

EEP174 - Dia Bondi_ How to Ask Like An Auctioneer

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SPEAKERS

Dia Bondi, Maria Ross

Dia Bondi 00:02

In my world and auctioneering, if I'm drawing on that we'd say that is knowing your increments and using them. So I might have all kinds of increments I can play with how much time I spend on something, how much engagement they get from me what the price is, what the bonus materials might be an opportunity for them to record the session and have access to rewatch us for one month. They might have like, for example, like these are mole your little, you know, it's not just price or just time or just licensing the content or GC what I'm saying there Hmm, so knowing what our increments are, even if we get to make new ones and then increment with them, we can, you can all kind of win.

Maria Ross 00:46

Welcome to the empathy edge podcast the show that proves why cash flow, creativity and compassion are not mutually exclusive. I'm your host Maria Ross. I'm a speaker, author, mom, facilitator and empathy advocate. And here you'll meet trailblazing leaders and executives, authors and experts who embrace empathy to achieve radical success. We discuss all facets of empathy from trends and research to the future of work to how to heal societal divisions and collaborate more effectively. Our goal is to redefine success and prove that empathy isn't just good for society, it's great for business. When we think of making big asks that will catalyze us into a new role, more funding or higher pay, maybe even a book or speaking engagements. We tend to ask small for fear of hearing a dreaded No, but today's guest Deobandi explains the role empathy plays in making big asks, and why you actually want to reframe the value of getting a yes, by actively seeking out the know so you can achieve your goals. DIA is a communications catalyst for high impact people, and she's one of my favorite people. She works with professional sea level leaders, VC backed founders and ambitious professionals helping them find their voice and lead with it. She's done talks for the likes of ports, Salesforce, Google's X team and Dropbox. In global sport, she helped Rio de Janeiro secure the 2016 Summer Olympics. After attending auctioneering school for fun. She translated the techniques she learned into a program that prepares ambitious professionals and especially women to ask for more and leave nothing on the table called Ask like an auctioneer. She's been featured on CNBC make it Forbes Fast

Company. She's host of the podcast lead with who you are. And Diaz book, long awaited ask like an auctioneer how to ask for more and get it launches this week. Today dia shares her incredible journey of working with high profile leaders and then making that decision to go to auctioneering school. She talks about the mental models of auctioneering and how they can help us reframe our asks, in a way that gets us closer to our goals. We talked about her six step framework for building your ass how to step into your zone of freaking out and see it as your zone of potential. Why We Need To quote order off the menu more and how we make the mistake of conflating worth and worthiness. Her work has personally benefited my life and business and I know it will do the same for you. Take a listen. Let's get connected. If you're loving this content, don't forget to go to the empathy edge.com and sign up for the email list to get free resources and more empathy infused success tips and find out how you can book me as a speaker. I want to hear how empathy is helping you be more successful. So please sign up now at V empathy edge.com. Oh, and follow me on Instagram where I'm always posting all the things for you at Red slice Maria. Hi Deobandi. Welcome to the empathy edge podcast. I am always happy to chat with you about how to ask for more and get it. So thanks for coming and joining us today.

Dia Bondi 04:03

I feel like we've been chatting about it for a lot like years years.

Maria Ross 04:06

We have been talking about it for years years, you and I go way back, we met through GE Oh, yes. And worked together on brand strategy. And you supported my book, The Empathy edge when that came out. And now I'm so thrilled that the world is going to get to see as like an auctioneer.

Dia Bondi 04:23

We did. We did two events together at your book launch for empathy edge that we did that so called one on one and the one in the clock factory in the East Bay and one in San Francisco.

Maria Ross 04:31

Yep, exactly. And I am going to be emceeding you're excited. I know look at us full circle. Okay, so let's get into it. I want to hear I mean, I already know but I want you to share with our listeners hear your story about how you even got into this work of helping a million women asked for more and get it. So tell us a little bit about your journey.

Dia Bondi 04:52

Yeah, so I've been a longtime leadership communications coach working with VC backed founders and senior leaders to help them find their voice Lee with it and speak powerfully at really critical moments so they can have the kind of impact that they want in their leadership and on their teams. And I took a sabbatical a handful of years ago and on that sabbatical, as usual, when I take breaks, I want to learn something new and weird and unrelated. And so my husband reminded me that years before I had made a threat out a bucket list in a bucket list conversation at a dinner table to go to auctioneering school for fun. And he said, Hey, maybe now's the time to do it. So I jumped on an airplane and I went to auctioneering school for 10 days, like me and 100 cowboys learning how to auctioneer everything, from, you know, livestock, to real estate to art to whatever. And you know, it wasn't gonna make a job out of it. So I came back home to the Bay Area and started doing fundraising auctioneering as an

impact hobby, particularly and specifically for women led nonprofits and nonprofits benefiting women and girls and a good 20 Auctions later, it kind of hit me that the that what I was learning in the front of the room was super useful to thinking about how we ask for more, and how we build a strategic asset, and then deliver it in our businesses, lives and careers. And so I launched a project called Ask like an auctioneer, with the goal to help a million women ask for more and get it using what I learned from and mental models and tools that I've learned from this impact hobby of auctioneering started out as really just programs, like keynotes and workshops, and then I learned so much I knew when it was time for it to be a book, so could reach more folks try to get to that million million Woman number.

Maria Ross 06:35

I love that. And we all of us around you have been like you need to write a book, you need to write a book. So you finally did, that's awesome. I feel like so much of your work, whether you've been a communication catalyst, or this work you're doing now is that you are this force in people's lives at their most climactic moments. Like whether it's their most high impact communications moment, or they're making like a really big ask that matters to the trajectory of their career, or their business or their funding or their life. You know, whatever it is, I feel like you are already there at the like highest vibration of people's lives. I'm curious, has that been a theme with you? I mean, you aren't you talk fast, you think fast, you work fast? Has that always been sort of the like, that's what you're in it for, like the high of it, of being there for people's high impact moments?

Dia Bondi 07:21

I don't know, I maybe I think sort of the so I know that I'm really driven by, you know, finding and being a part of really connected experiences and also adventure. And I think what you're pointing to has been a strong theme for me in my whole life and career for sure. And there's something about those sort of height where to think of as like high leverage moments that require deep connection to oneself, a leader has to get really clear with like, not just what am I going to say? But how am I going to say it? And how do I combine those two things in a way that are aligned with who I actually am. And there's some pretty critical choices that happen. So in that way, it's like a very connected experience. And when I work with leaders at those high leverage moments, I get to be deeply connected with them, and the moment and what the moment might mean. And then it always feels like an adventure, because it's sort of like, you never know what's going to happen. And it has actually taken me around the world, which is really cool. I helped Rio de Janeiro win the right to host the 2016 Olympics, I've worked on the Turkish bid. I've traveled and teach communication skills classes, to leaders across domains, you know, lots of different geographies. And that's been like, actually, my adventure. I had an I had a former or a mentor earlier in my life, say something to the degree of like, it's nice to know if you work in layers, or if you work in leverage points. Meaning like, Are you someone who, who maybe is sort of a marathoner who layers in, you know, understanding practice programs, whatever, over time to layer in something on top of something else to build something, or you're someone who loves to come in and, and work on like, distinct leverage points. And I think I've always been leveraged point person, I think and it feels like it's strategic ask is exactly that, isn't it? Yeah. Yeah, absolutely.

Maria Ross 09:16

Because those are those moments where, you know, you have talked in the past about the being in the zone of freaking out when you're making those strategic asks. And those are the moments where we

really feel like we've got to dig deep. And what I love about what you're saying and why you're even on this podcast is because that idea of connection and that idea of empathy is so important to remember that the Ask isn't just about you, and what you want, but making it a mutually beneficial ask. So talk to us a little bit about some of the mindsets that go into that. What are some of the parallels between what you learned in auctioneering school and how you apply that to clients and audiences when you're talking about making a strategic ask?

Dia Bondi 09:54

Well, for one, you know what it means to ask like an auctioneer in brief is, you know, in our regular lives when we go to think about we're going to ask for something budget headcount, you know, I don't know resources, investment, engagement, somebody's time, we always we often love the absolute very often will say, What do I think I can get? And then go for that. And then when we get a yes, we feel awesome. But what we do and I saw that I realized in auctioneering, is that we can't do that that's the equivalent of opening a bid. Having somebody put their paddle in the air and saying sold right away. What we have to do is instead is ask, in order to get a no, we need to know that somebody at \$5,000 will not bid literally, they will shake their heads at me and say No, not 5000. And I'll say, okay, great. 4500. And I'll sell it, I never sell it for the same amount that I've asked for, it's always underneath because I need to hit that know, in auctioneering, it's great new that tells me Oh, I just maximize the potential of that ask, there is no one in this room who will pay me more pay for this item? For more than \$5,000. It's great. Now I know if I sell it for 45. I did, I got absolutely the most possible. And I recognize completely that folks listening, don't. You're not in competitive bidding situations very often. Like, you know, if you're lucky enough to be in one, let's say, you know, for your talent and time, you know, consider yourself like kind of fancy, it's not happening very often. But what we can do is we can ask for the thing, we think that will get us a no, and then negotiate down and then you'll know you've not left any money or opportunity on the table. But we don't do that. Because everything between a guaranteed Yes. And that menacing word, no lives in a place. You already said it. The zone of freaking out is that place where we don't know what kind of answer we might get. Right? And I want to flip that for folks and think of it as the zone of potential. So that's what it means to act like an auctioneer and to your question, how do we draw on you know, some of the things I've learned to think about putting together a strategic ask. Number one, we have to recognize that the zone of freaking out is also the zone of potential, and we have to step into the Zoho we call it the Zoho in order to explore what else we could get, you know how much more we could get like the thing of the more is always in the Zoho? Because that's where all the like gray area and the best potential is, okay, fine. So if it's in the Zopo, how do we do that? The fact that you know how to know how to ask like an auctioneer go for that? No, doesn't mean you actually can't, we need to kind of like, unlock ourselves a little bit to go. Okay. But it's like one thing to know how to jump off the high dive. It's another thing to like, actually talk yourself into doing it, you know? 100%? Yes. So what are you know, you're saying the word mindsets, and I get mindset it in the book once but, you know, the these are like ideas I think of as like ideas, lessons, I learned that help you go, Alright, I'm gonna ask for 30% more than I would, in an everyday ask. So here's two of my favorite ideas are that people are irrational. And if you don't like that, you can think of it like this, their rationale for what they might say yes or no to? Is not your rationale for what you might say yes or no to. Now, in some ways, maybe you could even think of that as the ultimate act of empathy. Because you're not shopping from your own wallet. Mm hmm. You're saying, I don't know what they might say yes or no to, I'm going to let them decide. I'm going to ask and find out with my ears and my eyes and my heart open. That's it,

Maria Ross 13:34

ask and find out. I think that's the most you know, we talk about curiosity being the number one trait of empathetic people. But when we think about asks, we tend to think of it only for our own self serving, like this is about me. And actually, when you're when you have to ask another person for something, it's not just about you, it's about the way that you engage and connect with that person, and what is going to be in it for them. What do they value? What are they seeking? What do they want from the exchange?

Dia Bondi 14:03

And that's really part of the story that leads up to the Ask in my mind, I mean, when I go, you know, if I'm drawing on lessons from Aflac and auctioneer, I'm saying, Okay, I've got to set up the Ask I'm about to make in a way that makes it clear to the room that I see that we're like, what we're here to do is one thing, but what we're really here to do is another, okay, so at an art auction for a fundraiser, like it might be like we're here to actually yes, raise some money for this organization so they can continue to develop community arts programs, you know, for folks with developmental disabilities, fine. But maybe, also what we're really here to do is to build community with people that are like minded. Maybe what we're really here to do is to let you have the total walk away from this experience with the titillation of knowing that you've just started your own art collection. You are officially in our Collector now. You know, there's so many other really here to do's that is where I think the empathy comes in. I want to be clear, though, that when you think about your own strategic ask, that is a moment to go, what do I actually want? What do I need? Where, you know, it is all about you. But it doesn't have to only be about you.

Maria Ross 15:18

Exactly. It's both and, and I love that in the past, I've heard you talk about what is the offer in your ask. And I think that's where the empathy comes in, where it's like, here's what I want. And I'm going to be clear and bold about what it is I want. But I'm going to frame it in a way where I can leave room for understanding what I'm offering you at the same time, right? Yep.

Dia Bondi 15:41

And even if it's something that they might not see, they want, you know, like something you know about or you observe or you in some way, sort of almost wish and hope that they want, you know that you can add it in there like something they hadn't even thought of like, you know, the idea of going first, if you observe that someone that you're about to make an ask of somebody that sort of likes to be rewarded is the opposite of suffering tall poppy syndrome, they're happy to stand out and go first and be seen, well, maybe there's an opportunity in, in the ask to show them how when they say yes to you, or at least are willing to negotiate after the ask that they have to say no to them participating in this conversation and getting to a yes, that works for both of you, which hopefully is more than what you thought you would ask for originally, is an opportunity for them to shine for them to be that tall, Poppy, they love being right.

Maria Ross 16:34

I love that. What do you think it is that makes people not want to go for the no, like, I think they all kind of read intellectually about understanding that when you're auctioneering, you're trying to get the maximum dollar amount for the bid item. Right? So what is it that stops us from that mindset in real life? What are they afraid of?

Dia Bondi 16:57

We conflate This is another big one. And I do have a whole chapter on it. And the book is one of my favorite, we conflate worth and worthiness. We conflate the answers, we take the answers we get to the asks we make as ways to shape our own value. Okay, so for example, you know, one of the ideas you can use as a strategy to talk yourself into asking for more than you think you'll get to go ahead and challenge that assumption that like, there's no more than, you know, than the easy yes, amount is to remember that price, or what somebody will do or, or with you or for you, is a measure and a way to see what they value and how they value it. Not a way to define your worth or worthiness. Can't do it. I when I sell, and I tell the story a lot that I sold one night camping trip at auction for \$55,000. And I sold a piece of art that was supposed to be worth \$10,000 for 4200. So what are those worth? It doesn't matter. Sometimes when I do low Bono pro bono work for nonprofits I care about I'm \$0. Sometimes when I work with the organizations I collaborate with, I cheat. So what am I worth? The answer is, it doesn't matter. It's irrelevant, right? Like, if I based my worth, on every contract, I the price attached to every contract I ever got, I wouldn't be I would be a very sad person. And very confused. Yeah, yeah. So it's, it's a way to see what other people value and how they value it. I tell my wife saw this and auctioneering I tell clients, they say we want this piece of art to sell for \$12,000. And I'm like, I'm gonna sell it for whatever somebody else will, somebody else will pay for it. As long as it's above the reserve, because how they value it ain't how you value it. Right? So we can't take those bids personally, we just have to go. They don't really like is everybody gonna is everybody going to run out and you know, leverage their life to buy a Lambo? No, they're not because it's not worth it to you. It doesn't have value to you, somebody else

19:11

maybe. Right? Right. And I love this because,

Maria Ross 19:15

you know, even as I was building my own business, and as I started to get to know you and really take in your insights and your teachings, I always had this little voice in my head. That was like, on the one hand, I was very like, what's the worst they can do? They can say no. And then the other voice that was like, they're gonna put all these judgments on me for asking for this crazy amount. And they're gonna think I'm, you know, out of my mind, and or they're gonna think Who does she think she is? Right that that whole attitude. And since being friends with you and being exposed to your work, I have become more confident in the part of me that saying what's the worst they can do? I can say they can say no, and like you said, that isn't for me. Shannon, and in 99.9% of cases, the image we have in our heads of the person, like throwing up their papers and slamming the door out of the room because of the ridiculousness of what we had the audacity to ask for never happens. Like it never happens. And so that is so much money and value to us that we're leaving on the table. When we

Dia Bondi 20:21

don't ask for that. I'm going to reframe kind of reframe something for you and a common phrase, a common phrase that folks might be hearing this idea of like, the worst thing they could say is no, actually, the worst thing they could say is yes.

20:35

Because if I asked you, for

Dia Bondi 20:40

\$100 an hour for my writing services, and you say yes,

20:45

in my model, I was left some money on the table. Yeah. The best answer you could get is no.

Dia Bondi 20:55

Because that lets you know, you've Max, you actually touch the ceiling of what's possible, and then have a conversation about what does work for you. And then land at \$92 an hour. Mm hmm. I wrote a proposal and you'll hear this in my TED talk. I my TEDx talk, like I wrote a proposal and shut it off massively in my Zoho. This is about a year and a half ago. It was so so foolish, I was sweating. I felt that excited, giddy, like, Who do I think I am? I'm about to get in trouble. But it's also kind of sneaky and funny feeling. It's like a mini coaster. Yeah, welcome to the Zoho. Okay. And, and I wasn't even gonna send it off like that I was gonna send something off that was 30%. Beneath that, which is still 25%, above what I usually asked for. And the woman who runs operations and engagements for my small business, she was like, really do that. Is that Zoho enough? You know, we like, you know, we talked about it. Yeah. And I was like, I had so much rapport in this relationship, just in the beginning of our relationship, knowing we were gonna go into an engagement. I knew that if I sent it off, you know, and he said, We can't do that. There was room in our relationship to have a conversation. Mm hmm. I sent it off. And he said, Sure, send me the contract. And I was like, because, yes, is the worst thing I can hear. Yeah, yeah, that lets me I've left something on the table. Right? If he had said, Oh, that's outside of our budget, that's, we can't do that. And I could have said, Tell me about what you could have done it and landed somewhere beneath that number, right. I would have been, I'd be like, I know, I didn't leave any money on the table. So it's a little bit of a reframe around these things. Like, what's the worst they could they could say, is no. Yeah. I don't know if that's true. In this model, you know, I love that.

22:48

I love that so much.

Maria Ross 22:49

Let's talk a little bit about, you know, you kind of alluded to a lot of the principles, but you have this six step framework for building a strategic asset that you talk about in the book, which, you know, we're gonna put links to the book in the show notes, I want everyone to check it out. It's gold asked like an auctioneer. But what are some of those frameworks? Have those been some of the things you've been talking about thus far? Or is there something around those six steps? Because this is about building what you want to ask for? Yes.

Dia Bondi 23:19

Two things. And before we go there, I want to go backwards for just a second with folks will go with us. Because I think, you know, along the theme of sort of living and leading with empathy, you know, engaging with empathy. It's hard for folks to step into their Sophos and go advocate, you know, and make big asks, for professionals who are living, who are listening to this podcast and living in a world in which they have to pitch their ideas, gain momentum for those ideas, put a price on those ideas in that work. Even if you're in house, and you need, you know, you ask for budget for something you're often for you might be like, Oh, I read this book, and I'm in my sofa. But I can send this off because I know that people are irrational. And they're, you know, the way they say yes, is the way I would say yes. And so it's okay, let's just ask and find out. But not everybody has that. And when you sometimes make a request of someone, they then have to go make a request on your behalf for the resources, okay. And that can be very hard for them. So we've got to understand that if you're asking a brand new director to go make a pitch to her executive team for the very first time for budget, way more than she thought she would need last, you know, when she was estimating things because things have changed last quarter, you're putting her in a position where like she might have to go do something she's nervous to do so while we're nervous to make bigger asks, When we make those we sometimes are putting pressure on somebody else to go do that as well and they might be even less comfortable than you are. So I just want to bring that up that you you know, folks listening might go make pitches and go where are they why aren't they getting back to me? What's going on? They ghosted me or they kept saying yes. And they really meant no, I think because they never really went out and championed it. And not it might not be because they suck, is because this stuff is existential for people. Mm hmm. You know, they put in their little hearts on the line.

Maria Ross 25:16

I think that's such a good point. And do you have any advice for people that aren't making making those kinds of transitive asks where the ultimate decision maker is not the person that they're making the addition? The initial ask to guess what can they do to support that person?

Dia Bondi 25:28

So one is to be I mean, this is really tactical, but like, ask that person if you know, or ask that person, if they actually have direct control over the budget, they're going to need to go make requests. So just find that out. So you're not you know, you're actually checking then to find out what they need from you, or ways in which you can help them advocate for that ask, Would you like to invite me for 10 minutes to one of the meetings that were you know, this budget is gonna get discussed? Can I serve up this proposal in a different format that makes it easier for you to turn into an executive summary? Like, do you would you like me to stand up an FAQ that you can take in for when you guys have discussion about it, like, find out what tools they might need to help them advocate a little bit more easily on your behalf?

Maria Ross 26:16

One of the biggest things I've learned from you is also about how to strategically leverage value adds without dropping your ask. So as an example, yeah, so as an example, you coached me a few years ago on an ask for a speaking engagement for a leadership workshop. And their response was very vague of like, what can you do about the price type of response? It wasn't we don't have the budget.

But it was really just someone in that organization wanting to appear that they had driven a hard bargain.

Dia Bondi 26:52

Yes, what I remember this route, so

Maria Ross 26:54

So you had taught and I had gone to you and said, How should I respond, right. And you had said, Don't back down on the price if you stand by that price, but what else could be important to them. And we ended up landing on a value add component that was not have a heavy lift on my part, but kept my rate and my, my value of the package I was delivering intact. So if they were ever talking to peers or colleagues at other organizations, that was going to be the reputation of what I could deliver. Yes. And so I think that that's so important that we forget, there's all these other little value ads that we can use as levers without our first thing being let's cut the price. Right? Let's cut the ask whatever the ask is, right.

Dia Bondi 27:40

And then that person that maybe is operating inside of a frugal, you know, environment or like wants to know that you got that like there her direct report heard bosses? Don't leave money on the table. Yeah, exactly. So you, she can say like, look, we couldn't, we didn't get to lower the price. But we did get a bunch of bonuses thrown in. Now she gets to meet the need of looking like, you know, she was a heart, you know, drove a hard bargain. You got your needs met, and she looks like a friggin hero because she got upgraded. Mm hmm. So I think that's really wonderful. That's a wonderful, I felt I had forgotten about that. And in my world, like in my world, and auctioneering, if I'm drawing on that, we'd say that is knowing your increments, and using them. So I might have all kinds of increments I can play with how much time I spend on something, how much engagement they get from me what the price is, what the bonus materials might be an opportunity for them to record the session and have access to rewatch this for one month, they might have like, for example, like these are more your little, you know, it's not just price, or just time or just licensing the content or GC what I'm saying there. So knowing what our increments are, even if we get to make new ones and then increment with them, we can we can all kind of win. Totally.

29:01

I love it. And I think that that's

Maria Ross 29:02

under under appreciated, have like get creative about what you can offer or what you can do besides you know watering down the initial ask.

Dia Bondi 29:13

I feel like if I can remember I can remember to Hamels 50. And my brain doesn't work like it used to I feel like that conversation we had we also the thing that we came up with was also going to be good for you because it was an opportunity to deepen relationships with leadership outside of that sense.

Maria Ross 29:26

Yeah. 100% Yeah, it was it was extra coaching on top of it. And so like,

Dia Bondi 29:31

I do have me do this workshop, and then I'll come and do follow up cert coaching circles or something. Exactly. Yes. Okay. So I love that. So the six step framework, yeah,

Maria Ross 29:39

talk to us a little bit about some of those steps don't give it all away because I want people to

Dia Bondi 29:43

do the first three Oh, I there's so much other stuff in there that you know, I give you all six and it's totally fine. The the the idea is that you know, there are moments everybody that are pretty obvious moments to make asks right you know, performance review and you be asking for, you know, your annual increase or, you know, more RSUs or you're going to be okay. So you make an ask because you have a big, a big proposal happening, a pitch happening, like, there's certain moments that are like, this is a negotiation moment. And I don't actually talk about negotiation that much in the book, because to me, I want to kind of separate there's the ask, and then there's the new negotiation, I really want to pinpoint on the ask.

30:22

So I, they're there, however,

Dia Bondi 30:25

don't we go to a restaurant and say, Oh, I'm doing whole 30 this month? Is there a you know, do you have just a chicken breast back there in the kitchen that you can do with? Okay, we asked for things that are off the menu all the time, when we go to a restaurant, maybe maybe you're not that one. But you know, that is a common thing. Or like, Hey, I've got my one year old with me, can I just get some steamed broccoli, I could smash it up to give it to her, like you ask for things that are not on the menu. And sometimes you get it right. So I want people to think about asks you can make what could you ask for? That gets you closer to your goal. And then once you know what that is, you can say, How do I make sure when I make the ask? I'm not artificially low balling myself. So we want it. So the first three steps of the it's like an Ask strategy plan is to ask yourself, Okay, what's my goal? What do I want? I want to publish a book, I wanna, I don't know, I want to be director in 18 months, I want to own my first home by the time I'm 30, I want to get a seed funding, yeah, whatever I want to, I want my, and for a lot of folks that come to my workshops and organizations, they're like, 26, and they're like, if I have my own apartment, by the end of this year, you will be a big deal, right? I mean, I got married when I was 26. But things are different now with housing market. So your housemates the rest of your life around here. So so like, what is the goal? And it's like a concrete midterm goal, right? It's not like I want to change the world. It needs to be like, really, you know, 1218 months, you know, when you got there. Okay. So that's step one. Step two, then is not what could you ask for? Step two is, what is the next biggest move you need to make that gets you closer to that goal? The next move you need to make that gets you closer to that goal.

Maria Ross 32:04

I love that it's like the next right thing.

Dia Bondi 32:07

Exactly, because there's lots of moves you're gonna make to get you all to that goal. So, for example, I had a woman at a tech company in San Francisco, when my workshops, she raised her hand, she's like, my goal is to keep learning and growing. And I was like, No, it is not that is an activity. She was like, Okay, fine. And then she coughed it up. She wants to be general counsel, at a midsize pre IPO company, in, you know, in and around the tech space. She was, you know, that was not like a 12 to 18 month goal that was more like, you know, three to five year kind of goal. But fine. She's, I was like, Okay, now, that's a goal. Now, you know, you when you've arrived, you know, so I was like, what is one of the next big moves you need to make that gets you closer to that goal? And she said something like, well, one, I need to tell my boss that that's kind of the vision I have for myself. Okay. And I was like, alright, that's not really a move. That's like a thing you're gonna do. What's the, you know, like, what, what's the what's the move that would really help you feel closer and be closer, just like, well, there's this one, I need to kind of get in and around the conversations that general counsel's have, like, I need to kind of see what those look like. Instead of being like two layers away. I want to see okay, I was like, Oh, great. So

33:26

he wants to be in the room. Be in the room? Yeah. Okay.

Dia Bondi 33:29

So once we've got the top what was about the gold, then we've got the big move, then we can ask, what might I ask for? That gets that actions, that big move that gets me closer to that goal? What might I ask for? That actions, that big move that gets closer to my goal gets me closer to my goal. And for her, it was like, there was this one, you know, monthly meeting that she could ask her boss for once you get coughed up that that's her vision for herself. And to she's which again, is not an ask, but it just kind of needs to happen. And to she could ask to come sit in on those meetings, she does need to be a contributor at the table. She could be like a mentee, you know, the next generation of legal minds in the technology space, understanding how legal policy is made, you know, and that was she was like, that was the ask. And then we had to ask the next question, which is, okay,

34:29

what is the Zoho version of that? Ask?

Dia Bondi 34:33

The Zoho version of that ask and it could be in her case, it could be things like well, I want to go to that meeting with my chief counsel. And then will she spend the following half hour debriefing it with me and giving me I'm just making this up on the fly because I don't remember right. It was but debriefing and then introducing me to three other women in her network that are chief counsel that other companies so that I can start to grow my network in this space and Find to expand my mentoring network. Hmm, that takes a single ask makes it big. And she was kind of like, well, that's a lot. And I was like, Yeah, but what is the offer inside the ask? And of course, of course, it's going to be things like, okay, she's gonna

have a super high value person on her team, because you're gonna learn a lot in the next 12 months through these relationships, she may end up with a deputy sort of, you know, through you getting exposure to these other, like, there's a lot of things that you could do. So, it it

Maria Ross 35:26

could even be it could even be fulfilling her need to mentor. You don't know, right? You know, ask if I know,

Dia Bondi 35:33

right? So those are the first four steps in the six steps of a strategic ask plan. So we want to unearth and design and ask that might help. Doesn't have to be something on the menu. It does not have to be ordained, you know, ordained negotiation moments. And we want to start with those four questions. What's my goal? Big Move I need to make? What might I ask for to help action that move? And then what's the zolfo version of that? Ask? So that I don't accidentally lowball myself.

36:00

Oh, my God, I love it. So good. So good. All right.

Maria Ross 36:04

Let's talk about where we go from here. So you wrote this book, you did a TEDx talk?

36:10

What is your vision for this work? Ah, what is your zolfo vision for this? Yeah, I mean,

Dia Bondi 36:19

look, you know, in my business, it would be so cool someday to you know, I'm putting that together. I felt like a million women. That was a pretty good vision. Like, do we have to do more than that? I don't know. You know, I'm like, that's good. You know, for me, the place that I

Maria Ross 36:36

want to I just I have to interject right now, because given a statistic I just heard that has not moved since 2017. And it's what now 2023 The fact that 2% of female founders have gotten VC funding. And I could be using for it's gone down. No, no, it's actually two it was 2% in 2017. Oh, it's still 2%. Today, maybe it's 4%. Anyway, point is the needle has not moved. So yeah, we need we need more of you to more women.

Dia Bondi 37:08

Yeah. Understanding completely that this is not woman's fault.

Maria Ross 37:12

No, it's not. It's not that they're not asking enough. Let's,

Dia Bondi 37:15

let's put that out there. Yeah. And, you know, I had a I was on a another in another conversation around this. And it was like, why are you focusing on women? Is it because women have a difficult time asking? I'm like, No, I mean, yes. But so does everybody and that in even if it's true, that's not I'm not like, you can do it ladies. Like that's not that's kind of not the stance I take. I'm more like, Okay, what strategically can get you where you want to go more quickly? If you're hitting roadblocks in one place? Like, what else could you ask for? Because sometimes, maybe you need to ask, but you've been asking for the money and you're getting, you're just getting nowhere on that. Maybe we need to like what if we made more more asks around growing your influence, like this legal example I gave you grow a particular network to get into powerful rooms and build relationships that then let you make asks around money later to the right audience, because they get who you are. Do you know what I mean? More About like that than it is about, oh, they're there, you know, because that's not, you know, well, there's consternation and there should be you know, there should be it's true that there is backlash to women advocating for themselves? My answer cannot be Well, then don't do it. I'm sorry, that can't i can't be around. But the whole idea here is to help women ask for more and get it and strategic creative ways. And like an auctioneer's that don't leave any opportunity on the table such that they can, we can put more money and resources in the hands of women so that we can sort of just changes everything for all of us. Right. So that's where I live with this. Now. I have, you know, of course, my brain is on fire around like, okay, so this is the first book, is there one for sales teams? Is there one for you know, is there one for recent graduates? Is there yes, maybe there is? So how we get to that million? I don't know. And maybe it'll happen with this book. We never know.

38:55

I know. And maybe the million will be upped, as part of your Zoho move.

Dia Bondi 38:59

I don't know. I'm kind of open. I don't Yeah, I kind of open to see what might happen. And well, a million sounds really big and great. Like when I get one note from somebody last week, I got a note from somebody that said, I just negotiated a package I never would have imagined was possible for me. I wouldn't have done it without this content. And I can't even like when I hear that stuff. I'm like, let's go. Yeah,

39:21

yeah, let's go.

Maria Ross 39:22

We'll do this has been awesome. I'm so excited for the book. I hope everybody will check it out. Ask like an auctioneer, how to ask for more, and get it available in all the places and we will have a link in the show notes as well. We're also going to have a link to your wonderful podcast, leading with who you are. You've had some great guests on there, really including you insights. Thank you. And also, I'll put a link to your TEDx talk as well so people can check that out. But for those on the go, who don't have access to the show notes right now, just real quickly, where's the best place they can connect with you or learn more about you?

Dia Bondi 39:52

Go to deobandi.com dabondi.com

39:57

Perfect. Thanks for your time today. Thanks so much.

Maria Ross 40:00

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