

SEVEN STEPS TO EXPORT SUCCESS  
FOR BUSINESSES THAT WON'T LET  
BREXIT STOP THEIR GLOBAL GROWTH

*EXPORT.  
THRIVE.  
CHANGE THE  
WORLD*



**Jennifer Claire Robson**

# **Export. Thrive. Change the World**

**For Businesses that won't let Brexit  
stop their global growth**

**Jennifer Claire Robson**

## **Export. Thrive. Change the World**

Copyright © 2018 Jennifer Claire Robson

All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-912243-47-1

Published by

The Endless Bookcase

Available from: [www.theendlessbookcase.com](http://www.theendlessbookcase.com)

The Endless Bookcase

71 Castle Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, England UK, AL1

5DQ

e-Edition

This book is available in a variety of formats both paper and electronic.

# **Acknowledgements**

You pick up a book and flip to the acknowledgements and find once again that the author has dedicated the book to someone else not you.

Not this time

This one is for you.

I sincerely hope that it helps you on your journey to export success.

## **About the Author**

### **Jennifer Claire Robson**

I'm Jennifer Robson, author of *Export, Thrive, Change the World: For businesses that won't let Brexit stop their global growth*.

I have spent 10 years working in the export sector, spanning the UK, Europe and Asia. During that time I developed my seven steps to export success, which I will share with you in this book.

I've seen first-hand the benefits that come from the exchange of ideas and business opportunities across borders. But I've also experienced the frustration of red tape, lack of available knowledge and resulting missed opportunities.

In 2015 I decided to change that by setting up my own consultancy – Routes & Branches. I help British SMEs explore exporting opportunities by using the Seven Steps ([www.routesandbranches.com](http://www.routesandbranches.com)) that I believe are fundamental to export success and growth.

My career began as a parliamentary researcher, then policy advisor and a working group member to encourage a greater exchange of expertise between British and Dutch businesses.

Based in The Hague, I became a Trade Advisor for UK Trade & Investment, identifying and securing opportunities for British SMEs to do business in the Netherlands. A move to Asia resulted in me leading the Business Services team at the British Chamber of Commerce in Singapore. In this role, I helped more than 450 companies to develop their export strategy and business capabilities in Singapore.

I've since moved to India, another vibrant and booming business market. My knowledge of exporting is steeped in on-the-ground experience in multiple markets, all vastly different from my hometown of Leeds.

## Reviews

*"I liked the 'voice' of the book and I could appreciate the comments about the way Women in business see various challenges of exporting."*

**Helen Akiyama Japanese - English language & cultural specialist at [Akiyamaconnects.co.uk](http://Akiyamaconnects.co.uk)**

*"A practical and considered guide to understanding how to be a successful exporter as a British business owner. The book is full of really helpful questions and information. If you need advice on preparing for exporting then, Jenny is your one-stop shop for guidance and consultancy to make exporting a success for your business".*

**Ekua Cant: Founder of Drinksbot**

*"Love the book and the ideas in it"... I think this book is amazing!"*

**Barbara Hollyhead Chartered Marketer BA (Hons) MCIM  
DipM DipCAM (DigitalM)  
Agave BlueMarketing [www.agavebluemarketing.com](http://www.agavebluemarketing.com)**

## **Preface**

I want to help you.

If you have picked up this book, you are probably a small to mid-size British business owner looking to create a thriving business that makes meaningful change in the world.

Exporting might seem like the logical way to grow, but it can also feel intimidating and well outside of your comfort zone, particularly with Brexit looming. I'm here to open your eyes to the potential that awaits you and make it less daunting in the process.

This book explains the clarity you need before you decide to export, with plenty of resources to guide you through the process. If you decide exporting is for you, I'd welcome you onto my course ([www.routesandbranches.com](http://www.routesandbranches.com)) that teaches you step-by-step how to become an exporter. Thereafter I work one-on-one with clients to turn their exporting dreams into reality.

I hope you will be one of them.

Jennifer

# Contents

<b>About the Author .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Reviews .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Preface.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Section 1: A paradigm shift .....</b>	<b>4</b>
What is doughnut economics? .....	4
Brexit: Our opportunity to change the world .....	7
My Vision for a changed world post Brexit .....	9
Brexit an opportunity for change, not fear .....	11
<b>Section 2: The five challenges holding UK businesses back from exporting.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Challenge 1: Are UK Businesses too small to thrive?.....	14
How else are small businesses contributing to a thriving economy? .....	19
Challenge 2: Assumption that Service businesses export less than manufactures.....	22
Challenge 3: Businesses are dying before they mature .....	24
Challenge 4: Failure to plan.....	29
Challenge 5: Brexit.....	30
What should I be doing now? .....	39
<b>Section 3: My seven steps to export success .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Step 1: Values .....</b>	<b>42</b>
Brexit doesn't have to hold us back it could propel us forwards. .	49
<b>Step 2: Vision .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Step 3: Fear .....</b>	<b>58</b>
Accidental Exporter Syndrome.....	58



What is exporting with purpose?.....	59
The 6 major export fears and how to overcome them.....	61
<b>Step 4: Power.....</b>	<b>87</b>
What is power? .....	87
What is a Brand?.....	88
Brand UK: the impact of Brexit.....	88
Your Brand Power .....	89
Consumer Power .....	90
Government Power .....	91
<b>Step 5: Authority .....</b>	<b>93</b>
Why is it beneficial to become recognised as an expert or authority? .....	93
So how do you become an authority? .....	93
Before you export put strong foundations in place by developing expertise in your home market .....	95
<b>Step 6: Legitimacy.....</b>	<b>102</b>
Incoterms.....	103
<b>Step 7: A thriving business .....</b>	<b>108</b>
Let's recap: What would it look like to have a thriving planet? ..	109
The three pillars: Purpose, People and Profit .....	110
In light of Brexit what should I be doing now to ensure my business thrives? .....	116
<b>Conclusions.....</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>Contact Us.....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Glossary.....</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>123</b>



# Introduction

This book has a rather provocative title on purpose, I aim to challenge the 99% of businesses in the UK that are classified as SME or micro businesses to prepare their business for export and in doing so to change the world.

I intend to provide them with the tools and resources to be able to do so. Brexit has barely left the UK and international news since Theresa May invoked article 50 on the 29th March 2017. But in my opinion, Brexit is one of many issues that is preventing enough UK businesses from Exporting.

So what is the purpose of this book? My purpose is to demonstrate to UK business owners that they can use export as a mechanism to build thriving sustainable businesses and in doing so they will tackle and overcome some of the biggest challenges the world faces today. I'm publishing at the time the UK has invoked article 50 and is about to separate from the EU. A pivotal point in the UK's history. Brexit has opened up a dialogue about our values and vision and given us a great opportunity to change the course of our nation.

I'm going to split the book into three sections. The first will address the necessary paradigm shift in our thinking; the second will identify the five major challenges that are holding UK exporters back in the current economic climate. Section three is more cheery and aims to help you the British business owner embark on your journey to successful export and overcome the five challenges identified. I will guide you through my Seven steps that I believe are fundamental to export success and business growth.

After ten years in the export sector both working for the Government Department for International Trade and then as the founder of Routes and Branches limited [www.routesandbranches.com](http://www.routesandbranches.com) my export consultancy company I decided it was time to "write up" my observations into a book and in doing so record my process for helping UK companies to export successfully.

I'm making the assumption that if you have picked up my book it's because you are interested in developing a thriving international business and want to understand how to do this in an effective and sustainable way.

What I have come to realise is that the economic models used globally are serving the few not the many. Causing a crisis of resources and in many places political unrest and it is set to get worse. Collectively we have assumed that GDP is king we have built our economies and our businesses on growth rather than looking at how we can thrive. Exporting for growth is not working. Not enough of us are doing it. Each time we grow the goal posts move further away as we seek to grow further. The more and more we push on the more people we leave behind and the more destruction we cause for our environment.

Exporting doesn't need to be a mechanism for growth it can be a mechanism to promote thriving global economies, sustainability and care. Kate Raworth has developed an economic model to create thriving regenerative and distributive economies (Kate Raworth, 2018). I believe her model is possible and in reach, if we adjust our thinking, let go of our assumptions and reformulate our values. I believe that if we utilise export as a mechanism to connect ideas and command attention that we can realise the Raworth model and change the world.

The first step is to change our businesses and access export as a mechanism for development.

So let's start with the core principle that all successful businesses have three things in common:

1. Something to sell,
2. That something has to solve a problem or be desirable to people so that they want to buy it,
3. Once customers have bought it, it has to be so good that they want to recommend it to others.

If you don't have something to sell then you are not ready for export. Go back to the drawing board. Develop a product test it in your domestic market and refine it until you can be sure that it is

- a. Solving a problem.
- b. Desirable to consumers.
- c. So good that consumers want to recommend it to others.

If you have decided to sell someone else's product or service you need to ensure that that too meets the criteria above.

So assuming that you meet these three criteria, how do you ensure export success? How do you overcome the major challenges holding UK companies back?

Before I even get started on discussing why Brexit might hold exporters back let's look at some of the other major issues at play. In this book I have identified the five major challenges that I believe hold British Business back and prevent them from exporting; here they are in a nutshell:

1. We (British businesses) are so small.
2. Service accounts for 74%.
3. Businesses are dying before they mature.
4. Failure to plan.
5. Brexit.

I am going to look at each of these five elements in the context of Kate Raworth's economic paradigm that "[Tomorrows thriving future must be growth agnostic](#)". (Kate Raworth, 2017)

It is my hope and aspiration that reading this book will give you a clear understanding of whether or not your business is export ready and that using the book will help prepare you for export success.

## **Section 1: A paradigm shift**

I've written this book from the perspective that you like me believe that now is the time for a major shift in our thinking. In the wake of Brexit, we (British citizens) need to go back to our values as a nation and re-establish our place in the world. In doing so we the British public need to step up and lead the way "to be the change we wish to see in the world" (Mahatma Gandhi). We have to be brave. To step out of our comfort zones and begin to address the challenges that lie before us with creative balanced solutions that benefit not just us as an individual, company, or even country but us as a global society of interconnected human beings. That is my big vision.

It starts with shifting our economic outlook away from the capitalist demands of maximum growth towards a more balanced, regenerative, and distributive economy that enables all people/life to thrive regardless of where they are in the world. To reference Mark Manson "we need to prioritise our fu\*ks". To decide as a nation what's important to us and how we want to shape our place on the global stage. In my search for a better economic approach, I discovered an economic theory called doughnut economics developed by Kate Raworth. "The essence of the doughnut: a social foundation of well being that no one should fall below, and an ecological ceiling of planetary pressure that we should not go beyond. Between the two lies a safe and just space for all." (Raworth, 2017). Kate's theory has influenced my thinking and in this book I use it to frame my thoughts and guide some of my questions to exporters.

You will notice throughout the book that I leave unanswered questions with the hope of provoking you to think beyond your current boundaries to the possibilities for business success that exist if we (UK businesses) start to operate on a global level inclusive of all.

**What is doughnut economics?**

For over two hundred years, industry has been based on degenerative design: we (humans) take Earth's materials, make