

Sara Blakely

from strength to strength	dismal	pulled out all the stops	dogged
no stone unturned	come unstuck	get her foot in the door	dabbled

It's not every day that you hear about someone who was working as a door-to-door salesperson at the age of 26 and then went on to become one of the world's youngest self-made female billionaires, but this is exactly what happened to American entrepreneur Sara Blakely.

Sara was born in 1971 in Clearwater, Florida. After graduating from her local public high school, she considered following in her father's footsteps and becoming a lawyer. However, she received 1) _____ exam results and had to give up the idea. Most people would have 2) _____ at that point, but not Sara. At first, she **landed a job with** Disney World, then, 3) _____ **as** a stand-up comedian for a while, and eventually had her employment **with a steady pay check** selling fax machines for the next seven years. But it wasn't until she **had her "Eureka" moment**, that she **found her life's work**.

One day Sara was getting ready for a party and realized she didn't have any underwear that would **give her a smooth silhouette** under her white pants. So, **as a temporary fix**, she cut the feet off a pair of her panty hose. She immediately **saw a new product opportunity** in it and decided to create a line of shapewear.

Sara would spend the next two years trying to 4) _____ of the industry. She knew she was onto something big, so she 5) _____ to get her product out there. At first, the owners of fabric factories **weren't keen on picking up** her product for production. But, regardless of the **naysayers**, Sara kept moving forward on her great idea. After tons of hustle, late-nights, and 6) _____ **persistence**, she eventually found a fabric factory that would work with her. In 2000, Blakely finally persuaded a North Carolina-based mill to produce her product. Her company, Spanx, was born and soon became a huge success.

Since then, Spanx has gone 7) _____. By 2012, Blakely had become the youngest self-made female billionaire in history. Despite her incredible wealth, Blakely remains remarkably grounded. She still lives in the same apartment she bought when she first **set up her business** and saves all her old clothes **for a rainy day**. She's a true inspiration to anyone who wants to achieve their dreams and a shining example of what can happen if you leave 8) _____.

