21<sup>st</sup> century ‘intrapreneur’, but this common-sense canter through 10 habits and no less than 34 small but significant ‘shifts’ is a well-crafted wake-up call to the dormant entrepreneur in all of us. Inspiring, human, humble. Just like the author.”*

- Carl Nagel, Global Marketing Innovation Director, Jacobs Dowe Egberts

*Sahar is a powerful catalyst to drive entrepreneurship within big corporations.  
This is not an easy topic, the risk of staying at theory level is high.  
The reason why I am actively endorsing Sahar is because she provided me and my  
organization with tangible tools to start making changes immediately.  
Her personal story is genuine, down to earth, super inspiring and extremely interesting  
to follow.  
She talks to people's heart in a way that awakens the entrepreneur inside.  
She sells a mindset and she equips you to go make it happen.  
Her deep experience with corporations makes her suggestions and her collection for  
do's and don'ts very actionable.  
She does not provide theory and that's it. She is a change agent, a catalyst of change  
to drive entrepreneurship with a tangible and ready to use approach.*

- Stefano Volpetti, Head of Global Babycare, Procter & Gamble

*Sahar succeeds in reconciling the brain with the heart, through common sense. By far  
the most engaging and credible keynote speaker we have had over the years*

- Gruppo Campari

*You truly galvanized people in the room into feeling they could and should make  
changes in their approach to work – which is precisely the outcome we wanted*

- SKY