



A Bazaar Life: The Autobiography of David Alliance

By David Alliance



A Bazaar Life: The Autobiography of David Alliance By David Alliance

At the age of thirteen, David Alliance was taken out of school by his father and apprenticed into the Grand Bazaar in Tehran, where he learned the business skills that were to prove invaluable in one of the most successful business careers of modern times. In 1950, with just ?14 in his pocket, he arrived in Manchester in search of textile bargains, going hungry and sometimes forced to sleep on the street. Six years later, however, when he was still only twenty-four, he bought a loss-making textile mill, turned it around in six months and went on to build the biggest textile company in the Western world. At one stage his businesses, including his mail-order company, N Brown Group, employed more than 80,000 people. He did it through a mixture of incredibly hard work, creativity and nerve, and some of his takeovers, often of companies many times larger than his own, were breathtaking in their ingenuity. No obstacle was unscalable - his guiding principle all his life was that everything is achievable 'if you put your heart and soul into it'. Humble, charming and delightfully honest, Alliance's extraordinary rags-to-riches tale is not only that of a remarkable journey, but goes far beyond the world of business. Among many stories which have until now remained secret, Alliance tells of how he used the skills he learned in the bazaar to negotiate with the dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam to allow the Ethiopian Jews to be airlifted to Israel, his friendship with the Shah of Iran and the first-hand insight into the infamous Guinness affair. In *A Bazaar Life*, written with Ivan Fallon, he sets out the lessons he has learned in a long career, and the principles that have guided him. Young - and older - entrepreneurs can learn a lot from his story.

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Editorial Review

Review

"I was told by an eminent Mancunian fifty years ago to 'keep an eye on this young man, as he'll go far'. How true a prophecy that was. David Alliance's life as an immigrant in Britain is quite remarkable." Anna Ford "A thirteen-year-old Jewish boy starts working in an Iranian bazaar and goes on to create the biggest textile empire in Western Europe - a compelling story with fascinating insights." David Owen "It's a remarkable story of determination and derring-do, filled with gripping insights and anecdotes, and is an inspiration to all who come to these shores seeking opportunity, fortune and a place they can call home." The Telegraph

About the Author

David Alliance: Lord Alliance of Manchester CBE has been one of Britain's foremost industrialists for more than fifty years. He was the founder and chairman of the online retailer N Brown Group and also of Coats Viyella, Europe's foremost textile company. He was made a peer in 2004.

Ivan Fallon: Ivan Fallon was City Editor of the Sunday Telegraph and Deputy Editor and Business Editor of the Sunday Times. He is the author of six books, his first book, *DeLorean* (co-authored with James Srodes), was a Book of the Month choice in the U.S. He was CEO of Independent News & Media UK until 2010.

Peter Mandelson: Lord Mandelson served as a Secretary for Trade and Industry under Prime Minister Tony Blair and as Secretary for State for Business under Prime Minister Gordon Brown. He was also the British EU Commissioner for Trade from 2004 to 2008.

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