Episode 119 Transcript

Sun, Dec 10, 2023 11:43PM • 25:38

**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

coaching, qualification, programme, learning, learners, session, coaching session, work, pass, feel, cohort, assignments, lessons, coach, learn, recognise, journey, clients, portfolio, organised

**SPEAKERS**

Jo Wheatley, Zoe Hawkins

**Zoe Hawkins** 00:03

The Coaching Crowd podcast is for compassionate courageous leaders, HR professionals and high achievers, people who are passionate about helping others to find alignment in their lives through coaching, and do a thinking of training and developing as a coach. Hello, and welcome to the coaching crowd podcast with me, Zoe Hawkins and my friend and co host, Jo Wheatley. Hello, everybody.

**Jo Wheatley** 00:27

Good to be here with you this week. Today's episode is all about how to pass your coaching qualification. And we're covering this because the way that we approach our courses is by sharing with our learners, right in that very first orientation call that if you want to pass you are going to pass and it's our job to support you to be able to achieve that qualification. And we also know that sometimes when people are thinking about undertaking a coaching qualification, they really want to do it. But it can be a barrier thinking about am I capable of doing it? Will I be able to pass so today, we're going to give you all of those answers, exploring it in the session.

**Zoe Hawkins** 01:06

Yeah, and I think we also acknowledge that not everybody's experience of learning and school and education has been joyful. And we hope to debunk some of that experience when you join one of our programmes. Because it's really important to us that your learning experience as an adult is one that you can enjoy that you can relax into. It's not gonna be without challenge, and that everybody will experience challenge at some point on our programmes. But we want people to know that when they are joining us, they're joining us as an adult learner, and that it's very different to perhaps what you may have experienced in school, because formal education wasn't built for everybody. So we like to think of our programmes as flexible. And we want to be able to meet the needs of our learners. And we build our programmes in such a way that we address lots of different ranges of styles of learning, preferences of learning. So we hope that provides some reassurance to people who are thinking, Oh, I would love to do a qualification. But I'd really hated school like we are not school. We're an Adult Learning Centre. And that's very different and hopefully much more joyful for you.

**Jo Wheatley** 02:20

So where should we start with some of the practicalities? Then?

**Zoe Hawkins** 02:25

Why don't we begin with the start of the journey, and acknowledging that what your expectations are, will make the journey easier or harder for you to pass your qualification. And what I mean by that is coming into any programme, and let's say our level seven, for example, that's a master's level qualification, it's helpful to come in with an expectation that it's not all going to be easy and straightforward and simple. It's, it's useful to come in and expect a level of challenge in your learning journey. So we talk on our programme about the unlearning process. Everybody comes into our qualifications with skills and experience, you may be a really good listener, or you may be able to ask great questions. But there is a real quality to a coaching conversation that is different to everyday qualifications. And that unlearning process can actually be the hardest part and can be quite uncomfortable when compared with then learning how to coach. And so if you come into a programme with an expectation that I've got this, I, I'm a great listener, ask great questions. This is going to be simple. It's a case of dotting the i's crossing the t's. And I'll have by qualification, you might surprise yourself when you're met with challenging moments on the course. So when you're thinking about how do I pass my coaching qualification, it's useful to have and set an expectation of like, I'm up for some challenge. I'm okay that I'm going to find this stretchy at times. And I'm really interested in what I'm going to learn. And I think if you come in with that expectation, you're going to have a much smoother journey as you seek to pass your qualification.

**Jo Wheatley** 04:05

And that's also about knowing and spending time thinking about what do I need in order to set myself up for this coaching qualification, this commitment that I'm making and recognising that it is a commitment, there is boundaries that you'll need to put in place? Things you're going to have to say no to things you're going to be saying yes to, as I was saying that might put you outside of your comfort zone. And as you all know, because then I have our emotions coaching practitioner courses. Well, emotions are very much at the heart of what we think about when we're designing our learning experiences when we are undertaking CPD ourselves. So actually just spending a bit of time thinking about what what is the emotional experience that I would like to have on this course and what will I need to do in order to have that experience? And you know, what are the emotions that I am aware might come up for me? So when we have orientation call As the pet the reason we have the orientation call is, before we get into the learning of the coaching content itself, it's spending time getting to know each other building that psychological safety. And it's spending time thinking about what are the requests that each of the cohort members have of each other on that programme, in order to be able to learn at your best in that kind of an environment. And also then to be able to develop the relationship with the course facilitators, so that you have that safety and the ability to be able to share with them, you know, I feel, I feel really comfortable doing this. But when I'm in this situation, I feel really nervous and then giving the facilitators the opportunity to be able to support you with that, at very early stage, because there are little adjustments that we can make on the programmes, to be able to support individual learners to be able to get the most out of the programme. So prep is really important. That's that emotional prep before you start the programme. It's also some of the practicalities around making sure that you have done the pre work. So for us, we have a learning platform. So on a level five and level seven coaching qualifications, where we are together as a cohort, there is videos to watch the video demos of Sony and I demonstrating what you're going to be practising, there's the theory, you know, the background to the content, you're focusing on that week and doing that, it's going to give you that confidence. And when you arrive in the session, you have got that the broad understanding and that overview of what you're going to be doing. We also we also have the quiz, don't worry, which is designed specifically to give you the reassurance as a learner like, what are you thinking? Have I got this? Did I really understand what this lesson was about the key learning points, the quizzes there some multiple choice 10, multiple choice questions, and it's going to help you to think yeah, okay, so I have got it, I'm ready now to go into the lesson for the practice.

**Zoe Hawkins** 06:58

Yeah, like, our courses aren't designed by accident, they are designed with you passing the qualification in mind. So as you're talking there about the learning portal, like we have designed those lessons in that learning portal to the marking criteria that is required for your coaching qualification, and then some. So not only do we meet the ILM, standards of coaching, we're also bringing in the expectations and standards of different coaching bodies. So we look at the ICF, we look at the emcc. And we look at the Association for coaching. So we look at all of them. And we bring in their standards and expectations. So working through that preparation and that content, it's not there. Because it's nice to know, it is there as part of the process. Like if you come into our programme and you trust in the process, you do the pre work, you turn up to the live lessons, you do your coaching triad practice, you do your reflective diaries, you do your assignments, you spend time in supervision, if you follow the programme, it is designed to enable you to pass like it's a very robust and well tested programme. So you do all of those things. Plus you're reading like, ultimately, that's how you pass is to trust in the programme trust in the process. And I think with that also comes your mindset. So you need to come with an open mind, you need to be open to feedback, because on the programme where you're attending the live sessions, you will be observed. And we will share with you strengths and things that are working out really well for you and what we're seeing coming through in your coaching, and also development areas. And for some people, they relish the development areas and just want to know more and more. And for others, they can find that really challenging to hear. But I thought I was doing really well. And it's like well, you are doing well. These are the areas that you can focus in on and grow from. So I think if you come with an open mind that willingness to learn, and you follow the process, and do what is asked if you pass your qualification is actually going to be very straightforward. For you. It may not be easy, that's different, but it can be straightforward.

**Jo Wheatley** 09:08

On our programmes, you get to choose the format of the sessions. So the timeline basically that you complete your coaching qualification under so within the ilmc three year kind of boundary, you may choose to do a weekly evening format with us, you might choose to do a semi intensive where you do a number of sessions each month so you complete the taught elements in a shorter period. We've got one day a week version, we've got a fully intensive version. There's lots and lots of different ones and we recommend that you go to our website IgY company.co.uk If you want to view all the choices for the year ahead. So when you choose the format you then also work out your own timeline. So once you've completed all of your taught lessons, you then move into undertaking your kitchen practice hours with clients, and you get to choose how long that's going to take you. So some clients, some of our learners like to do that within a six month period, they catch all their clients once a month during the six month period, and they complete their assignments. But other people, that's too much life is busy. They've got other commitments, and they need to take longer to do that. And the great news is that you can do that. So you can find a format that suits you. And that very much plays to this idea of how do you pass your coaching qualification is stay in your own lane. It's your life, your life is very different to anybody else on the course, you choose the format that fits you. And you know, when somebody else is saying, Oh, I've just finished reading that book, you don't need to compare yourself to that person, they've read that because they had the time to they wanted to rate relates to a development area that they have. You get to choose when you access, you know, resources, how you take information on. And that really will help you to pass your qualification because it will keep you emotionally resilient to that. And so looking beyond the qualification, I think is also important too, when we're thinking about how to pursue qualification. Because when you're feeling challenged, and maybe you're feeling a bit tired, because perhaps this qualification isn't the only thing that you're doing, you're working a full time job, you've got these other commitments, reminding yourself of your why is what's going to get you through and get you that pass, it's what's going to help you to manage your energy across this, you know, what is if you're doing the level five and level seven is, you know, it's going to take you at least a year to be able to complete it. Well, if you do a level three qualification, that's very different. You're not part of a cohort itself guided learning, you can complete that qualification within a three to six months period. or longer, it can take you longer if you choose to take longer over it. So that's that's a different experience altogether. Yeah. So

**Zoe Hawkins** 11:58

you talked about a number of things there. I think what I'm hearing is you start with the end in mind. So it can have a compelling reason why you're doing it, and focus on your timeline. So when you want to complete it by and that standard coaching, isn't it like you go into something, have a specific and clear goal around how you want to achieve it? And I think that thing that you mentioned there around looking at the end and what comes next? Yes, absolutely. And I also say balance that with your ability to be in the present moment. Because what we see on our coaching qualifications, certainly in these early days is almost like a not a frustration, but a desire to be the best coach, whilst acknowledging that you're only on like less than two. Like you can be on Lesson two, you want to be the best case or you still got like a long way to go. And that desire to want to be the best can sometimes railroad you from being able to stay in the present, and taking the learning from that present moment. So it's a really fine balance between acknowledge that you are where you are in your journey. That's what you're saying around staying in your own lane. If you're in a session with somebody else, and you think oh my gosh, like they are an incredible coach, why am I not as good as them, they could just be having a really good day, like you don't actually know what journey they're on. So it's really important that you don't compare yourself to other learners on on your journey, but you stay focused on what do I need to learn from this session? You know, what's the value that I have got? How can I apply what I'm learning to my coaching, and the way you pass your coaching qualification is the application of your learning. So you can come into a session and you can learn lots of great things. But actually, if you don't go and use it, or you don't apply it, and you don't reflect on that practice, then it's going to be harder for you to, to adapt and grow as a fantastic coach. So staying in your own lane, being focused on who you are and what you do being in the present moment. As well as just trying to enjoy the journey. Because ultimately, particularly if you're self funding, this is something you're really going to want to enjoy. And it is an enjoyable process as challenging as it is like our learners get a lot of joy from from being on these programmes, being together in a cohort of people, and also learning so much not only about yourself, but about how you can support and help others. It's a really enriching experience. So have fun, I guess is what we're saying. That's how you pass your coaching qualification as you have fun, I

**Jo Wheatley** 14:30

think. Absolutely. And you'll also is to set yourself goals. So talking about that you're not comparing yourself to others is like, are you getting better week on week, so other facilitators saying gee, well, last time I saw you, you were doing this that was an area for development. I've really I've really seen you now move into this space. You've got that now your next area for development is take a look at this area. It is great and set your own your own goals around it. So maybe there's a particular area of coaching that you identify for yourself is something that you want to work on. And let your peers know. So when you're in those practice sessions, say this is something I'm working on, I'd really love some feedback on how you experienced that in the session with me today so that you get the feedback you need. And then if they're saying, yeah, like you did loads that or you didn't do that at all, depending on which is your goal, then monitor yourself against that. And what can help with that is having a study buddy, so he was talking about being able to stay in the moment as much as being able to be motivated by what you want to do with this in the future. And so he and I trained with different coaching providers, but we went on a on a journey together around coaching Little did we know that we were going to end up creating what we have with within good company and be sat here talking to you, or now on the podcast. But we were each other's study buddies, right, from doing our masters in HR, all the way through to doing our coaching. And that's when you've got like a trusted confidant, you know, somebody that you can be very open and honest with, and that they can be very open and honest with you. So sometimes it might be a case of, you know, pulling the person back as a hair on come back here, let's just get this in our minds before we move on to that, or whether it's the personal use any other person, but I think we've got this now. That's what would be an advanced what would this look like if we did this in a more advanced way? Or what do we want? What do we want to learn about next and inspiring each other, because what we also see is that, in a larger cohort, that's not everybody's favourite place to be, some people really enjoy being in more kind of intimate smaller groups. And so that works well. When we have our small group supervision, we also put people into triads, and that can really help to, to offer that duality of of environments. But also, we lots of our groups form WhatsApp groups, or they agree a space that they will communicate together as a cohort outside of the formal lessons that the facilitators are providing for them. And that can can be great. But it can also have some drawbacks, because you know, where people are sharing resources in there, if that's what you love, because you're a bit of a theorist is great, well, I'm getting even more content. But if somebody's posting in there and saying, Oh, my goodness, I've got my first coaching session, I don't feel ready for it, I'm starting to feel really panicky, and you're, you're, you're already thinking, Oh, I've got mine coming up, you can get that kind of emotional contagion effect through those environments. And so, you know, that's something to be mindful of, is just checking in with what are my emotions, you know, if I sit with me and connect with my own, rather than what's happening in the group, so you know, there are lots of things to be mindful of, but actually more than anything, it is about getting organised. So on our level, or level three, five, and seven, there are three main assessed elements. There's an assignment, which is about coaching and mentoring in an organisational context. And we provide content in all of our lessons to, to kind of help our learners to be able to be successful with that. Then we have the coaching portfolio, which is the second piece, and that is when our learners are going out. And they're coaching clients. They're applying the learning, and they're reflecting on that. So what have I learned? Now I've done this in practice, what do I need to develop in order to continue to grow as a coach, and that portfolio is the bit that piques people's kind of anxiety because it can feel like it's a lot to do, but let's break it down into how many clients do you need to coach. So for our level five, our learners coach for 54 hours of coaching practice. And on our level seven, they coach eight clients, which 72 hours of kitchen practice. So we say some get your folder that you're going to submit to us set up. So you'll have your folder with your coaching diaries, and we provide a template, you have a pre coaching questionnaire, we give our learners the template, they'll have an example of their client notes. So that there's part of the audit trail, and they'll have the supervision reflection journals, they're like one page documents that they complete after supervision. And so even for some of our learners just understanding like what is this going to look like when I submit it? What do I need to send you in getting that skeleton set up? So then it's a case of just popping those documents, saving them into these folders, just helps them to settle and then be able to concentrate on on the coaching which is the bit that they really love. So, you know, passing your qualification for some people is about overcoming the admin hurdle. There's

**Zoe Hawkins** 19:41

always two kinds of learners aren't there there's, there's those which are all over the detail. And then there's learners probably a bit more like me, that don't really pay attention to the detail and halfway through the like, oh, what records am I supposed to be keeping again and I remember when I did my coaching qualification, there wasn't as much emphasis on this organised past organisation and working out basically the the records that he needed to keep. So I was about halfway through my coaching hours when I was like, oh, I need to be keeping a reflective diary. So, you know, we work very hard on our programmes to help people to understand the shape of, of the qualification. And within our learning portal, there's a whole section dedicated to about your qualification, like each of the different assessment elements, there's videos, there's example assignments, there's a huge range of resources. And then in the live training, again, we emphasise the records that you need to keep and how you need to keep them because we recognise that some learners will always have questions about that side of things. So our message to everyone is like, personal organisation may not be a strength of yours, but if you keep your portfolio up whilst you are coaching, the portfolio is going to write itself and that that one is the beast. So if you crack that one, the other two assignments are actually pretty simple in in the context of what you're doing. So the you know, putting your effort and your energy into mastering how you're going to hold that portfolio organised whilst you're practising is something we do spend time on in the programme. So I think what we're saying is passing your coaching qualification is a given, if it's something that you want to do. So we are there to support you in getting to that result.

**Jo Wheatley** 21:22

And there's one other key piece that we wanted to talk about today, which is the difference between providing critical reflections or critical analysis, and descriptive. So when you start off at the level three, generally speaking, it's okay to provide descriptions in your answers as you get up into level seven. The marking criteria requires you to provide critical reflection or critical analysis. And that can feel like a mountain to climb for some of for some learners trying to understand what does that mean, how will I know when I have achieved that? And critical reflection is really about writing what you did, why you did it, how did you make that decision? Or why did you make that decision rather than any other? What happened as a result of that? So what worked well, what didn't work so well? And what is your learning? And what are you going to do differently as a result of it. Rather than simply saying, Today, my coaching session went really well, the client arrived, happy and content. And they were happy to follow the format that we discussed at the end of the last session. And they left at the end of the session feeling satisfied that they got what they needed to from today's session, that doesn't provide the evidence that is needed in the portfolios. So do you want to give a an example of that? Yeah,

**Zoe Hawkins** 22:50

so if you go to a coaching session, you might say something like, arrived at the coaching session, I was feeling nervous about the session. What I what I'm reflecting on now is that my nerves affected my ability to ask clear questions. So my Kochi wasn't always giving the answer to the questions that I thought I was asking, you know, what I need to do is actually spend time grounding myself before I head into my coaching session, I recognise that my energy actually has an influence on my coaches experience of their session. It's something like that. So you're looking at yourself as the tool, essentially, you're looking at what did I do? Well, what didn't I do? Well, how have I impacted my coachee? And what am I going to do about it? So you're looking at a three, I see it as a 360 of like, what worked, what didn't work? What did I do? Why did I do what I did? You know, what am I learning from this? Just what you've said there, Joe. So you're kind of looking at multiple different lenses and angles to to what's happening. descriptive feedback is great for a level three, and to some extent, level five as well. And a descriptive feedback would be more like I arrived at the session, I was feeling nervous. You know, I notice that I didn't ask clear questions. So next time, I'm going to ask, I'm going to focus on asking clear questions. There's not really, in that any appreciation of why you weren't asking clear questions what the impact was on your client or how you're going to ask better questions next time. So is the depth of reflection that you go to in level seven that is important that we do not have pages and pages of it, you're looking at, we're looking at, you know, one key letter, two key learning points from one piece of critical reflection. So you don't have to tell the whole story of your coaching session together. So we know that's a lot to take in. But we talked about this on the programme, and ways that you can pass and I hope today has given you all some reassurance if you're thinking of embarking on a coaching qualification, particularly if you're thinking of coming with us in good company, you're going to be incredibly well supported to make sure that your investment is in good hands and you absolutely will pass if you want to.

**Jo Wheatley** 25:07

So if you want to check out information on how to join our courses, you can click on IG company.co.uk

**Zoe Hawkins** 25:17

Thank you for listening to the coaching crowd podcast with Zoe Hawkins and Jo Wheatley. We'd love for you to join our inclusive community to learn and grow in the coaching space.

**Jo Wheatley** 25:24

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