

[https://www.engcornershop.com/Authentic\\_Listening/Dick%20Smith.mp3](https://www.engcornershop.com/Authentic_Listening/Dick%20Smith.mp3)

## *Dick Smith in conversation with Richard Fidler*

### Businessman and adventurer Dick Smith

Dick Smith is one of Australia's best known businessmen, adventurer and **philanthropist**. He's **founded** companies (Dick Smith Electronics) and magazines (Australian Geographic), and his face is on the shelves of just about every supermarket in the country - it seems you can't go anywhere without **encountering** Dick Smith or one of his enterprises. And this is a man who when he was young suffered from **dyslexia**!

He's also well known as an **aviator** - he holds such records as the first **trans**-Tasman balloon crossing, the first **solo** helicopter flight around the world and the first helicopter flight to the North Pole.

He also developed some **novel** ideas for attracting **publicity** for his business. "My favourite was towing the iceberg into Sydney Harbour," he says. "I wanted the publicity for Dick Smith Electronics and someone worked out you could tow an iceberg to the Middle East to provide water for Saudi Arabia, so I came up with the idea that I was going to tow an iceberg into Sydney Harbour, cut it up into icecubes and call them 'Dicksicles' and sell them for 10 cents each.

"This was just a joke, but the media actually **fell for it**. The various journalists kept ringing me and saying, 'When is it happening?'... The ABC rang and they were **chartering** a plane to get a scoop on the iceberg.

"On the day before April Fool's Day we towed a big barge outside Sydney Heads and at night we **draped** a big sheet over it and we put fire fighting foam and shaving cream... We towed it through Sydney Head and we had 300 staff - I gave them a list of the radio stations, newspapers and TV stations and I said, 'you have to get up at 5am and start saying, what's that coming in through Sydney Heads, it looks like an iceberg!'

"In the end it was on every radio station that Dick Smith's iceberg was coming in... people drove an hour to look at the iceberg. As it came past the Opera House, we had the navy call up and offer their moorings to moor the iceberg!"



## Authentic Listening

---

Now listen to an excerpt from an ABC interview with Dick Smith and answer the following questions. Please note, it's very unlikely that you will be able to get all the details right, so ... just sit back, relax and – **ENJOY!**

1. Dick Smith admits that his school years ended with him developing a terrible complex of **inferiority**. What are some of the reasons for that (try to write down at least 2)?
2. In what year did he start his first business? What kind of business was that?
3. Dick Smith states that during his first year in business he paid himself a salary of \$40, while his only employee got \$65. And yet his accountant considered him earning more than the Prime Minister of the time. Explain why Dick Smith was surprised to learn about this.
4. He calls himself a “great asker for advice”. What does he mean by that? Give an extended explanation.
5. How much did he have to put into his first business? Where did the money come from?

6. Listen and fill in the gaps. Please note that some gaps may require two or more words.

Over the years Dick Smith Electronics grew up into a very successful business with more than \_\_\_\_\_ shops and a turnover of over \$50 million while employing \_\_\_\_\_ people. However, Dick Smith was quite happy to sell it to Woolworth for \_\_\_\_\_. He was \_\_\_\_\_ at the time and ready for a new \_\_\_\_\_. He reveals that founding Dick Smith Electronics was \_\_\_\_\_. However, while he enjoyed starting the company, he found running it really \_\_\_\_\_.

7. Dick Smith is one of the richest people in Australia. Does he socialise with other members of the ‘rich men club’?
8. Dick Smith is proud to be called a philanthropist (even though he can't pronounce this word!). He is happy to donate a lot of money. Why is he doing this?