



### Millie's current position:

Millie is in charge of the branding and design of the Ruby & Millie cosmetics range, which she created with Ruby, for the UK, Europe and the Far East.

**Millie's work:** 'My work now involves strategic development and even finance, but what I enjoy most is innovating: that is, creating something that has never been done before.'

'I love "cooking up" new products: specifying the colours, textures and ingredients. I design the formulas and then the lab develops them. For example, I might decide that a lipstick should be richer in a mineral oil pigment or that there is too much green in an eyeshadow. It is very similar to working out a recipe.'

**Her route to success:** 'I would say my career path has unravelled, rather than been planned.'

Millie did not have a traditional route into science. While she was still at school, she worked in the beauty industry in various salons. After leaving school she joined the retail cosmetics industry in Los Angeles, California, as a sales assistant. Whilst working for a large Japanese company, she wrote to the managing director analysing some of the problems. She suggested improvements to his firm's products and how the range could develop to better the needs of her clients.

'The next thing I knew, I was invited to spend three months in Japan, learning about biotechnology in some of the country's most advanced labs. I saw amazing things such as a "vegifruit" that was half a potato, and half a tomato. I was also given a thorough insight into all aspects of the cosmetics business. That was when my career really took off.'

'I appreciate the opportunities that science has given me. My approach is one of daring to experiment and take risks, even when I have no idea of the outcome. Not long afterwards Boots wanted to introduce a new range of cosmetics. None of the big companies were interested and I was approached. I nearly said no as well - I am so glad I decided not to! The result was Ruby & Millie, a company I set up with my good friend Ruby, a well-known make-up artist.'

'My advice would be if you think you have a good idea, go for it. If it succeeds, it will build your confidence. If it fails, try something else.'

**More about Millie:** Now with a young daughter, Millie has arranged her work so that she can spend more time with her. Living in Los Angeles, Millie plays a lot of tennis, and spends her weekends surfing in the summer and snowboarding in the winter.

**What next?** 'I live in the States at the moment where we are developing the Ruby & Millie brand. That is really challenging. Otherwise I have certain goals but no firm plans. You cannot see the future so you have to plunge into it. The secret is to be ready to recognise opportunities as they arise.'

