

THE COACHING HUB

Podcast Episode 53 - How to run an inclusive coaching business

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Hello, welcome to the coaching hub podcast with me. Your host, Ruth could feed if you're a coach or you're coaching curious, this is the place for you. We're going to be talking all things, coaching personal development, business development, and a really fun way. You're going to have live coaching sessions, or you're going to have come away with tools and techniques that you can practically use and take away. If you enjoy this podcast, I would love you to subscribe. And if you really enjoy it, give me a review. Hello, and I have the wonderful Nita Pecora here

Is a face coach, and she's going to be talking about something which is super important, and it is about creating inclusivity in your coaching business. So, and Nita was in our very fast coach training group started at the beginning of 2020 and is now taking the world by storm as a first cage. So welcome, Anita. Thank you for having me. Well, first of all, let's, let's just go a little bit about fierce coach and what is a fist?

Okay. So I started my business as a fierce project manager because I, that was my background as a project manager. And that was predominantly the people that I was working with. Um, the fierce was always in there because it symbolized everything that was about women in particular, standing up for themselves and standing up for other women. It symbolized confidence and symbolize standing up for others as well through working with you for that more, to be in a fierce coach, because I found that the message that I had around the challenges around love women were facing, and some of the solutions was resonating with more than just the project managers I used to work with. So I still work with that group of people, but I also work with, with business owners and entrepreneurs as well, who are passionate about being this?

I love it. I think that we all need a bit more fierce in our lives. So we're going to talk today about creating a business that is, that creates more inclusivity. And I know this is super

important to you, so I'd love to know what it is. It drove you to have this as a focus for your coaching business.

Yeah, absolutely. So again, it was coming from my background as a, a woman in a male-dominated industry railway in construction that I, I didn't realize right at the beginning that there were going to be barriers and obstacles to me being the different one in that space until I was fab ranch, my career. So that exam, we weren't really talking about inclusivity, but now obviously there's a lot of conversations around it. So for me, it was really important. Of course, I've got a big value of fairness and social justice. So for me, that's what inclusivity is about. And as I've moved into the coaching world and the online coaching world, I continue to learn more about, about it and about how we can be inclusive in our coaching businesses. Partly because I see both things that I could do better, but I also see see a lot of practices, which are not as inclusive and often it's because people aren't thinking about it,

Hopefully that works. We're going to give people some things to think about today. So if somebody is wanting to create a more inclusive coaching practice, what would you say for them to start?

So I think a really interesting place to start is looking at your audience and your niche. So I've had some really interesting conversations over the last few months about this and the idea that absolutely we're taught to have a niche in, in our coaching business. And that's really important, but by doing so, and the idea of having an ideal client avatar, where we think about the one ideal person that we're talking to in some ways that can be quite limiting could mean that you're always talking to the same type of person, and then you might look around your business and then realize that you've only got one type of client that's maybe that's okay if that's what you're aiming for, but just that awareness that that could be a bit of a double-edged sword as well.

Mm yeah. And then it's like, you're in the kind of echo chamber, aren't you like all your clients are similar. You're having those same conversations, your creating content that speaks to one person and it doesn't have that variety to it. And that inclusivity.

Yeah, absolutely. So we could be really missing people who need our services or who we could be sickle saying, but not talking to their experience. So just a bit more mindfulness in sometimes the words that we're using or who we're talking to, if we want to, how we can still keep our niche, but be also a bit more broader to capture those other people, that experience. And I've been having some interesting conversations, even around the word woman. And I've always had a business that was talking to women in male-dominated industries. And it's something that I'm thinking about how to also broaden that out because there could be other people who feel for me, it's about the experience of feeling like you're not fitting in, in that space and feeling like you have to be somebody

else to be a leader. That's the people that I talk to, but actually that's not always the women. So even though I absolutely advocate for inclusivity for me, it's something I also need to reflect on and how I can build that into my business as well. I love that.

And that's actually something that we've, we've been looking at a lot recently that if we're, if we're saying we're inclusive business, we only have women that work for us and it's not actually really, truly inclusive. Yeah. We've been having those conversations with our internally as well as externally, because like we do need, we do need to question don't we

Absolutely, I think is really important to question. And I think that, I think that's absolutely an important topic about who your team are as well. And one of the conversations that, um, I attended a talk about it in the, in the aftermath of black lives matter, those conversations that were happening. And one of the most powerful questions that I took away from that was who's in my team, whether that's, who I'm freelancing or outsource into, but it was specifically about, are you paying black people? Have you got any black people in your team for me? I also take that broader to think about working with people of color. And at that point I realized actually I wasn't. And even though I'm the past and I've kind of, I'm an Asian woman, it was something that I became aware of because I was asked that question and it wasn't something that I had thought about before. So now I'm again, more mindful in, okay, when I'm choosing to outsource or work with somebody, I may well take that into account as well now. Yeah.

W we've had similar conversations and our team is more diverse now, but it is something, yeah. Again, like looking at, especially for us in the coach training business, what we're finding is we're getting lots of referrals from people. And obviously this is a little Keck for Anita to say, come on, Anita, we want you on board as well. We're getting referrals from people to be mentors and assessors. And the problem of a foul sometimes is that you refer people that, you know, and the people that you know, tend to be similar to you in many ways. And actually, I think I attended something as well, that was saying, look beyond referrals, because if you're only looking at referrals, you're keeping a pool really small, and you're actually for your business, it's better that you have different opinions and different experiences that people can bring because it's going to make the culture richer. And it's going to actually mean that it's more creative. So when you're only looking at people within your pond, you know, it's, it's restrictive in every way is.

Yeah, absolutely. And of course, that's an amazing thing to do to work with referrals. But like you're saying, it's, it's more than that, isn't it. If that's your only source of business, then it is going to be this small pond of people like your existing clients. Yeah. Yeah.

Okay. So how else does having an inclusive business play out? We've talked about talking to the clients, we've talked about your team. What else do you think people need to?

I think specifically as a coach, one of the practices that I see sometimes is the idea that it's all in mindset and the message that anybody can do anything, which is not a bad message in itself. But I think if you take that to the extreme, it can be quite toxic. Like we talk about toxic positivity. And I think the idea that everything is mindset could be toxic as well because it denies that experience beyond that it denies that systematic and structural barriers that that can exist. And it's not to say that people who experienced those things are victims to those. And it doesn't mean that mindset isn't important and how you navigate NSN these existing obstacles. They have very valid and important conversations, but the idea in how it's framed sometimes can be, it's all about how you think about a situation and taking that to the extreme and the idea that people in poverty are there because of, because of that mindset, which I've had in some instances. So, so I think again, we have to be mindful in our message in, but also how, when we coach that we are aware of these external things beyond mindset so that we know that it's not everything, but it's important.

Yeah. I got exasperated. Well, that's that, that's like a measured words. It wasn't, it wasn't exasperated. It was much remote exasperated. I got very angry when I saw a lot of stuff off the, um, especially after, you know, when we had the black lives matter marches and, and everything about that. When people were saying people were like, kind of victim, well, you know, if they believe they can change. And I actually had a few, a few little tiffs, especially on Twitter, which is why I'm no longer on Twitter for my mental wellbeing, because it's like, you know, how can you say? And you know, that I'm from a background where I used to, I used to work in secondary schools in the city, London, secondary schools, but I, while over a decade, how can you say that there is a level playing field. Yes. Mindset will help everybody, but you have to look at where people are from. You have to look at the context that end, you have to appreciate that. You know, I'm a white woman for me. My life has been considerably easier even than yours as an Asian. So my context is different to your context. And for me to say, I want, if you, you know, it's all mindset, Anita, it's frankly insulting, isn't it?

Yeah, absolutely.

I think it doesn't mean that mindset isn't important because mindset is important and we could all like everybody, regardless of context, Kurds with a more positive mindset could achieve.

Yeah, absolutely. I entirely agree. And yeah, it's not about denying the importance of mindset, but I think sometimes it can be painted as if that's everything and then it can become even victim blaming as we just spoke about. And I think that's when people take it to the extreme, but absolutely mindset is huge. And when I work with people in the Mt, dominated industries, beyond that, where we're still in domination society, we are talk

about ascending the obstacles. We talk about how to navigate these challenges and we do work on mindset. It's huge. And it's so important, but just acknowledging that it's not everything. Yeah. Yeah.

I think that's the thing is it's that acknowledgement that this is not the only thing. So there's lots of things that people can do. They can look at their team, they can look at their messaging, they can be mindful of context that what actually is going on structurally for people, whether that's inside institutions or outside.

Yeah. What else would you add? So the other thing that I would add is that it's just really important to recognize equals lived experiences and recognize what they are going through, which has coaches. We are amazing at Deming, but it's really important then from that to project our own experiences and be able to create safe spaces for those people to share. And so, in a way, that's the two points. One is about the projection of our own views and feelings. And I'm putting that on the other pastor because that's our Lidic spirits. But the other point is about being able to create that safe space for them and recognizing how we can do that. And in a one-to-one space and Dina, great coaching space, again, they might be slightly different things that we've got to do to create that safe space and recognize that sometimes we might not be the right person to be able to do that for that client. And if that's the case, then perhaps in those cases, we might actually say no to somebody.

And that's so important, isn't it? That the actually saying no, if we're not the right person.

Yeah. I think it's so important. And I've seen the examples of people that I know being in spaces where something's happened and then they no longer felt safe. And even though that wasn't directly about them, it was about rights or has an agenda. And those kinds of conversations by that by the coach will lead, wasn't cut down or it wasn't reacted to in a way where that person felt safe. So I think that's incredibly important for us to acknowledge our role as a leader that make those safe spaces. And if we can't, maybe that's okay as well. But then we have to acknowledge that before it gets to the point where somebody feels unsafe. Yeah. So important.

I think I'm going to give lots of people, lots and lots of food for thought, and you've given me it as well. And I think, I think this is really important. That part of being inclusive is about always acknowledging that you are like, this is not a finished article. Is it? We're not finished our schools. We've always got stuff we can learn and improve. And

Yeah, absolutely. I think we're always learning if we teach to be. And I think it's important that we, as coaches, as leaders, that we do change to carry up that name.

Anita, you've been amazing, which I knew you were B I know lots of people together. They want to find the first cage. How can people find you

Online? So you can find me on LinkedIn. I'm now on Twitter. [inaudible] and I'm on LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, I'm on most of your ad clubhouse, um, Facebook. And you can find me as a neater for, for people who are not going to look at the show. Nita is eight. N I T a and then the girl res P H a G U R a.

Yeah. I know some people don't look at the show notes. I know it even has more than one spelling, doesn't it? Yeah, exactly.

The joy, the joy. Thank you so much. This has been an absolute brilliant episode and I thoroughly enjoyed that. Thank you for listening to the coaching hub podcast with me. Ruth, say, if you enjoy this, I would love you to join my Facebook group, the coaching community for more of the faith.

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