



## Deborah Meaden

**BBC Dragon, successful business woman & self-made millionairess**

Lessons in inspiration from one of the Den's most formidable she-dragons.

## Deborah's biography

### About Deborah Meaden

- Successful [business woman](#) and self-made millionairess
- Rose to TV stardom as a BBC Dragon's Den investor
- Firm believer in common sense, honesty and 'telling it like it is'

Deborah Meaden's style lends itself to numerous occasions. She is passionate about many causes and speaks with a conviction that will capture the attention of your audience, however varied.

A self-made business woman and a firm but fair potential investor, Deborah Meaden is a household name due to her appearances in the BBC's Dragons Den. Having always dreamed of owning a company, Deborah showed entrepreneurial spirit from a young age and started her first business when aged nineteen, using earnings from previous jobs.

### Beginnings

Born in February 1959 and raised in Essex, Deborah Meaden always had ambition. When she finished school, she attended a business college with the aim of one day starting her own company (or companies). Once she had completed her course successfully, Deborah worked in a fashion house. Inspiration in Italy She moved to Italy at the age of nineteen and started a business supplying high quality glass and ceramic items to retailers such as Harvey Nichols back in the UK. Although Deborah had sole agency rights for the products she supplied, they began to be sold in rival shops and she had to walk away from her first business. Undefeated, she re-entered the business world, soon opening the first UK

franchise of the Italian shoe company Stefanel in partnership with a friend. Despite their success, Deborah wanted to move her career on and so her friend took on the whole franchise and she moved on to other positions, including a role in the leisure industry with Butlins.

### **Life in the Leisure Industry**

After gaining further experience in the leisure and retails sectors, Deborah worked her way to becoming an operations director at an amusement arcade business and was soon also working with holiday parks for the same company. When she was promoted to managing director, the business grew from just one to five holiday parks. Deborah eventually went on to purchase the company via an MBO and under her care it became yet more successful. She sold the company in 2005 but still maintains a role within the business. She is currently involved in several [businesses](#).

### **Becoming a Household Name**

Having started appearing on the hit TV show Dragons Den in 2006 and became known as a shrewd and reasonable dragon, not afraid to tell candidates looking for investment the truth about their business concepts and likelihood of making a Return on Investment (ROI).

### **Personal and Charitable Interests**

Deborah is an animal lover and lives with a mini menagerie in Somerset with husband Paul. She supports numerous charities including and is currently an ambassador for the WWF and the chair of the 'Childs Voice Appeal South West', which is a part of Childline. She supports ethical, fair practice in business and in life and feels that taking care of the environment and wildlife is extremely important.

Speakers Associates Ltd | +44 (0)1628 636600 | [info@speakersassociates.com](mailto:info@speakersassociates.com) | [www.speakersassociates.com](http://www.speakersassociates.com)