

Meet Diane Mentzer, COO Coach at Diane Integrates, LLC

Jim Ries: Hello and welcome to Java with Jim. I'm Jim Ries, Director of Business Development at Offit Kurman. Joined here today with my friend Diane Mentzer, who is COO Coach at Diane Integrates. Diane, how are you today?

Diane Mentzer: I'm doing great, Jim, how are you?

Jim Ries: Life is good. No complaints here. Love the background. Everything looks wonderful. Let's jump in. So Diane, tell us about Diane Integrates, what do you do there and what makes what you do different from other coaches or consultants that are in the same industry?

Diane Mentzer: Yeah. Well, that's a great question, Jim.

Thank you for asking. So, we know when you're working through a challenge with somebody who really gets it, that great feeling that you have, you're energized, the ideas are flowing, you're seeing things you might have missed 'cause you've got that other perspective.

Well, COOs hardly ever get to experience that. [00:01:00] Because even when you're in a really great company that has an amazing CEO, you've got a terrific team. They don't have any peers, right? Because they're sort of in between the CEO and the rest of the company. They're working on bringing that vision to life.

So it's lonely at the top for them too. And the CEO that they're working with in most cases, sees the world completely differently, operates differently, which is great, but it adds challenges to the mix. And there are lots of coaches out there working with founders and CEOs on strategy and what the vision is and growth and focusing on that.

Hardly anyone's working with COOs on execution. It's just not being done. And I spent my career as a second in command, either to a division director or a business owner. And yeah, I've got degrees in management and certifications, but more importantly, I've made all the mistakes. [00:02:00] Right? Plenty of them.

Plenty of them more than once, right? I've made lots and lots of mistakes and learned a lot of this the hard way because it's stuff that people aren't talking about. And so when I'm coaching a COO and I'm helping them understand how to communicate with their CEO in a way that they both get what they need, how to manage that flood or strong flow of ideas that especially visionary CEOs are bringing in every day, and how to get the team to step up so they don't have to keep jumping in and rescuing them. I really get where they're coming from, where they wanna go, and what's in the way, because I've lived it, right?

And we always start with what's most pressing for them right now. So yeah, I have my approach, my way of working the things that I wanna bring in, but I weave them in based on what their immediate need is. Because when you're so focused on something that's a real problem for you, I could spend hours talking about [00:03:00] something that would be really helpful to you.

Next month, you're not going to hear it. I'm not gonna retain it. So it's all about what is really most helpful right now. And then how does that flow and I've helped with tactics around

handling really tough conversations. One of my clients turned somebody who had been a top performer. They had really tanked and were on the brink of termination.

They were able to turn 'em around and that was really cool. I've helped with some other strategies and tactics for handling different challenges in the moment, but it's funny when I talk to my clients and at the end of each session, like, how are things going? What they always say is, it's just so great to have somebody to talk to, to work things through.

Jim Ries: Well, you might have answered my next question, which is, when it comes to Diane Integrates, what are you most proud of?

Diane Mentzer: Yeah, it really is, I'm most proud of freeing COOs and some CEOs who are still filling both [00:04:00] roles from overwhelm. And seeing the relief. I see the relief that they get in our sessions, their posture changes, they're able to breathe.

They go from being all tense at the beginning to just being more relaxed and working through things. One of my clients, I was asking her to describe, doing a little bit of that market research. So what do you value out of this? And she's like, it's just really hard to put into words.

But I just have this sense of relief when I see your name on my calendar. And what popped into my head was the old York Peppermint Patty get the sensation commercials. Right. I get a cool breeze blowing through my hair when I take a bite of a York Peppermint Patty. So tying into that, and yeah, they get five to 10 hours per week back and they're saving tens or even hundreds of thousands in hidden costs because not as much time's being wasted.

They're able to keep their staff so they aren't having those costs. But really those are like bonuses because being able to, feeling seen and heard and [00:05:00] understood is just so powerful. And then helping them get those communication skills and strategies for themselves so they can go back. The coaching strategies is not often talked about, but as a COO where you're going from being the best individual contributor to getting work done through people, being able to coach your people to step up, super valuable for them.

Jim Ries: Yeah. Yeah. Diane, what do the next six months look like for you and Diane Integrates you got anything coming up that you wanna share with the audience?

Diane Mentzer: Yeah, I'm really looking forward to the next six months. I think this is an exciting year. So EOS, the entrepreneurial operating system and a lot of other ones, they really talk about or highlight how important that CEO COO dynamic is.

But there's not much on the how, so I've created a workshop that really helps them understand how to capitalize on that relationship and use it to strengthen the foundation of the [00:06:00] company and drive sustainable growth. And so that's targeting a little bit out of what I normally do, focused on COOs, that's speaking to both the CEOs and COOs.

And I created a toolkit that goes along with that, some exercises, some questions, some strategies they can use. And I give that away as part of the workshop and be happy to share the link with you if you think your listeners might find it interesting.

Jim Ries: Yeah, that'd be great. We can share that when we post this.

Appreciate that. So Diane, here's the final question, but the fun question, what do most people watching this video not know about you? And does it have anything to do with the color purple?

Diane Mentzer: Well now I have two answers. Do we have enough time for two answers?

Jim Ries: You can make it quick. I think we have time.

Diane Mentzer: Okay, well purple I say I come by it naturally. 'cause I was born in February and Amethyst is the stone and violet is the flower. So it's really very purple and for a [00:07:00] while, purple wasn't a popular color and I was having trouble finding it and I just started hoarding it and gravitating towards it and it just became more of a way of life which I love.

But the thing that I had prepared for the answer to that question is that I'm a West Coast swing dancer. I started with country dancing, two-step, waltz, cha-cha, that stuff, which I do still love, but mostly now dance West coast swing. And it's just so fun. And I got dragged along. My friend wanted to go, she dragged me along to a free lesson and I was just hooked.

And years later I learned that it's one of the best, lead and follow partner dancing like that, is one of the best things that you can do for brain health and to ward off dementia. So I'm like bonus, I've been doing this for a long time and it's just so fun. But it's a very conversational dance.

So the leader will start something and then the follower is adding to it and building with it. And it was just recently that I really realized that is very [00:08:00] much like the CEO COO dynamic. 'cause the CEO or visionary founder comes in with this big idea, which is the leader's got this idea and then the follower is adding to that and helping them bring it to life because you can stand there and think, I want you to do a left side pass with a spin. But if there's nobody to do it, you're just gonna be standing there by yourself on the dance floor. And it really is how the both of them work together that makes a dance really great, which is how both of them work together, make the companies and the teams really great.

Jim Ries: Love it. Love the analogy. Very nice. Nice the way you tied that together with a nice bow. Well, Diane, great to spend time with you today. Really nice. Appreciate it. And I know I'll be seeing you soon. So thanks for joining us.

Diane Mentzer: Thank you, Jim. It was really great seeing you, and I appreciate you having me on.

Jim Ries: All right, see ya. Bye.