

Wichita Chamber Business Accelerator

Episode 127

Anita Greenwood

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Don Sherman: [00:00:00] Welcome to another exciting edition of the WCBA powered, of course, by Evergy. For thank you for listening. Don't forget to like us. Love us share us. We truly appreciate you checking us [00:01:00] out. In the house today. Powerhouse Leaders. E.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: That's what's up, Don. We have Miss Anita Greenwood in the house.

How are you?

Anita Greenwood: I'm doing good. Thank you.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: Wonderful. So glad to see you and have you on the podcast.

Anita Greenwood: Happy to be here

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: So for our listeners, if you would please tell us who you are and what you do.

Anita Greenwood: Okay. Who I am is Anita Greenwood. I am owner of Powerhouse Leaders. It's a Wichita based leader development company.

I am mother of three children and two dogs. And I am also an adopted Kansan since 2007.

I think I adopted Kansas rather than Kansas adopt me actually. So, or a bit of both.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: That is awesome. So tell us. Powerhouse Leaders. What does that mean? What is that?

Anita Greenwood: Ah, so what I do, so if we start with, what I do is I work with senior level leaders, and I develop powerhouse leaders, powerhouse teams, and powerhouse [00:02:00] strategy.



Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: Hmm. You see what she did there, Don? Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

So how did, how did this become. Have you've always coached leaders or did you just one day wake up and you know what? These people need help.

Anita Greenwood: Probably a yes to all of the above in a way, because I think that when you become a coach, you've always been one.

And then it's the decision of whether you make that your full-time gig or not. And so I guess one day I woke up deciding I wanted to travel the world and be in business. And then I did that, and I did that for many years. And then it came to a point when I'd really grown in my leadership and I started to have challenges in my leadership and started to look for resources to support me.

And, and there there weren't many to be quite honest. And so I really realized there was a gap. Hmm. And at that point in time I started to say, okay, well what if I filled [00:03:00] that gap? And so I would, I already had a passion for mentoring other people. I'd been mentoring and coaching informally in my professional career, so I'd been doing that for a long time.

And then I decided to go and get a certification and learn how to do it properly, so to speak, because you can. Think you're a coach when you're a professional coach, but sometimes you're not. What we would call, I'm an international coach, Federation certified coach, so we actually have some ethics and some rules and some principles that we actually use when we coach.

So it's a lot more than just saying, I'm a coach.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: Don. Do you hear that? Yeah. You can't just go around saying, I'm Don Sherman and I'm a coach.

Don Sherman: Okay, you clowning? Okay. That's good. That was good.

Anita Greenwood: The reality is there are a lot of people on the internet who claim that they're coaches and, and you know, Don't have any formal training and sell themselves for a lot of money and people who are certified and qualified and good at what they do can sometimes suffer from those people who sell [00:04:00] themselves at very high cost and don't actually deliver the results.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: How long has this business been in operation?

Anita Greenwood: I started my business in December of 20 15,

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: 2015. Okay. So what did you do before this business?

Anita Greenwood: I had a career in large consumer goods companies. I started my career in

sales and wanted to go into marketing, but in fact I graduated with a major in marketing and international finance. But as I was living in France at the time, they told me I couldn't do marketing because I wasn't French.

So I decided that I needed to pay my rent and survive. So I was gonna go into sales and I was gonna learn how to be French. And then I actually was really good at sales because I was the only woman and I was the only person who had a strange English, English accent. And so that was the beginning of a, a long career journey in, in large consumer goods companies.

Reckitt. Colgate. So if you use anything like Lysol or [00:05:00] Airwick or you clean your teeth with Colgate toothpaste all of that stuff, those are products that at some point I either sold or did advertising campaigns and commercial strategy for.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: That's so awesome and such a cool story which I'm so glad you shared that with everyone but it also, it always, when you tell it, I immediately begin to think of Emily in Paris.

Anita Greenwood: Mm.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: I don't know if you've seen that, but,

Anita Greenwood: Oh, I have. I love it. I was so sad every time they came to the end of those series, I'd be like, oh my gosh,

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: I need more.

Anita Greenwood: And I, I watched it with my daughter actually. She's my, my 20 year old. I don't know if I would want to watch it with anybody who's not old enough to, to see the mature sometimes content of it, but I was like, Having lived in France for 15 years and having worked in Paris, I was like, oh my gosh, this is just so real.

Yeah. And speaking French and English, it was a joy for me because I could understand everything without needing the subtitles. Mm-hmm. But, but yeah, there is a lot of [00:06:00] stereotypical stuff, but there's a heck of a lot of truth.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: I thought it was Sorry to take us on that, on that road, but as you were telling that story, I was like, I bet these are some of the lived experiences Anita has.

Anita Greenwood: Yeah. Being a foreigner in Paris is, is awesome. And so I identified with Emily on many levels. I, and learning how to speak the language I think is essential if you live there, because otherwise there are things that just pass over the top of your head and you know, you'll get taken on with a taxi driver on a trip that you never thought you were gonna do and pay three times more than a local.

So you just have to be careful.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: Well, you know, I, I can imagine living is pretty awesome, but nothing compared to living in the wonderful Wichita Kansas. So you decided to come here. You said you think that Wichita adopted you. What do you mean by that.

Anita Greenwood: Well, I adopted Kansas first and foremost when I first came here.

It was interesting cuz going back to my career, I was actually working in New New York City. I was working on Park Avenue and 49th. [00:07:00] Opposite the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. So that was where I was working for four years. And it came to the point where it was time for a new opportunity, and by that time I had three small children and we were looking at the opportunities within the organization.

It could have been in another country and it could have been here in America. And it, it turned out that I was working for Colgate Palmolive, and we have the health pet nutrition business, which is based in Topeka. And I got offered a job in Topeka and my initial response was, Oh, that's interesting.

Where is that? And then I came to visit and I actually visited Lawrence, Kansas. Mm-hmm. And fell in love with it. Thought it would be a great place to raise kids. Moved in 2007 and actually when I visited, The Flint Hills was when my love story with Kansas really began because I drove down, you know where you come off the turnpike, you [00:08:00] get, you are going through, and then suddenly the hills open up and then the sun is on the hills and the rays are going down.

You're talking to somebody who grew up in England where there's no space. Mm. And just to see that vast expanse of grassland for me, I nearly had an accident cuz I was so busy looking left and right that I forgot to look ahead. But, but that was it. I just loved the, the Kansas countryside, the space, and I just really loved the welcome I got from people here.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: That Is awesome. Well, we're so glad you decided to choose Kansas. And we're excited that you started your business here in Wichita, Don.

Don Sherman: Help us with your journey starting then to when you decide to hang up your shingle and open up Powerhouse Leaders.

Anita Greenwood: Oh my goodness. So when I came here to Kansas, I had a really, a fabulous leadership role in the organization. And that was after having had another fabulous leadership role in the head office.

In New York City. And so when I [00:09:00] was in New York, I was actually in a global role where I got exposure to everything. I was pretty much, I was on the 11th floor, which was where

the senior executives were, and I was in a global role and I got exposed to stuff that most people of my level of experience wouldn't have got exposed to.

I was then offered this job in Kansas where again, I started having exposure to strategy high level commercial strategy for the organization. And I did. I must have done a fabulous job because after about two years, they promoted me to a different job. Okay. And then I ended up getting another I got another job.

And that time it was in international, an international marketing role, and it was a fabulous role. So again, I started working on brands, developing brands, and traveling a lot. But what really happened at that point in time was I was then just getting stories and stories of, of, of leaders seeing how people were working.

But for myself, I was trying to be a mom to three very small children. I was trying [00:10:00] to travel internationally, and I was also trying to be the absolute best, you know, executive, I could be and leader to my team. And it got to the point I was like, oh my gosh, I'm, I'm just missing out on so much.

And for me, and this is what I hear with my clients today, my executive clients today, it's about the price you pay to be a senior executive.

A lot of people see the, I call that the trappings, you know, the nice car and the house and the vacation, but they don't know the price you have to pay. And so for me it started to be is the price I'm paying, the price I want to pay. And that was when I started to say, okay, perhaps there's something else out there.

So I actually got offered another job, and that was in an animal health company in in Kansas City. And I then moved from Colgate. And this was a much more entrepreneurial role because I was developing a business from scratch. So then I stu yeah, I was doing, I was expanding the brand to different retail channels, so that was fabulous.

But I then was [00:11:00] asked to travel again internationally. And so I then started to have, again, the same challenges I'd had in the previous role and it started, I started to my say to myself, okay, Anita, what is the common thread here? You know, well, it was me and it was my leadership, and it was my ability to manage that situation.

It was my ability to manage my time, and so I started to really question how could I be a better leader? Hmm. And that was when I said, and, and, and how could I manage my team? How could I get stakeholders to just say yes instantly instead of have like three months of conversations and barriers to, to success.

And so that was when I decided it was a chain of events. Actually. I started to really question my future. And then I started to literally investigate, lots of different options. And one of them was

like, did I want to be a therapist? Cuz I'd been really interested in helping people and volunteered extensively in nonprofit.

And I was like, do I want to be a therapist? And so I met somebody who's the head [00:12:00] of a nonprofit organization. Because I thought it might be nonprofit. And I started talking to her and she said to me, would you like me to tell you about what it's like to be a therapist? I was like, yes, please, please tell me.

So she starts describing what work she'd done as a therapist. You know, working with people who had mental health conditions were suicidal, you name it. And she looked at me and she said, is that what you want to do? And I was like, oh no. And I, and she said, well, what do you wanna do? And I said, well, I really wanna help people move towards the future that they aspire to, to create themselves as the best brand they can be as a leader. And I like helping people move forward. And she looked at me and she said, have you ever thought of being an executive coach? And I looked and I said, well, what's that? And then obviously the rest is history.

I started, and you know what Google's like, so I think I Googled executive coach and then suddenly these, these things kept on popping up.

And at that point in time, like I said, three young children, so [00:13:00] trying to get a really good program while I was still in Kansas was really hard because they were on the east coast, west coast, et cetera. And then suddenly, thanks to Google popped up Avila University executive coaching program and it was literally 20 minutes from my office.

So I started the, the story is that I started learning to coach by going to school at night, coaching in the evenings, coaching in the lunchtimes, doing my homework for, for the university at the weekends. And it took me about a year and a half to really complete that, that certification. And then I would say, as you asked for the story, Don.

What really was the pivotal moment was I went on a mission trip to Haiti. Which is another story in itself for another day. But I went to, on a mission trip in Haiti and I stopped being executive Anita for a whole week. And I became fully immersed into Coach Anita who was empowering the [00:14:00] kids because this was an orphanage and a lot of teenagers who were then leaving the program to go out to the big wide world.

And I found myself sitting with these teenagers, speaking to them in French because I speak French and just thinking, This is who I want to be. I wanna really help people move forward. And when I came back from Haiti, it took me about three days to resign. And, and so I resigned from my job, like literally like, you know, and I was very fortunate in that the CEO said to me no, no, you don't.

You're not resigning. I need you. And so that was the beginning of the, the transition.

Don Sherman: Okay.

Anita Greenwood: Whereby I literally started being a coach and continued being an executive and really started to develop my own business while I still had the safety of a salary, benefits and all the rest of it. So I'm so grateful for the, the No, you don't.

I'm, you know, that man saved my life in a way because I think it would've been harder than it. It really was. But that was how I [00:15:00] started. I literally left my work and then I started from scratch. I literally, one day I just like, I'm doing this, and off I went.

And that was eight years ago.

Don Sherman: I was wondering what was the pivotal point, but sound like you got the entrepreneurial bug when you went to that location where you was like an entrepreneur.

Right.

Anita Greenwood: Yeah. But I think, I've always been an entrepreneur. I was one of those kids that grew up when I was a kid, I used to, everybody else was out playing and I was out raising funds for Save the Children. I, I just had this, I've gotta go and generate money and whatever.

And then when I was in my junior year, I was part of a, what we call junior enterprise. And I wasn't one of the popular kids, so I wasn't elected to be the president or the secretary or the treasurer. But I was the one who actually did all the work. I said, okay, this is what we're gonna sell. This is how much we're gonna sell it for this is what we're gonna do.

And then they all did it. So I was the one who led the movement. So I, I'd re and I started working at the age of 14 as well as a checker in [00:16:00] a grocery store. And by the time I was 16, I was training the staff. So I kind of had that entrepreneurial spirit from itty bitty little girl. Really

Don Sherman: It. Biti. I love that. I love, love, I love your voice as well.

So, I think it's break time, right?

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: It is. It's time to hear a word from our sponsors friends. And we'll be back to hear more with and Powerhouse Leaders.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: Welcome back friends. We are here with Powerhouse Leaders. Anita, your story's just [00:17:00] phenomenal. Awesome. So you're in the business, so tell us and tell our listeners. So, who do you cater to? Who's your type of client?

Anita Greenwood: My type of client, first of all is a powerhouse, right?

I'm looking for somebody who has a certain level of success and has come to a point in their career where they.

What they're doing currently is not working anymore or is not getting them the success that they want. And it can be an executive or a team. And so what I do is at that point, I intervene and we find out, okay, where are you? Where do you wanna go? And what is the gap in between? And how can I help that person from, from a perspective of mindset and of strategy?

So I don't. I usually intervene. It's more, it's not necessarily crisis, but it's definitely pivotal moments in somebody's career or in pivotal moments of a company's future.[00:18:00]

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: That's very interesting. So I'd, I'd imagine, you know, you've lived in a number of different countries and a number of different cities. What, what would you say is your unique perspective that you have?

Is that a part of it?

Anita Greenwood: Yeah. A lot of people come to me, I think, because first of all, they'll say to me, you understand my world, because I was in the business world for over 20 years. I was with people from all over the world. I managed teams in France, in Japan.

I managed global teams of lots of different national nationalities altogether. So it enabled me to see not what differences people had, but what brought them together? So that ability to identify the common thread. So I understand people's lives in business, but I can also understand the common thread.

So, so that's what they'll say is often I can boil things down really quickly. I can just listen to somebody. I was a consultant and so my role as a consultant when I was with Accenture was literally to [00:19:00] listen to somebody and then say, okay, this is. This is the challenge. This is what you need to do.

So it's this ability to, to just understand everything really quickly and then get really pragmatic about what to do to change that situation.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: And not too many people have that skillset. So you being able to use all those different, So In your bag that you've been using throughout the years and be able to bring this to executives and their teams is really quite great.

Anita Greenwood: You, you can cut through the, excuse me, crap. Yeah, really quickly. When you've seen so much and you've heard so much. Nothing is new. It's just like, okay, so what can we learn from this and what can we do about it? And so it ends up being quite direct, but, but usually highly effective.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: And I don't see that you do a lot of marketing.

Anita Greenwood: No, I have a really great network, so I, I worked in, like I say, very large companies and I have a large network, which means people come to me. [00:20:00] So I've never really needed to go out and market myself because my clients actually speak for me and they'll say I have. People contact me all the time saying, Hey, so and so worked with you.

Don Sherman: Right?

Anita Greenwood: They recommend I work with you. So I've been incredibly blessed to have that, you know, that fortune, and I would even say in Covid that was one of my best years ever. I mean, I, I used to feel embarrassed about that. Now we've got a little bit of hindsight.

But I, I coached people constantly and I facilitated global teams from my basement at a basement office at that point in time.

But that was when everybody realized that, yeah, I can have a coach who's on the other side of the world. She talks my language, she understands me. I don't need to sit in the same room as her. And so I was, that was just really the pivotal moment I would say, of my business where it just mushroomed and blossomed.

Thank you.

Don Sherman: That's awesome.

Anita Greenwood: And I, I'm aware it's not the same for everybody, so I do consider that to be, you know, a blessing.[00:21:00]

Don Sherman: So much success. What's gonna happen in the next five years? What's on the horizon?

Anita Greenwood: I really want to continue growth. I've started working with contractors, so I now, because I've got so much work, I've started to contract with other people to coach so that they can take the principles, the powerhouse principles, because a powerhouse leader and a powerhouse team have certain principles and there's a way of coaching.

And so I want to expand that further. I already coach with other individuals, do workshops with other individuals, and I wanna take that bigger. I would love to do more events because I see the transformation happens in events like Tony Robbins events, which I love. And so my goal is to have transformation for more people and quicker and to cover, to, to, to serve more people than I do currently.

So even globally. And I'd like to have this global company based out of, well, it's already that,

but it's a global company based out of Wichita, Kansas.

Don Sherman: Excellent. And help us [00:22:00] understand. What you were going through when you said, okay, I can't handle all of this. I'm gonna have to train folks. But no matter how much you train folks, they're still not you.

Anita Greenwood: Mm-hmm.

Don Sherman: What feelings did you have about handing that off and trusting somebody who's gonna super-serve that customer like you would.

Anita Greenwood: I would say that I have, being a coach, I have an ability to very quickly understand what's behind the person, and so I invest in people who have a heart that is similar to my heart, if you see what I mean.

So the passion that's similar to my passion because I believe we can train skills. But we can't, we can't, we can't give passion. You have to be passionate about developing people, about believing in the value of people and then the skills I can help them with. So I think it took me a while to say, okay other people can do what I do.[00:23:00]

But I believe that I am a great coach for some people, but some people will think, no, she's not my person. Mm-hmm. And if I can have more people like me in different packagings, I'm a marketing person. Right. So I believe that in line extensions, when I was at Colgate, we had Colgate Basic toothpaste, Colgate with whitening Colgate with this.

Right?

Don Sherman: Right.

Anita Greenwood: Coaches are the same. We can all be Colgate toothpaste. We just have our different benefits and then we're gonna appeal to different people.

Don Sherman: Excellent. Well, if you ever come across Ebony to coach, you would need more than one person. You'd need a team like a football team, cuz she has so much going on up in there that it's, it's, it's tough to, to

Anita Greenwood: She would be my ideal client then because all of my clients have got so much going on.

Don Sherman: Oh, okay. Well, Uhhuh double charge her. Do you like to have fun?

Anita Greenwood: I do.

Don Sherman: Okay. You dealt with Ebony long enough. So we're gonna do word association. I'll give you one word. You give me one word back. It's not wrong cuz it's your word.

Are [00:24:00] you ready?

Anita Greenwood: OK I am.

Don Sherman: Leader.

Anita Greenwood: Everyone.

Don Sherman: Success.

Anita Greenwood: Subjective.

Don Sherman: College.

Anita Greenwood: Optional.

Don Sherman: Failure.

Anita Greenwood: You haven't finished if you've failed.

Don Sherman: Entrepreneur.

Anita Greenwood: Exciting.

Don Sherman: Nice. Wichita.

Anita Greenwood: Home.

Don Sherman: Vacation.

Anita Greenwood: Essential.

Don Sherman: Hero.

Anita Greenwood: Single moms.

Don Sherman: Nice. Chamber.

Anita Greenwood: Opportunity.

Don Sherman: Family.

Anita Greenwood: Source.

Don Sherman: Fun.

Anita Greenwood: Essential.

Don Sherman: Last one, and you gotta tell the truth. you ready?

Beverage.

Anita Greenwood: Oh, two things. White wine.

Don Sherman: Okay.

Anita Greenwood: And tea.

Don Sherman: White wine and tea.

Okay. At least you told the truth.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: Course tea has to be in there.

Anita Greenwood: Yeah. Tea has gotta be, yeah.

Between, between getting up and five o'clock or six o'clock, it's tea. And then I would transition to wine.

Don Sherman: To wine. Yes. [00:25:00] White wine.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: At least you don't start off with the white wine. Yeah.

Anita Greenwood: Some days. Some days. Ebony.

Don Sherman: Ebony starts out with crown, but that's okay. Gosh, that's in the morning. But that's cool. Hey,

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: wow.

Don Sherman: To each their own. Thank you Anita for

Anita Greenwood: Thank you so much. It would

Don Sherman: nice to meet you.

Anita Greenwood: And you. It's a pleasure.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: It's been a lovely conversation. Thank you for sharing all your wisdom and your stories with us.

Don Sherman: And your voice.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: Of course.

Don Sherman: Of course. You're not from here.

Ebony Clemons-Ajibolade: Well, friends, we've hit the end of today's segment. If you would, please make certain that you share this with your friends and your circle of influence, and let us know who you wanna hear from next Till next time.

Don Sherman: Peace. [00:26:00]