

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



Episode 26

Published: 8 July 2016

Host: Annemarie Cross

Annemarie Cross: You're listening to Women and Leadership Podcast, episode 26.

[music]

Hi I'm your host Annemarie Cross, Branding Communication Strategist and ThePodcasting Queen. Welcome to another episode of Women in Leadership Podcast, the podcast that empowers you to reach your full potential. Have you ever been in the situation when you feel you need to justify your choices because of what other people around you are saying or worst yet, people don't agree with you or your vision. So what do they do? They begin to criticize you and your work.

My guest today is Jennifer Latham. She's a corporate trainer, leadership coach, speaker, and author and sadly this is something that she personally has experienced. However, having been through these challenges, she's become much stronger and she's passionate now about empowering women to embrace the leader within themselves to help them become stronger, more effective leaders in their career and in their life.

On today's show, Jennifer is going to share why you have to do what feels right for you. Never feel obligated to justify your choices and decisions and how to get creative. It's so important especially if you want to build a successful business because that means you need to be able to come up with creative solutions to problems and never take things personally. Not everyone is going to agree with

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



you or even understand your vision. You need to know how to ignore those people around you who are trying to negatively influence you so lots of good stuffs in today's show. Welcome to the show, Jennifer.

Jennifer Latham: Thank you so much for having me tonight, Annemarie. I appreciate it.

Annemarie Cross: My pleasure. So Jennifer you spent the first half of your career in various management roles in the retail industry and through that time you won a lot of awards in each of those companies and that's really given you the confidence to know that you're good at what you do. Then in 2011, you started your own business.

Jennifer Latham: I did, I did. So I spent probably about 20 years in the retail sector in various things at clothing industry, telecommunications that kind of stuff and did a variety of management roles and ended up leaving retail when I was...I guess I was a regional manager at that point. Yeah and then in 2011, I decided that I wanted to start my own my business and I opened up marketing communications firm to help small businesses really create marketing strategies that worked within their budget and their goals.

Annemarie Cross: So tell us when you made that decision or you're starting to think about, "Hey, I think I might like to start my own venture." Was that then a decision that you made and you took that action pretty much straight away or was there a timeframe between when you started that seed, that seed of opportunity to the point where you started your business?

Jennifer Latham: No, it was pretty quick. At that time what I was doing is I'd had actually gone back to school and I was working...just finishing up my degree in marketing

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



communications. I was thinking, I was going to have to go work for a marketing firm in order to get a job in marketing and the reason I was thinking that is because there weren't any marketing firms in the city that I lived in. All of a sudden, it hit me one day and I thought, "Wait a minute, there aren't any marketing firms here. Why don't I do my own." When I started doing the research and taking a look at what was available and what businesses needed in the area, I pretty much jumped on in and the idea came to me in April and my business was launched in September.

Annemarie Cross: That's fantastic. I love that. You saw a need there or when you needed to have an opportunity and then when there was not something there for you, you thought I'm going to create mine. I love it. I think in so many shows that we've had or conversations that I've had with women, sometimes they do have this opportunity, this idea that they're thinking about and it can sometimes take them a long time to start to get the ball rolling. So I love the fact that what you did is you saw the need, you had that opportunity and grasped it with both hands. So a great, great role model for us.

Something else that happened to you in 2011, your story in your journey, you successfully navigated through reputations mirroring campaign by someone who was on a mission to destroy you. I mean so many women that I've spoken to over the last number of years have had similar situations where people have gone out of their way to talk about them negatively and so forth and it's such a horrible situation to be in.

Jennifer Latham: It really is. It did a number on my self-esteem. That's for sure. You know, it was a little scary just to kind of even step out of the house and wonder what are people

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



thinking, what the people...what is their opinion of me, that kind of thing. And then I ended up just saying, “You know what, I cannot let this person win. It’s not happening. I’m better than that.” I just made the decision to just step out and start attending events and I ended up talking to new people realizing that they had never heard anything about me whatsoever from this person. I thought, “Okay, well, that feels better.” You know?

[0:05:03]

Annemarie Cross: Yeah. Yeah. So often the conversations that would stop us from getting out there and sharing our insights and really impacting the world with the message that we want to share comes from within us. Isn’t it? Yes, people might be saying things around us but how we deal with that, how we interact with it and obviously, how we let that affect what we do or in some instances don’t do because we end up hiding, that really is the most powerful thing, isn’t it? And what you’ve just said here and I’m sharing this again that if someone who is listening today that maybe they’re in midst of someone else, a competitor or I’ve even heard of close associates that have for some reason just got be back out of joint and are starting this horrible smear campaigns. We really need to just ignore that and just allow our brilliance to shine through because that’s what everybody else is going to really resonate and connect with, yes?

Jennifer Latham: That’s exactly it. I just had to come to the realization that, “You know what, I’m the better the person here. I’m not going to be pulling any of that drama. I’m here to do a job and if you don’t like me that’s not my problem.”

Annemarie Cross: Something else to listen and an insight that you want to share with others today is the fact that you shifted your business to better suit your purpose and

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



evaluate. Speak a bit more about that because I know many women in their own business and even in their own careers or in corporate are not living their own purpose, their mission and therefore they really feel that there's something missing. What was the time that you decided, "You know what, enough is enough. I'm going to shift and really start to live my purpose."

Jennifer Latham: I think it was probably about two years ago. What happened is I think for the longest time I had this idea in my head that once you have this career, whatever this career you've chosen. You're supposed to go to school and get your degree, go to work, work for 40 years, retire with your gold watch and be done. I think it was always in my head that you're not allowed to change your mind and I just kind of got to a point where I realized that the business that I was doing, the marketing stuff, I still enjoy it but there was just...there was more to it than that that I wanted to do.

I realized that I had a lot more to offer based on my experience from being in corporate and being in management and building really successful teams. So I knew that I had more to offer and over the last couple of years I've really evolved my business into a point where I'm really passionate about helping women really dive into their own personal brand and become that leader that's in their like and that to me just is so empowering.

Annemarie Cross: Do you find that when you're thinking about that the journey that you did go through and those of the early years in business where you were working around the marketing. I would imagine that that would have given you incredible experience and wisdom and so forth so it might have been just a natural

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



progression, growth of confidence and you're generating great results for your clients. In hindsight looking back, would you have still wanted to continue the journey that you did and then realizing, "Hey, you know what, I can bring in more of my previous expertise to really evaluate." So I guess my question is, are you glad that you went through that or as a hindsight, you recognize that early on and you could have made that decision to trust that instinct that "Hey, maybe I need to be doing this in my business to really evaluate and suit my purpose?"

Jennifer Latham: I think it's a combination of both things. I think when I look back when I first left my corporate job, I think I needed to have more confidence in myself to know that I was actually doing a really good job. I knew I was doing a good job but I didn't know whether I was good enough to actually teach it to somebody yet. But then when I looked back at the years that I started my business with, I wouldn't change it for anything because I've learned so much even just building a business and how to reach and connect with people and build relationships and things that I probably I wouldn't have learned otherwise.

Annemarie Cross: Yeah. I think I will say too out there that women, we can tend to kind of feel the emotions of regret, and doubt and all that stuff. But I think every single experience even the negative ones and the ones that we think, "I am so glad that that's over," they can be really learning opportunities and I think when we start to look at it that way, then the emotions change. We don't feel heavy with regret and if I only did this and this, really, it's strengthened you. I mean the situation and I hope that no one ever has to go through what you went through about the reputation smearing campaign is absolutely horrible. But I would imagine that the strength that you have in yourself and your self-value is so much stronger because you needed to develop that to be able to hold your head up to the point

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



that you could go to those networking events, have conversations with people that you might have already known or maybe new people. I'd imagine that you got such a deep level of strength that you now have to tap into, yes?

Jennifer Latham: I did. I learned a lot about myself. I really learned that I have that strength, and I have those capabilities that maybe I would never have learned before. Even though it was awful to go through that, I truly believe everything happens for a reason and there's always a lesson in everything.

[0:10:07]

Annemarie Cross: Uh-hum. Uh-hum. What would you say then Jennifer to someone who is struggling with something similar? What would be an insight that you would really love to share with her to stay strong, keep focused and to move forward. What would be that insight?

Jennifer Latham: I think the one thing that I tell people a lot is really to tune in to who you are as a person and it doesn't matter what anybody else thinks because realistically, you're not going to please everybody and that's okay. It's not your job to please everybody. When you stay true to who you are and you live your life with integrity it doesn't matter that not everybody likes you.

Annemarie Cross: Let's talk about getting creative. I know in business you can think that things are flooding along nicely and then all of sudden another challenge or another problem. It's just the fact of business. It's just one of those things and I know that you say building a successful business means that we need to be able to come up with creative solutions to problems. Let's dive in a little bit deeper to this.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



Jennifer Latham: Yeah, I think and I guess this comes from me being in corporate where I was leading teams all the time. There are a lot of times that my main store that I was responsible for, we lived in the middle of nowhere. At least it feels like it anyway. So our market is very different from other markets in the country and in order to do what I needed to make our store number one, I needed to get creative in our store with no budget. Because head office wasn't giving me a budget to market my just one little store so I had to get creative. I mean it worked. My store was number one in the district and number four in the entire company and I've really pulled a lot of that into my own business and really started to see, "Okay, you know what? What can I do that's a little outside of the box that isn't being done normally but I know in my gut it's going to work."

Annemarie Cross: Did you use any specific tools or brainstorming methods? Because I know a lot of people struggle with this, if those of us are a little bit more creative this can seem like just the natural step to take. But I do know that there are some people that really struggle even to get into this creative zone. So let's just share some of the tools or strategies or even mindsets that you used to know when your door open and tap into that creativity?

Jennifer Latham: Yeah I get that. I mean a lot of people are more strategic rather than creative and I think having a good balance of the two...

Annemarie Cross: Yes I agree.

Jennifer Latham: ...is actually going to be a good thing for your business. But for myself I do a lot of writing. So for me if I'm just...and it's not even just like I'm...it's just brainstorming. I'm just writing free writing and that's where a lot of ideas will

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



come out of. But the other thing that I've noticed is that when an idea comes to me, I have to act on it right away, otherwise it's gone.

Annemarie Cross: When you say you need to react with it or act on it straight away, would that mean sometimes writing it down just in case you're doing an activity or a project that just cannot allow you to continue playing with that idea and fleshing that out a little bit. So would you write it down and then put it that side so that you pick that up later?

Jennifer Latham: I do and then I try to get back to it as soon as I can because I know that the inspiration may not last forever.

Annemarie Cross: Yes. So let me ask you then because I would imagine that being creative, and this is what I find, you have to create the space to be able to be creative. Like if you jam it in between and I got five minutes between the next call, I mean you might just get your desk organized and then there's the five minutes. So do you stretch your time within your schedule that enable you to have these creativity zones?

Jennifer Latham: I do. Every morning and every night, I actually sit and journal. I write. I just write whatever comes to me and I also do a meditation just short, usually about 20 minutes and it's amazing what kind of things will come up just in that 20 minutes phase.

Annemarie Cross: I absolutely agree with that because so often, as we are busy in our schedules and look, this is a whole lot of topic because some of those things that we're busy with are just things that we should be outsourcing or not really focusing our time on. Ladies, this is another insight for you because some of you this message needs to be mentioned.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



However, just like our space, our time where we're not creating an environment or giving ourselves time to allow the thoughts to flow. That can also be clutter and I know that if I'm not in the right space, and don't do some deep breathing adjust this kind of center yourself, it can really be difficult to come up with ideas. But when you get in that zone isn't it incredible Jennifer, the things that come to you, ideas that you can then continue to flesh out pen and paper for some people that might be coloring in whatever it might be, you really can come up with some incredible ideas that really would help overcome that challenge or problem.

Jennifer Latham: You really can and I think even when you take that time just to be still and be quiet, you're going to hear your own intuition and your own gut instinct so much easier. And the things that come up were just incredible and like you said with the busy thing, there's a big difference between being busy and productive.

[0:15:12]

Annemarie Cross: Yeah you know I love pen and paper as well and just something that I was sharing today with...well, actually today and just this week with the few of my colleagues. I've been given a Microsoft Surface Pro and they've got a fantastic electronic notebook that you can write on OneNote.

Jennifer Latham: Oh, nice.

Annemarie Cross: So what I can do now is just have all of my written and colors, you can put all those things on there and file them away for later because I don't know about you. I've had so many ideas in notebooks and I can't find the notebooks or I've thrown them away but these ideas you can go back to. Do you find that too ideas that you might have had little while ago and then you can pick up on those and

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



you can really continue to leverage and brainstorm out that one little seed of idea that you've had?

Jennifer Latham: I love that because I've got notebooks piled everywhere full of ideas. So I love that. That's perfect.

Annemarie Cross: Yes absolutely. Let's then talk about some of the technologies that you use in your business. Here we are today. I'm in Australia. You're over in Canada and we're speaking to one another. I mean great technologies there. What technologies have you found in your business the ones that you really do leverage to help continue to streamline and grow your business?

Jennifer Latham: Yeah, link is that being able to connect with you on the other side of the world. This is great. I love using Skype and I'd love using Zoom. Something like that is fantastic because you can sit and have a face-to-face conversation with somebody on the other end of the world and still really be able to connect in a way that you don't do just over the phone or through email or whatever. You know, the face-to-face connection has been really good through Zoom or Skype.

Annemarie Cross: Yeah just share for people what Zoom is?

Jennifer Latham: Yeah, Zoom is great. It's similar to Skype but I find that it's actually... it's great. You can have a whole team meeting on there if you wanted to and it's all...it's free to a point. I mean if you wanted more people on it you then pay for but it's not expensive and it's great because I've been part of mastermind groups on there. I've had client calls on there and being face to face, the connection is fantastic.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



Annemarie Cross: Yeah, I love that too and, of course, Skype and social media. Are there any social media tools that are your favorite?

Jennifer Latham: Most, I used Twitter a lot. I connect with a lot of people on Twitter and then of course LinkedIn is really good too. LinkedIn is really good opportunity for me to be able to publish my articles in a space that I want the right people to be reading it.

Annemarie Cross: That's the key, isn't it? So often we hear people like marketing professionally saying, "You need to be on this platform and that platform and that platform." But if our ideal client, and our ideal audience is not there then, I mean often you can then better spend time on a platform where you know you're ideal client is and it's going to benefit from that information for sure. So tell me what kind of goals, or dreams, visions do you have for your business moving forward?

Jennifer Latham: I have some big things coming up. I'm in the process of writing a book so I'm really excited about that. This book is actually going to be the first in the series of books that I'm doing on women in leadership. This book is actually going to be exploring why women leave their corporate jobs to start their own businesses. What is missing in corporate to have women strive to reach higher levels in a corporation?

So what I'm doing is I'm interviewing really high-leveled Canadian women, CEOs and senior executives as well as high-level entrepreneurs. And then I'm going to be doing a section talking about my own stuff that I teach with personal branding and leadership and really exploring the opportunity of women being able to become CEOs and senior executives and really closing that gap that's missing in the corporate world right now.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



Annemarie Cross: You know, everything that you've just said I think is so relevant within women in business too because whatever is going on mindset in the corporate space where they're perhaps not getting paid of what they're worth can sometimes then follow us to our own business too when we need to put proposals forward or charge what we're worth when we're working with clients as well. So I'm sure a lot of the content that you'll be creating is certainly relevant as well. Is there any last piece of advice that you'd like to leave with anyone....with everyone today?

Jennifer Latham: My motto is that you only got one shot at life so you better do it the way you want. That's something that I'd really want people to take to heart whether or not you decide to start your own business or if you want to strive to reach a higher level in your corporate position or you're quite happy with the position that you're at. It's really up to you. It's your decision. It's nobody else's life to live.

Annemarie Cross: I love that. That's so important and you know what, with everything that we said today if you do make a choice and it doesn't work out the way that you would hope, do it again. Change, use creativity and find a way. If that didn't work, let's find a way to do that. So Jennifer how can people find more about you?

Jennifer Latham: You can actually get on to my website www.jenmlatham.com or they can connect with me on Twitter as well @jenmlatham. That if you connect me on Twitter I'll usually respond pretty quickly anyways so that's probably the best place to reach me.

Annemarie Cross: Fantastic and of course we'll put all of those details on the show notes as well and to get to today's notes annemarietcross.com/podcast26.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



Over the next 12 weeks, we're going to feature new segment at Tech Tip to help us to help us leverage technology in our business. I've recently been invited to become to a Microsoft ambassador and as I mentioned earlier on to today's show, they've given me a Microsoft Surface Pro to use in my business. There are so many function and features in the surface that I have absolutely idea about and unless someone tells me about them, I'll probably never find out. You know that saying, "You don't know what you don't know."

So what I'm doing is I'm inviting my fellow Microsoft ambassadors to come on the show, share a tip with me whether it being app that they're using or a piece of technology that is really going to help me be more productive in my business. I want to share that with you so that you can leverage that in your business as well.

By the way if you are using a Microsoft Surface Pro already and you got a favorite app or a way that you're using it to streamline and run your business, reach out, let me know. I'd love to hear from you just pop an email through to podcast@annemariemcross.com, podcast@annemariemcross.com. Let's listen to the today's tech tip.

[Music]

So today joining me is Megan lemma from Tech Coach HQ. What piece of technology are you sharing with us today?

Megan lemma: I'm sharing with you a tool called, Snip. Now, this is a great tool and it's available to download from mix.office.com/snip and we'll share the link in the podcast. This is a great tool because this Microsoft has a great snipping tool for taking screen shots and things like that. But Snip is a tool that sits and it just so it hangs down

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



when you need like for taking screen shots. So you can click and drag to capture any window or area of your screen and then the basic thing for me is being able to annotate. So you can draw all over it and even comment with voice. It's so perfect for any small, medium business owner because you might need to mark up a way of a site or a document or an image but you need to add those voice comments as well as drawing on them.

So for me I use it two ways, I prepare a lot of my presentations with screen shots whether it's images, whether it's actual software that I need to explain such that if I'm taking about OneNote then I need to be able to draw it and explain how to use it. And then from there you can paste it. You can send it as a website link or you can alternatively save it as mp4 and then export it. So for me it's been a really handy tool just being able to do screen shot, mark it up, and export or save.

Annemarie Cross: That is a free or a paid source?

Megan lemma: It is a free site and you just have to go to mix.office.com/snip.

Annemarie Cross: So once you do the screen shot, you do have to save it if you want to go back to it later as well?

Megan lemma: You do have to save it and if you do want to go back to it. What options that you get with the snip tool is being able to actually...you have a pin palette that you can sort of draw and an eraser and as I said, obviously, the audio. But for me often when I'm doing screen shots at a time I just need to be able to capture whatsoever on the screen

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



Annemarie Cross: Yeah that's great, isn't it. You might see a great source so you want to send something to your team or even for yourself.

Megan lemma: It meant a really big difference to my productivity using my service because I can be out on the go and I can also use it with brainstorming with OneNote. Sometimes, I might have taken other notes around that brainstorm but I just want to extrapolate that brainstorm and I might want to drag into a presentation. I did this earlier that week with the training session. I had my surface and I was demonstrating something so I was able to snap it and I exported into a Facebook group where I was sharing with my training attendees.

Annemarie Cross: Fantastic, great, great tool and yes, we will certainly put a link to where you can get that tool on the show notes. And again the show notes annemariexcross.com/podcast26

[Music]

Now before we leave today's show just to remind for those of you who are stuck with creating your own signature program. One of the things that I've put together is a breakthrough round table and if you're using a piece of technology virtually, anyway, the round tables that Jennifer spoke of that today and that is Zoom. So if you're stuck with getting your signature program out of your head and out into paper and developed so that you can learn that to the world and support the people who you are here to serve. Just go to annemariexcross.com/yoursignatureprogram, annemariexcross.com/yoursignatureprogram to find that more.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PODCAST



So that brings us to the end of another show. I do hope you'll join me again next week. We have another fantastic as lined up. While you're over at iTunes, please subscribe. All you need to do is go to annemariex.com/podcastitunes. When you subscribe that means you will be notified each and everytime another fantastic guest that comes out just like Jennifer that was today. I'm sure you've taken a lot of insights away. And while you're over there please leave a rating and a comment for our show that allows us to make sure that we're bringing you the information that is supporting you and helping you reach your full potential as well as sharing our show with all of the other amazing women out there doing great work. Until next week, have a fantastic week. See you later Jennifer.

Jennifer Latham: Bye Annemarie, thanks much.

[Music]

[00:26:45] End of Audio