

S2: E194: Why Specificity is a Magnet as a Coach

Tiffany:

Welcome back to the Make Your Message a Movement podcast. I am so excited to introduce to, to my amazing friend Amanda Walker. Amanda is a master coach in life and business. She is the creator of the Best Damn Coach podcast and program. She's been featured in Forbes, Today Online, and Catalyst Athletics, and her signature approach involves helping women create sustainable habits and develop true love for themselves. Her featured BDC method helps coaches increase coaching mastery and build the skill of growing a thriving business. So Amanda, welcome to the show. I'm so excited to have you here today.

Amanda:

Yeah, I'm so excited to be with you, so thanks for having me.

Tiffany:

Of course. So a little bit of context, um, we go back quite a few years. We met in a mastermind, and we were kind of newbies in business then, um, not super new, but new enough.

Amanda:

Yeah, for sure.

Tiffany:

Just, yeah, just hit it off right away and have been friends ever since. Um, but life happens and we get busy, and so it's been a little while since we've connected and since you've been on the podcast, and I'm really excited to dive back in specifically because Um, you know, I do have men listening also, but you know, I, I work with a lot of women and, um, you are, you know, the best damn coach. Um, you've also been through my branding process, which is super fun, but I really thought it would be beautiful to bring you on to talk about like what we're seeing today online with coaching in general, but also some of the things that you specifically talk about. So let's start with that. Kind of like, let's move here a little bit of your background, because I know that, but the people listening don't. Then we can move into just a little bit, maybe your view on how coaching has shifted, maybe in the past even like year, 3 years, because a lot has changed. And then I want to talk about some of your specialties and frameworks. Yeah.

Amanda:

Um, yeah, so much like I think your listeners, and probably what we're going to dive into today, is I didn't come out of the womb a coach. In fact, I didn't even graduate college, um, necessarily stepping into entrepreneurship and coaching. I did start coaching athletics when I was 15, so

I've been helping people facilitate results since I was 15-year-old— 15 years old, which has almost been 30 years. Um, but I actually formally went to undergrad and grad, uh, as a science major and then went to grad school to become a teacher with a coaching emphasis. And so I taught high school for 10 years, loved it, taught and also coached athletics there, uh, have a strong fitness background in group fitness, um, CrossFit coaching. So pretty much my whole life has been about impacting people and pouring into people. And then, uh, as you said on my show, then your dream kind of changed when you have kids. And so I found myself loving that but also realizing that my kids were way more important. So I left teaching, I took a year sabbatical like just kind of praying, hoping that something would pan out.

Amanda:

And that's when I stumbled into entrepreneurship, starting in the health and nutrition space. I kind of stumbled into running my own nutrition and health coaching practice, which was wildly successful and helped me start to see that it really wasn't the thing I was coaching. Just like when I was a teacher, I used to say I could teach language arts, I could teach PE, I could teach— I happened to teach science. It was more about helping my students. There was an objective I wanted to get them to, to understand and learn. And getting from point A to point B together, that's the art, right? That's the fun part for me about facilitating results. And so through my practice growing, I just had people organically like, hey Amanda, tell me how to do this coaching thing. Like, you're such a great coach, help me. How are you, how are you making money? How are you getting clients? And that's when I realized my passion was actually helping other female coaches, consultants, practitioners, however you self-identify, get their passion and expertise into the world so that they actually have paying clients and they can experience the freedoms that, you know, I did.

Amanda:

I remember very clearly the first month that I made the same amount in one month as I made as a teacher, you know, for an entire year. I was just kind of mind-blown that that was even possible, and I'm sure you've been there as well. And so for me, it's Like, I'm not— I always say I'm not a unicorn, uh, I'm not a gatekeeper. I just want to help others experience that level of freedom and joy and reaching their potential and sense of pride, and doing it by using your skill set to help another human being, you know, get from point A to point B.

Tiffany:

So good. Yeah, and we were connecting at the beginning of the call and saying, you know, how our, our, you know, family lives are going good and how our businesses are thriving and, and just I was reflecting on how much gratitude I have for that because, you know, I think so many people start in a business and they have this dream and then it doesn't necessarily— it's not as

easy as it looks, but there's also formulas and there, there are like steps to results. And so I love that you've just really honed in on that and, um, just put all of your efforts into helping women specifically. Um, because when I believe, when we have more women doing the work, and as we coach each other and as we make the changes, like, that's how the world is going to change, right? Like, we need women to step up and make the changes. That's kind of on a different path, but I'm so passionate about it.

Amanda:

Yes.

Tiffany:

Um, so yeah, so you talk specifically, and you mentioned, you kind of alluded to it, you talk about, um, this thing called lived versus academic experience and how that shows up and how oftentimes women don't give themselves the credit that they deserve. So I think that's going to be so impactful for the audience listening today. And I'm even excited to hear more about it because I think it's, it's actually really common that we do this. So I will let you take it from here.

Amanda:

Yeah, I mean, I went to grad school, but I went to a private college for grad school, which was not cheap. And I really had the vision, maybe like you, that I was going to teach for 25 or 35, 30 years and sail off into the sunset of retirement. I really never had imagined anything other than that. And so once I made the decision along with my husband to leave that career, I floundered and I was I, I'm very honest to talk about, I'm not meant to be a stay-at-home mom. I love being a mother. It's top priority and a wife. Those are the most important things in my life, but I'm also not a woman that can exclusively be at home. I knew that my soul needs to be on fire through doing work in this world. And so I was quick to realize that. And as I stumbled into entrepreneurship, I had a lot of guilt or even shame around, I just spent all this money on undergrad and graduate school and I'm not using it. Quote unquote formally, right? Right. And we fast forward because everybody here that's a service provider, most of us didn't do this thing always.

Amanda:

Even in your context, while you are well trained in your background, you're not delivering in the, in the format and the style and the container that you were, you know, coming outta college and beyond.

Tiffany:

Absolutely.

Amanda:

And so I think we're very quick to discredit. It's kind of like, I call it PC and AC. It's, it's pre-coaching and after coaching. And so it's kind of like we discredit Forget everything that came up into this moment of the skill sets, the hats we've worn, um, the experience that we've gained both professionally and personally. And all of a sudden we get a coaching certification and we think that's the only thing that matters. And quite frankly, if that's your belief, you're doing yourself a disservice and it's probably impacting the authority you can build and the, I think the authenticity that you can offer your people. By not acknowledging those things or like shoving them down, even if you're a stay-at-home mom and you are deciding to become a coach, you know, I just had a client recently in a program. She's had 7 children and she's lost the weight every time and kept it off. I was like, that in and of itself is freaking miraculous. You need to talk about that. But she was concerned because she only had an NASM certification, which if you're familiar, it's like an okay certification in the health and nutrition space.

Amanda:

So she was like, do I need to do more? And so I had to say, but like, who are you trying to reach? Are you trying to reach and coach PhDs? No, you're trying to coach the 50-year-old woman that's had lots of kids and is done, is midlife, who wants the freedom to wear a swimsuit on the beach for the first time. And so I think it's incredibly important that we acknowledge there is this lived experience that definitely informs how we show up. Um, and then we can couple that along with the certifications and the coaching reps and the books we read and the podcasts we listen to or whatever they, and, and the actual reps obviously of coaching. And those two together are what I believe, like, your sweet spot.

Tiffany:

So good. Yeah, it— I think there's so much that we do that just doesn't feel relevant. Or to your point, if it, if it just feels like, oh, that's a different lifetime, that's a different identity, like, that doesn't even matter. But it all creates who we are now in this moment. And, you know, I love talking about that authority piece also. It helps with a— like, what do I want to say— like the differentiation, right? Like nobody else— you could have the same certification, maybe the same type of coaching, but your background is so much of what makes you unique too. It's like not only the experience but the uniqueness.

Amanda:

Yeah, for sure.

Tiffany:

So with that, then you also you know, help women, um, as do I, in kind of different angles, but create their frameworks and really create kind of like what sets them apart as a coach. Um, and this is so important for like, you know, I look at everything through the lens of brand, and when we look through the lens of brand, um, that differentiation, that authority, that uniqueness is more important than ever because now everybody's using AI. It's spitting out the same, like, I can't tell you how many people I've seen with like coaching things called CreateHer, all one word. It's, I've seen it like 30 times and I'm like, you guys, that's just spitting out the same thing over and over, right?

Amanda:

Yeah.

Tiffany:

So anyways, um, we are both on the same page that we need our own intellectual property. Um, we need frameworks, we need things that make us unique. So let's dive into that a little bit. Yeah.

Amanda:

I think equally how you look through the lens of branding, I look at everything through results.

Tiffany:

Mm-hmm.

Amanda:

And I look at it, you know, when I'm, when I'm working with clients, there's kind of two, if you imagine a Venn diagram, the two things that I'm looking at is how to help my clients be better practitioners and work on this kind of art of coaching and coaching mastery, and then developing the skill of entrepreneurship. Because without clients, you're gonna hang out in this kind of hobby coach identity, and I want to shift into that profitable, you know, coach identity. And so there's this piece that's, that's really important of always getting results in business and making sure when we take action, we're, we're like doing stuff that's not just like— I call it fauxductivity— stuff that we think looks good and is working but really isn't moving the needle. But also the same with our clients is we want to make sure that each of our sessions is, is driving some sort of result as well. So we all have a process. I mean, the way you get dressed in the morning and the pathway for which you do it is going to look very different than the the way I get dressed. And so if we, if we magnify that, the way I coach and teach someone to grow a business is going to be informed from the fact that I was a teacher.

Amanda:

I had zero brand experience, zero marketing experience, zero sales experience. You and I entered in very different canvases because of your background, right? And so I might have been a little slower to the game in the beginning because I was working from a different set of lenses. But the thing I do bring to the table is for 10 years I studied teenagers and I figured out what it took to get them the fastest, the fastest results possible on tests and outcomes. And not from a memorization standpoint, from like actually understanding the material, right? So my entire world and my zone of genius is results-driven. And most of my students will say like, I can tell you were a teacher, the way you break things down and make them so simple for me to understand. I've learned it from a million other people, but nobody Nobody helps me understand, or you're drawing pictures all the time, or info, you know, like, uh, framework graphics, all these things. So I share that because exactly what we talked about at the beginning, the lived experience informs the process that you guide your clients through, and it is entirely different than anybody else.

Amanda:

If I'm a 23-year-old, um, nutrition coach who's never had a child, who's lived on their own, and doesn't have any dependence on them. Like, how I coach my clients is gonna look different than, um, a 40-year-old nutrition coach who's had 3 kids, whose hus— this was me— or 2 kids, whose husband worked out of the home, who was solo parenting a lot. Like, I get what it's like to not have time and to be in a body that I hated. Um, and so both are right. That's the cool thing. And by talking about your situation and your circumstance and what you've done before, and also the authen— authenticity of the life that you live now, that 23-year-old's gonna attract probably young 20, you know, 19 to 28-year-old people that don't have children or are similar to that stage. And I myself never attracted those clients. I attracted the, the 30s to, you know, 50 range of women who were having done having babies and wanted something different. And I think it's really important to understand there's this, this unconscious attraction that happens when we're talking about being magnetic for your clients, that it's, it's like It's not a should I talk about my story, it's like you have to talk about your story, especially in AI.

Amanda:

You have to show me the behind the scenes, you have to tell me about your journey because that is going to bring, you know, like begets like.

Tiffany:

Mm, so, so true. And I would second that for all of the, the branding reasons as well. Like it's, it's just so important and I think Oftentimes, especially now, I see so many people just playing in chat, playing Claude, asking it what it thinks they should say and completely negating their own

story. And then again, it just starts to sound like everybody else doing the same thing. So, so, so important. So I'm curious, um, without obviously, you know, sharing too much, like, what are some of the the biggest things that you help women with, like, first? Like you said, um, you know, you're looking through everything through the lens of results and, you know, helping women become the best damn coach. And in, in my opinion, since I've known you for a long time, you are, um, the best damn coach. So, so what does that look like? Um, like, where do you start with women? And, you know, what are some of those results that you're focusing on that are maybe counterintuitive. Like, I think a lot of the times when we start in the business— you and I talked about this when I was on your podcast— it's like, um, you know, there's the vanity metrics, or there's having a website just to have a website's sake, and it might not even be doing the job properly.

Tiffany:

Or like, there's, there's so much to it. Um, so where do you look at like first steps, and what are those results and metrics that you're actually like looking for?

Amanda:

Yeah, I mean, the interesting thing is we really don't start in that much of different places because if we want clients, well, if we want to coach and we want to impact people, then we have to have clients. And if we have clients, then we have to understand the psychology of the, the prospect that exists out there. I just recorded earlier on my show with a client. She can't— this is just a— I'll give an anecdotal example, which I am taking— it is taking us to a point, but when she introduced herself to me, I met her at an event and she said, I'm a nervous system coach and I help, you know, turn dysregulation into co-regulation. And I was, you know, in my head I'm like trying not to say anything, right? Um, and she shared on the podcast basically how she can look back and laugh at that now because she was so in the bottle when it came to coaching and so focused, like many of us are, so excited about the tools and the modalities, but she had zero clients. And so now, you know, she— we've gotten some clarity around that, but we often are operating, you know, from 15, you know, years ahead.

Amanda:

Not really, but like 15 steps ahead of where our client is potentially. And so the way we talk about what we do is not meeting them where they're at. They're not lying awake at night at 3 AM like thinking, I should go Google nervous system regulation coach. What her client—

Tiffany:

regulated, right?

Amanda:

Yes. I need to co-regulate right now. Her clients are searching, I just yelled at my kids and I feel like a piece of crap, right? She's a parent coach and so she helps kind of shoot that gap, um, on how to stop yelling at their kids so they can actually have real conversations. So the first place we have to start is helping coaches understand that they are in the business of being a problem solver, that businesses, businesses exist to solve a problem. I don't even love the word niching. I think it's outdated. Yeah, I used to talk about it. Yeah, I don't, I'm like, that's So old news.

Tiffany:

Yeah.

Amanda:

Um, because the first thing I want you to do is we have to figure out the problem you solve and then who you solve it for. And you can even, you can even be a little weak on the who you solve it for if your problem's pretty specific, or your problem could be a little more generic if the who is hyper-specific. Um, so I think that that's step one because the reason I share that is that's actually how you build a framework. If you build a framework and a process and a methodology that's based on finding some, helping, you know, women over 40 find their purpose, that's really vanilla. It's, it's gonna be hard to calculate results. The results are gonna be very subjective. So if we reverse engineer and say, okay, this is the problem I'm solving, I build my framework and my process through it. Then through my process, one thing that I'm really great at is helping coaches see the tangible results that their clients are getting, even if they are healers or even if they're working in a modality in the life coaching space that feels a little bit more like, mm, spacious.

Amanda:

Like, absolutely people are getting tangible results and that's where we should be marketing. Mm-hmm. So it's really helping to shift the viewpoint of my coaches to understand like, we gotta nail that problem because that is the red thread that goes through everything. What you post on LinkedIn, what you post, uh, on You know, wherever, Instagram, how you write your lead magnets, how you, you know, storytell in your email newsletters, like whatever it is. And of course how you build your offers. So if it's, if it's weak and vanilla at the front end, it's gonna be weak and vanilla at the back end.

Tiffany:

Mm-hmm. Yeah. So, so true. And I think, um, we see that so often where people, like you said, people are getting so stuck on like, how, the how they're doing things rather than the actual outcomes, um, and the, the what they're doing. So that is super valuable. And so if you're

looking at that, um, you know, in, in supporting these women and starting with the problem in mind, maybe tell us a few stories of like some of the results. Um, like I love that story. You just—I love stories and hearing the client results, and I think that's the best way a lot of times for people listening to, to like really understand the work. Um, so maybe could you give us a few like case studies or like results-oriented? Since we're talking about the results, we might as well share them.

Amanda:

Yeah, well, I want to share a, a personal story and then I'd love to talk about another client of mine that I think will land. But just to go back to just understanding this idea of attraction, I host a live event here in Arizona every April Um, for at least the last few years. And, um, it's 40 coaches in the room. And I asked, I, I wanted to walk them through this exercise to help them see, uh, this attraction piece. And so, um, I don't only help teachers, I don't only hope help, um, like former experts transition, right? But because I talk about my story and because I share in my stories my desire for health and fit, like my love for health and fitness and healthy eating, and that I have parent, that I have 2 kids and I'm a parent. I asked in the room, well, well, if you're a parent, will you stand up? And 38 of the 40 women in the room were parents, even though I don't exclusively help parents, right? And then I said, okay, if you were in a former career and you decided to become a coach, and you would say you were an expert in your former career and now you're transitioning that skillset, show, stand up.

Amanda:

It was like 35, I think, of the 40 people self-identified as that. And then I said, hey, if you were a former teacher and now you're here doing coaching, and it was actually like 10 girls in the room were all former educators and were standing up. So the reason I wanna just add that in and share that, it goes back to this notion of understanding that when we can get clear on the problem we solve, cuz this is where people's hesitation is, they're afraid they're gonna eliminate people.

Tiffany:

Yes.

Amanda:

And they're afraid that if they get too specific, that it's going to eliminate people. And the reality is, is you just bring in like the most brilliant people when you can hit on that problem that you solve. But by looping in the other facets of you, then you bring in people that have similar interests and similar vibe and kind of get you without getting you. And so it makes this Honestly, I think this whole, uh, client-coach, you know, whatever, client-guide relationship even more

rich. And so I just wanted to like echo, like, I get the fear of getting too hyper-specific in the problem, but you're always going to attract outliers and people that just love you because you are you.

Tiffany:

It's so true. And I feel like people— that what came to me when you were saying that is like, you know, there are billions of people on the planet You can't serve all those billions of people. So yeah, it's, it's so interesting when people are like, I just don't want to exclude anyone. But you know, if you don't, you're not really being inclusive to anyone either. So anyways, yes, yes, totally agree with that. Yeah.

Amanda:

So a couple client examples that I think really resonate. Um, one, um, client was— has a PhD in pelvic floor, um, PT. She is you know, an expert in, uh, diastasis recti, if you're familiar with that as a woman. Um, and so when she came into my world and started working with me, I got on her website and she was literally saying things like diastasis recti repair program and, um, pelvic floor healing. And I was like, look, Ali, I love you and you're brilliant. Like, you are so good. Like, women need this. I know this about you, but no woman that's had a baby who has this protruding ab is— I mean, I think we have a little bit more self-awareness around it right now, but they're really not going to the interwebs searching how to heal diastasis recti or how to heal my pelvic— yeah, I mean, I can barely say it. I don't even know if I'm saying it right, to be honest. It's not my wheelhouse. So I was like, Ali, what are we like? I need you to tell me. So we went to her intake forms, we combed through the data, and it's most of it was, I'm peeing my pants all the time.

Amanda:

I'm peeing my pants when I sneeze. I look in the mirror and I have this bulging ab, you know. And so I share that to say it was very clear the problem that she solved. She helps women stop peeing their pants. After they've had kids, but she couldn't see it because it was too coachy and practitioner and too PhD-ish, right? Um, and it was funny because we made that tweak and immediately, I think within the next 2 weeks, she had sent me an email. She's in our Small Buy Offer program and she, uh, had 2 Small Buy Offer clients, which for me, I, I, that's what I call like a front-end trust-building offer, like the gateway to the higher ticket package. And just tweaks in messaging, she had 4 new people sign on in one-to-one. And she had like zero sales calls for 6 months leading up to this. And so it's just an example when we get clear on the problem. And not every single one of them was postpartum by 6 weeks, right? It was like, oh, some of them had babies years ago, but this was still a pending problem that she could support.

Amanda:

And so I think that's one great example. Um, and another brilliant example, I have a client who I adore and she has been— she's a lawyer Um, and is, uh, specifically in HR. That's her like law specialty. And she worked for a large museum park that we all know very well that has two locations in California and Florida. Um, and she wanted to leave that because she could see the opportunity she had to build her own thing, but it was demanding and her kid was getting older and she didn't wanna miss the events and she was constantly locked in just like you and I. But the struggle was, I don't know how to reposition that, um, that language. Like, I, I don't know. I've just been doing this thing for so long, and just when they have HR nightmares, they reach out to me and I'm like, okay, well, we were able to see, but what kind of people are you wanting to work with? This kind of corporation or more B2C? Like, what? And it was, no, she wants to work B2C or B2B. And so what we were able to identify was that languaging, like She helps companies stop HR nightmares before they even start, right?

Amanda:

Because her company just don't— they don't know what they don't know. They're— so anyways, it's been really cool to just see when people can start to see how this expertise gets repositioned and the languaging around it to stop saying it like all professionally. We, we know you're brilliant. We don't— we actually are doing ourselves a disservice and pushing people away if we try to sound all cool and clever. Clear over clever will always win.

Tiffany:

Oh, so true. And the fluffy language that, you know, whether it's medical like you said, or like super legal or just, you know, fluffy, it just is never gonna land, um, as strongly. And it's, it's just so important. And I love having this conversation because obviously, um, we both just believe so heavily in in this work, whether it's based in the brand lens or the results lens. Like, it's, it's just so important. So based on all of that, as we wrap up today, um, where can people find more out about you? Where can they connect? All the good things.

Amanda:

Yeah, I think one of the best places and most high ROI is I have a, a limited series secret podcast called How to Get Clients. It's a 21-episode bingeable. Every episode's less than 10 minutes. Put me on 2 X. There's a workbook that goes along with that, um, and it literally walks you through some of the things we, we talked about today. And it's meant for you to walk away with clear steps to increasing the consistency of the clients you bring into your world. So you can grab that at amanda-walker.com/limited-series-freebie. And then I'm, I'm hanging out on LinkedIn and, uh, Instagram at A Walk My Way is my handle there.

Tiffany:

Perfect. Well, thank you so much for coming on the show. I know it's been super valuable for the audience, so definitely go grab that from Amanda. I mean, who doesn't want to get more clients? That's what we're here for in business. So, um, super valuable. And yeah, it's just so lovely to be together again.

Amanda:

Thank you so much for having me. I appreciate you.