

• • • Mary Kay Ash • • •

Mary Kay Ash is recognized today as America's greatest woman entrepreneur. Her story is unique. Her ideas were bold and her actions were revolutionary. They opened new doors of opportunity for women and left a permanent mark on American culture.

The story of this one-of-a-kind visionary reflects the great American dream, shaped by the "you can do it" spirit she learned as a child in Hot Wells, Texas.



Because her mother had to work 14-hour days to support Mary Kay and her ailing father, little Mary Kay had to take on responsibilities well beyond her years, which fostered an incredible work ethic from a young age. When faced with new and daunting tasks in caring for her father, she would call her mother for guidance. Along with advice, her mother would encourage her by saying, "You can do it, Mary Kay. You can do it." As an adult, Mary Kay would pass this **can-do spirit** on through a remarkable company that would inspire millions of women for generations to come.

That company story didn't begin until Mary Kay Ash faced a situation all too familiar to women in the early 1960s. After 25 years in the direct-selling business, Mary Kay Ash resigned a position as a national training director when yet another man she had trained was promoted above her, at twice her salary. And, instead, she started writing a book aimed at helping women survive in a male-

dominated business world.

Sitting at her kitchen table, Mary Kay wrote out two lists. One list contained the good things she had seen in companies. The other featured things she thought could be improved upon. When she reviewed the lists, she realized she had created a marketing plan for a **dream company**.

So, in 1963, she launched her dream company with just \$5,000 in savings and the help of her 20-year-old son, Richard, creating Beauty by Mary Kay. It was a first – a company dedicated to making life more beautiful for women. It was founded on the Golden Rule, praising people to success and the principle of placing **faith first, family second and career third**. It was a company, as Mary Kay Ash would say, "with heart."



The original Mary Kay storefront

With steadfast commitment to these principles and her tremendous **determination, dedication and hard work**, Mary Kay nurtured her dream from a small direct sales company that sold only five products to one of the largest direct sellers of skin care and color cosmetics in the United States that now offers over 200 premium products. *Fortune* magazine recognized the company as one of *The 100 Best Companies to Work for in America* and also named Mary Kay Inc as one of the 10 best companies for women.



Mary Kay Corporate Headquarters

Today, Mary Kay's initial goal of providing women an unlimited opportunity for personal and financial success continues to drive the company to even greater heights. The vision, courage and unwavering spirit of Mary Kay Ash continues to help women achieve their potential and bring their dreams to life. With more than 3.5 million Independent Beauty Consultants in more than 35 countries worldwide, the company continues to be one of the greatest success stories in business. And through it, the legacy of Mary Kay Ash continues to inspire, enrich and empower women around the globe to believe that they can do great things.