

Show Number: CCS Episode #42

Show Title: [Coaches Connection #42] Grow Your Coaching Practice: Boost Your Productivity by Taming Your Inbox

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Show blurb:

Hi there, welcome back to Coaches Connection Podcast - this is episode 42. My name is Annemarie Cross, Small Business Marketing & Mindset Coach.

Do you ask the question - How can I grow my coaching practice? What are the secrets that will help me fill my practice? And, what marketing should I be doing to attract new clients. Well, you're in the right place.

Whether you are just starting up your coaching practice or you've been in business a while this podcast is devoted to helping you take your results to the next level.

I'll teach you the right business and marketing strategies you should have in place to communicate your meaningful message in a powerful way so you can stand out and finally grow a successful, profitable coaching practice.

Let's get started...

Welcome:

Hi there and welcome to another show.

Would you like to boost your productivity when it comes to your email and your inbox? If you're anything like me, your inbox feels like a beast you just cannot control. The rate of emails you receive on a daily basis AND the number of emails that are sitting in your inbox from quite a while ago, blocking up your inbox and impacting your productivity. No matter what you try, you just can't seem to get on top of it.

Well, if that sounds like you – stick around because I’m going to share a tip that was shared with me last week that has made an incredible difference. Just one action which has freed me up when it comes to the backlog of emails. Also, I’ll be sharing five tips which will help you ‘tame’ your inbox while make a huge impact on your productivity.

Announcements:

Before we dive into that - I have a few announcements I’d like to share.

Firstly a huge shout out to my colleague Keith Keller. You can find Keith over on Twitter @KeithKeller. You’ll remember Keith from my Socially Savvy Segments that I did not so long ago, where Keith shared some fantastic tips and strategies to help boost your visibility on Twitter.

Anyway, Keith has been sharing the show with all of his community, which I am so grateful for.

He and a team of other business experts have joined forces and have come up with a great resource to help you overcome online overwhelm. So, if you are struggling to keep up with everything you should be doing online with social media; if you have been meaning to get some support staff to help you, yet outsourcing is something that confuses you and you don’t know where to start then I highly recommend you access their free guide and video series to help you.

Just go to: http://bit.ly/Overcome_Overwhelm and Download their **FREE Action Guide** and get the **3-Step Video Tutorial Series** that shows you how they grew their businesses...

- The Top 10 Tasks to Outsource Today (and who they personally use for those tasks)
- The Top 10 Out-Tasking Services for Overcoming Online Overwhelm
- The Top 10 Online Tools Every Entrepreneur Should Use to Simplify Their Business

That’s http://bit.ly/Overcome_Overwhelm

2. Secondly, I want to do a shout out to Karen Keller. Karen is a Speaker, Author and Executive Coach. She is also the creator of the Keller Influence Indicator. Her Twitter handle is @KarenKeller

Anyway, Karen reached out and let me know how much she has been enjoying the podcasts and has been sharing them with her community.

Thank you Karen – I really appreciate it and am thrilled you are enjoying the show.

Now that leads me to you. Would you like me to do a shout out to you as well during the show?

Will you help me spread the word about this podcast?

My mission is to get our message of inspiration out to as many people as possible and you can play a huge role in helping me.

All you need to do is subscribe to our iTunes channel, give our star a rating, and leave a comment. That's it. By subscribing, rating and commenting over on itunes that allows other people to find out about our podcast, which I hope you have found informative, inspiring and something you enjoy listening to on a regular basis.

So pop across to www.ambitiousentrepreneurnetwork.com/ccpitunes and you'll be directed to our itunes channel.

Thank you so much!

Tip of the week:

For those of you who know me, you know I love to create. My weekly articles, podcasts, audio snippets, programs; I love being in the creative space.

Well, one of the ways I spark my creativity as well as continue to expand my knowledge is to read other people's articles, listen to podcast and watch videos. However with all of the information available on the internet it can be very difficult to keep up with everything.

Well, I found out about a great new tool that allows me to subscribe to the blogs I want to read and it stores it all in one place so I can easily scroll through and read the blog posts I want to.

This tool also allows me to bookmark for later if I want to go back and read it again; it allows me to save it to my evernote – which is especially handy if I want to include the article as a reference when I'm writing my articles; it also allows me to share the article easily with my community across various different social media

sites. It also allows me to schedule sharing of the articles, which is how I've been using it for the last week or so, where I'll read an article and think "Oh, my community would love to read that." So I'll schedule it directly into Hootsuite to be shared with my community on Twitter and LinkedIn.

Just with a click of a button.

It's such a great tool. There is a free version and a paid version. I've opted for the paid pro version, which is \$45 dollars for the entire year, as this allows me to schedule and save blogs on evernote.

Anyway, check it out if like me, you were struggling to keep up with all your reading. It certainly has helped me to boost my productivity in that area, and I'm sure it will for you too.

If you do end up using it, shoot me through a note to let me know how you are finding it.

The link is <http://feedly.com>

Further resources to help you grow your profitable coaching practice:

- <http://feedly.com>

Feedly is a news aggregator application for various web browsers and mobile devices. It compiles news feeds from a variety of online sources and allows the user to customize and share with others – easily and effectively.

Words of Wisdom:

Today's words of wisdom is all about taming the beast that is your inbox. I don't know about you, but a week ago if you were to look at my email inbox there were over 2,200 emails sitting there. These included emails from my subscriptions to newsletter; the groups I'm a member of from LinkedIn; my team emails. You name it, it was there sitting in my inbox. Now all of these emails especially from my team were actioned, so it's not as if they were still waiting for me to get back to them.

So this was more things I wanted to follow up with if I wanted to keep up to date with newsletters; and just general filing away of emails I had already read and actioned.

No matter how many intentions I set for myself; and the time I did spend in going through the emails, sorting through them, deleting the ones I no longer needed, I could never ever get to zero emails sitting in my inbox.

In fact, it was impossible for me and would have taken me ages to sift through all two thousand of the emails.

That was until I heard a great tip by Michael Hyatt. He was sharing a tip with another one of his Platform University members, where he recommended the person take all of his emails in the inbox; create a OLD archive folder and copy all emails to that folder. Now everything is in that old file if you ever need to go back to check on something. And, more importantly you now have an inbox that is empty and you can start afresh by keeping that up to date and emptied out at the end of the day.

Which is exactly what I have been doing for less than a week and I tell you it has made such a huge difference in my energy levels and productivity.

Previously, every time I looked at my inbox with all of those old emails sitting there, I felt exhausted and a little guilty that I still hadn't gone through to sort it out. Even spending an hour or so on it just didn't make any impact, so it was getting frustrating. I was just getting anywhere.

However, what I did was create an OLD archive and put all the old emails in there. I've created a NEW archive and any new emails that I need to deal with on a latter basis go in there. Or I'll action an email immediately, send it to my team, or file it in the respective folder if it is one of my team keeping me updated on one of our projects. This means that at the end of every day there are no emails in my inbox.

If I pop across to my inbox now, there are no emails there either, as I've just taken action of the emails I received this morning. They're done and out of there. It's clean, empty and organized. And it feels amazing. I've finally tamed that beast of my inbox and I'm setting the intention that it will no longer get to the stage it was at, by committing to have it be empty by the end of each day.

So if you're feeling a little overwhelmed with all your email, here are some tips to help you get on top of things, like I just have this week:



1. If you have a ton of emails in your inbox that have been sitting in there for as long as you care to admit, then I highly recommend you do what I have just done. That is to create an OLD Archive file and copy everything over to that.

Then make a commitment to yourself to do ensure at the end of every day that your inbox is empty by taking action on the item; sending it to your team; or putting it to a To do Folder.

2. I don't know about you, but I would often keep my email open so any time an email came in I would see the envelope in the bottom tool bar. Well of course I just couldn't wait to see who it was that emailed me, so I would constantly interrupt myself and stop what I was doing to check out the email. I just couldn't help myself.

Anyway, what I started to do was to commit to only checking my email a couple of times a day. This is still something I am working on perfecting and I am getting better at switching off my email so I can concentrate on what I am working on without being interrupted.

I highly recommend you do that as well. Commit to checking your email a twice a day; perhaps once in the morning and later again around mid afternoon and then respond as needed.

A few of my colleagues have done this with great success. In fact one of them sends an automatic email response to every email to let the sender know she has received the email, however that she only checks and responds to them twice a day. She confirms she will get back to them as soon as she can. This is something you can consider too, if you are transitioning from being responsive to every email and answering it almost immediately and going to only answering a few times a day. I am not personally doing that and you need to consider whether this fits in with your business systems. I'm in two minds about whether or not I like this idea. I know it can get overwhelming to receive emails back from people every time you email them. So do think about this carefully.

3. One thing I did years ago in my career coaching practice, was to hand over all my enquiries, which included email enquiries to my VA. I just made the decision and then made it happen.



For some of you this sounds daunting and scary, however I felt such an immense pressure being lifted off my shoulders no longer having to worry about handling all my email (and even phone enquiries). My VA took over all of that.

Some steps to help you get to the stage of being able to do that include:

- Documenting everything they need to do in order to respond to an enquiry. So a flow chart of sorts that they can follow.
- Setting up of various scripts so they could just copy and paste and reply to the enquiry. I started off with about 3 or 4 scripts which we've amended and added to over the years. That way my VA knows what she needs to send with regards to a specific enquiry.

When we were just starting out during the transitioning if there was something that came through that she was not clear on, she would email me at the end of the day with the various requests for my advice on what she would like me to do with regards to handling it. I would then type up another script for her to use, or I would give her directions as to how she should respond.

Now, we have been doing this system for several years and only every now and again – perhaps once every few months, she may have a question about how to handle something that has a unique circumstance that she isn't able to handle with the scripts and processes we have in place. So I'm happy to advise as needed. And, doing this has taken such a huge load off my plate. So I recommend you make a commitment to outsource your emails and start by making a folder with step-by-step processes and scripts and other handy information for your team to be able to manage that for you.

4. I reached out to a few of my colleagues on Facebook and Kim Flintoff said she will often use the Ctr-Alt-Del buttons. Donna Morgan who works with MCI Computers also reads her emails and deletes them straight away to keep their inboxes uncluttered.

So this is my last tip, so you can go and make a commitment to get stuck into your inbox after today's show. And that is, DON'T be afraid of your delete button. Use it often.

Don't be like me previously where you just let the emails back up to the point of overwhelm. Read – delete. Read – delete. Read, action, delete. Read,

forward to your staff member – delete. Or, if you need that email for future reference, file it into a folder, such as a project folder, or a client folder, or an To do, or follow up folder. Get it out of your Inbox. And, of course make sure you take action on it as soon as you can to get it deleted out of your To Do or Follow up folder.

You'll notice a huge difference in your productivity and your energy.

So there you have it; tips to tame your inbox.

Do you have a tip you'd like to share about how you keep on top of your emails so your inbox doesn't get cluttered. Go ahead and share it on the comment section below the show notes. It's always good to hear from you.

And, if you implement some of the tips I've shared today, drop me a note to let me know how it's impacted positively your productivity.

Today's Inspirational Tip

"Productivity is never an accident. It is always the results of a commitment to excellence; intelligent planning; and focussed effort." – Paul Meyer

Go ahead and give us a shout out - we'll make sure we shout back!

If this was an episode you really enjoyed and got value from, I want to encourage you to head over to iTunes over at www.ambitiousentrepreneurnetwork.com/ccpitunes and leave a comment and a rating. I'd so appreciate this as this really makes a huge difference and helps me get the message out to as many coaches as possible. And you can play an incredibly important role in helping me by rating, commenting and sharing the show with your friends and colleagues.

If you have a question you would like me to answer in an upcoming show, head on over to:

www.AmbitiousEntrepreneurNetwork.com/CCPConnect

Leave your name, your business name, and your question, and I look forward to answering that for you in an upcoming show.

Till next week, bye for now, this is Annemarie



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