

THE 20 SMARTEST WOMEN IN BRITAIN

Meet the women who are out to change the world

You might not know these women yet. But you will – because the chances are they're going to change the way you live, even the way you think. They are inspirational, not only for their jaw-dropping achievements, but also for the energy and confidence that have enabled them to succeed while remembering they still have A Life. They're the kind of women who say, 'let's run a plc and go home on time/take maternity leave/work out of the office' and their records show just how it's done. So put your hands together and applaud...

HOW WERE THEY CHOSEN?

A list of 100 women, each one recommended by independent experts in her field, was drawn up from the worlds of science, entertainment, the media, politics, fashion, education and more, and pared down to 20 by a judging panel from *eve* magazine. Then a second panel of judges, shown here, voted for five finalists and an eventual winner.



THE JUDGES

Maria Kempinska (top), founder and MD of comedy club chain Jongleurs. Since selling Jongleurs in 1999, she has launched a TV production company and the London Comedy Festival.

Amanda Wakeley (centre, left), designer, three-times winner of the British Fashion Award for Glamour. Her clients include J-Lo and Liz Hurley.

Jenni Murray (centre, middle), OBE, voice of Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*, author, *eve* columnist.

Baroness [Susan] Greenfield (centre, right), Professor of Pharmacology at Oxford, the first female director of the Royal Institution of Great Britain and a world expert on the workings of the human brain.

Heather Rabbatts (not pictured), former BBC governor and chief exec of London borough of Lambeth. She's now MD of Channel 4's *4Learning*.

Amanda Platell (bottom, left), ex-adviser to William Hague, MD of *The Independent*, and *Sunday Express* editor. Now a broadcaster and writer.

Gill Hudson (bottom, right), editorial director of *eve*.



THE WINNER

EMILY SHUCKBURGH, 28, meteorologist

Taking control of the weather is something men have tried to do for thousands of years, but it took a 28-year-old woman to achieve it. Her company, Weather Informatics, issues long-range weather forecasts to energy companies, retailers, the NHS and government so they can plan ahead. Unusually, Emily Shuckburgh combines an impressive academic record (she's a research fellow at Cambridge and holds a Paris-based EC fellowship into climate change) with an astute business brain, which has helped her appreciate the commercial potential of scientific research.

Most memorable achievement? 'That I've helped bring cutting-edge developments in the scientific community to the outside world.'

Smart advice? 'I'm a realist who tries to make the best of any situation. Frequently, research can lead nowhere, you feel demoralised, and you have to gather motivation to try again. But eventually you progress.'

And your other life? 'I strongly believe in the importance of family, friends and leisure. I've always tried to make as much time as possible for my personal life, but it becomes more and more difficult as increasing numbers of people depend on you professionally. I take inspiration from Marie Curie. Not only was she the first woman to win a Nobel prize, but she also won a second and raised a Nobel prize-winning daughter!'

Tell us your mantra. 'It's Einstein's "Imagination is more important than knowledge."' >

Words: LINDA GRAY, ANGHARAD LAW
Winner and finalist photographs:
ANN-MARIE BICKERTON



WINNER

EMILY SHUCKBURGH

28, meteorologist
eve's Smartest Woman
In Britain, who impressed
the judges with her ability
to mix advanced science
with business sense – and
still have a life!

BRAINS GALORE



▲ **NICOLA SHINDLER**
32, television producer

Clocking Off, *Queer As Folk*, and *Bob And Rose* are just a few of the TV series made by Nicola Shindler's Red Production Company. Her credits as a script editor (*Prime Suspect*, *Cracker*, *Our Friends In The North*) are equally impressive. 'I want to make drama that goes beyond sheer entertainment,' Nicola says.



▲ **KATHY SYKES**
35, physicist

Taking physics out of the lab is the mission of Kathy Sykes, the brains behind the award-winning Explore-At-Bristol centre, where she is head of science. 'The best thing is seeing thousands of people concentrating, laughing, and getting emotionally involved in something I think is important.'



▲ **PAULINE TIFFIN**
41, fair trade pioneer

Reach for a cup of Cafédirect and you're acknowledging the work of Pauline Tiffin. By buying straight from source, she helps producers of coffee, sesame, honey, chocolate and even gold increase their profits. 'Women frequently personalise things,' she says. 'De-personalising everything leaves projects with no soul.'



FINALIST

ERIKA WATSON
35, lobbyist

A single mother who knows what it's like to struggle, Erika Watson is now giving other women a leg-up. Her speciality is micro-credit – lending money at minimal interest to women with no income or assets, so they can set up in business. The payback rate is 99 per cent. **Memorable achievement?** 'Setting up Prowess UK, which aims to make numbers of women starting businesses equal that of men.'

Smart advice? 'In the US, a failed business is seen as good experience for building a successful one.'

Mantra? 'What's the worst that can happen?'



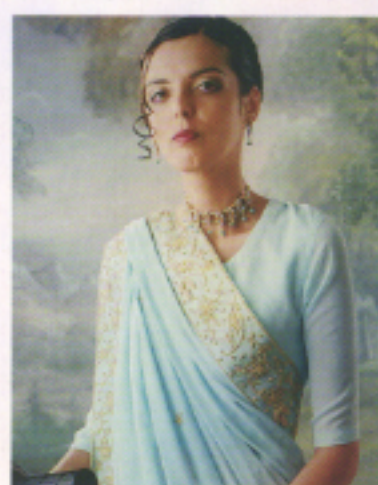
▲ **CILLA SNOWBALL**
43, advertising executive

If you shop at Sainsbury's or scoff Walkers crisps, you could well have come under the spell of Cilla Snowball, chief executive of advertising agency Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO. Seems like everybody gets a name-check there except Cilla but, with 311 staff, 44 clients and three kids to manage, it doesn't faze her. No queen bee, she's campaigning for more women at board level. It makes sense: 'The best companies operate with teamwork, excellence and great output,' she observes.



▲ **JO DA SILVA**
34, engineer

Carving an extension for the National Portrait Gallery out of its own back yard is just one example of Jo da Silva's talent for creating complex buildings on difficult sites. 'It's a magical moment when a building is opened and it turns into a living entity,' she says. Associate director with Ove Arup, she's also involved with RedR, an international charity that sends engineers to disaster areas.



▲ **ZUBEIDA MALIK**
28, reporter

For a young Muslim woman to arrive in Afghanistan on September 12 and scoop the first interview with the Taliban is astounding, but it's typical of Zubeida Malik. One of the BBC's most tenacious correspondents, she currently reports on Islamic issues. 'It's a difficult career for women, even more so for black women,' she admits. 'But when things look bleak, I remind myself of the racism my parents suffered when they came to the UK. It can never be like that again.'



FINALIST

RUTH MISKIN

45, literacy expert

Ruth Miskin is national training director of Success for All, a literacy programme for primary schools. She says that 80 per cent of children assessed as having special needs simply haven't been taught correctly.

Memorable achievement? 'Ensuring every child at Kobi Nazrul School in London's Tower Hamlets [where for 85 per cent of pupils English is a second language] could read.'

Smart advice? 'Women are more self-critical than men; it makes us more effective.'

Mantra? 'Time for a cup of tea yet?'

▲ **BELINDA EARL**

39, retailer

Two years ago Belinda Earl was appointed chief executive of Debenhams. Her belief that people should work sensible hours, efficiently, is music to our ears. She is currently the first chief executive of a major company to take maternity leave.





▲ DR JESSICA JAMES

33, banker

'It's tough to continue in physics after the post-doc stage,' says Jessica James, and she should know. One look at the promotion blockage, after a PhD in Theoretical Atomic and Nuclear Physics, propelled her into finance at Bank One, where she is vice-president. She advises the government on education, helps physicists move into business, plays in a band and makes temari – mathematical shapes – in needlework.



▲ EMMA WHITE

35, breast-care specialist

Winner of the Florence Nightingale Award in 2000, Emma White has spent her career improving breast-care services. A specialist in cancer genetics, she's set up family history clinics, run national trials and is now getting the message across via the pages of *Nursing Times*, where she's clinical editor. Being a psychologist as well as a nurse, she's aware that, with cancer, talking can be as important as action. 'It's about making someone's difficult moments more bearable,' Emma explains.



FINALIST

FABIOLA ARREDONDO

35, internet entrepreneur

The most powerful woman in Europe according to the *Wall Street Journal*, Fabiola Arredondo first made her name at BBC Worldwide, the company that brings you eve. Best known for spearheading the internet company Yahoo! in Europe, she's launching her

own media company later this year.

Memorable achievement?

'Building Europe's leading consumer website and making it profitable. We gained some extra wrinkles, a few stone and too many air miles, but we had a good time doing it.'

Smart advice? 'Choose a job you're passionate about and give it your best shot. But be objective enough to recognise when it's not worth the battle.'

Mantra? 'Do what you love; don't take it too seriously!' >



FINALIST

NOREENA HERTZ

34, economist
Fifty-one of the world's largest economies are corporations, not countries, says Noreena Hertz, fellow at the London School of Economics, whose critique of globalisation, *The Silent Takeover* (£12.99, Heinemann), topped the best-seller charts last year.

Memorable achievement? 'Being the first woman to jointly receive the Miliband Fellowship at the LSE. It's awarded in recognition of radical thought.'

Smart advice? 'Women have to work harder than men and shine that much more to get recognised.'

Mantra? 'Know when it's time to move on.'



▲ KELLY FISHER

23, snooker player

Since the age of 14, Kelly Fisher has pocketed virtually every snooker award going – Ladies World Champion (three times), Lady Player of the Year, European and UK championships. She extended her record-breaking run last year, becoming the first woman player to make three century breaks and is now the world's number one female snooker player. And a black belt in kung fu!



▲ ANYA HINDMARCH

33, handbag designer

Self-taught designer Anya Hindmarch launched her business at just 19, after spotting a trend in Florence for drawstring leather bags. Her superb craftsmanship and witty designs are sought after. One of her most successful wheezes is 'Be A Bag', which raised cash for cancer charities by persuading punters and celebs to splash their faces across her satin bags.



▲ BETH EGAN

30, think tank director

Beth Egan, the woman who epitomised Cool Britannia, broke into the male-dominated world of special advisers to become deputy director of the left-wing Social Market Foundation. Next stop the cabinet? Maybe. What women need is confidence, she says. 'Men go for a job if they have 20 per cent of the skills required, but women only apply if they have 80 per cent.'



▲ ALISON BROOKS

39, architect

'Good design is not enough,' says Alison Brooks, who believes architecture must be accessible to everyone, a philosophy that's helped her scoop numerous awards since setting up her company six years ago. Her passion is for eco-friendly projects, such as an undulating range of miniature hills, landscaped in London's Hammersmith, designed to deflect sound from the thundering Great West Road. 'Every project I attempt is like giving birth – slow and painful, but you're so proud of the result.'



▲ SUZI LEATHER

45, consumer champion

If there's one good thing to have come out of recent food scares, it's the independent Food Standards Agency. The driving force behind it is consumer champion Suzi Leather, whose impressive record as a consultant on food and health made her the natural choice as Deputy Chairman. A government and EU adviser, she's been on every food-related enquiry and pressure group going, illustrating her motto: 'You make your life. It doesn't just happen.'



FINALIST

BELLA HUBBLE

35, recruitment specialist

Working up from tea girl to MD of online recruitment agency www.monster.co.uk, Bella boosted the content by 650 per cent while there.

Memorable achievement? 'Juggling family life with a staff of more than 100.'

Smart advice? 'Women have the ability to multitask and that's in our favour.'

Mantra? 'Get the balance right.'



THE PRIZES

eve's Smart Woman of the Year wins a £500 luxury hamper of Clarins beauty products. The five finalists receive a selection of Clarins goodies, and 14 runners-up each get a bottle of Clarins' classic Eau Dynamisante.