[music]

0:00:05.7 Wayne Brown: Hello, I'm Wayne Brown and welcome to the ET Project and this our third episode for January 2023. If you're tuning in for the first time, season's greetings to you. We're delighted to be delivering this podcast for executive talent all over the world, whom we're affectionately referring to as Team ET. In our episode today, our destination is Prague, although while visiting our guests, we do country hop between Finland, Switzerland and Chicago in the States, before nestling back into the beautiful, serene streets that line the capital of the Czech Republic. Our guest today is Ms. Susanna Lahteela. Susanna is a colleague in a program that we're completing together, and when we first met, I made a mental note that this is somebody I need to get on our podcast. One reason in particular is her specialty, and you'll understand more on that shortly, but secondly because of her vibrant and infectious personality that I'm confident you as a listener will engage with. Susanna is a triple champion in Eastern Europe for public speaking, and has built a career as a public speaking coach. So back to my first reason mentioned above, as you can see the communications connection raising its head once again on this show.

0:01:26.7 WB: As a public speaking coach, her focus is with current and future leaders to help them unleash their true potential by gaining respect through speaking with confidence. And as Susanna says, it's always uncomfortable before it's comfortable. During today's conversation, we touch on a number of speaking topics and gain a deeper understanding around the concept of being a competitor, whether in sport or business, and striving for more with a never give up attitude, regardless of the challenges thrown in your path. The objective being to learn and then grow, confronting each challenge head on. If you look at Susanna's LinkedIn page, you'll see a classic example of this in a story she posted about how to overcome unexpected events in a lead up to an important activity, in this case, a live public speaking competition. It's an inspirational conversation, I truly encourage you all to listen intently for the next 40 minutes or so, as Susanna and I converse in this episode titled, From Sport to Public Speaking to Coaching Leaders, How to Communicate.

0:02:42.1 S3: Welcome to the ET Project, a podcast for those executive talents determined to release their true potential and create an impact. Join our veteran coach and mentor, Wayne Brown, as we unpack an exciting future together.

0:02:58.1 WB: All right, so Team ET, welcome to another week. And it's been an exciting week. There's a lot happening in the last months. And you will have heard me talking in the intro that this week we've hopped aboard the virtual jet once again. We've landed in the Czech Republic and in the capital city of Prague. So we have a really fascinating guest and I'm excited to get you to listen to the story behind our guest today. Susanna, welcome to the show. It's really great to have you on board and I'm looking forward to our conversation. For those that listen to the intro, of course, you would have heard me talk about Susanna has this three time Eastern European public speaking championship under her belt. And of course, that probably gives you an indication of what we're going to be talking a lot about today, which is communication and in particular, leadership and how communication can help with influence with leaders and can be very supportive as you're developing as a leader, which is very relevant for all of you. So, Susanna, I'm excited to get into our conversation.

0:04:06.6 Susanna Lahteela: Thank you, Wayne. I'm super excited to be a part of the podcast. It's been a pleasure so far. So looking forward for our conversation as well.

0:04:13.4 WB: You know, I always kick off with the same question. It probably bores listeners and I'm sorry for it, but I'm always interested. Do you have any fun facts that you'd like to share?

0:04:23.8 SL: I have one particular that I always say in every time when someone asks about a fun fact, and that is even though your podcasters might not see me, I'm a relatively small woman and I'm blonde from Finland, yet still I have been a security guard in my life. That used to be my job. And it's normally irritating people when I tell that and it's telling always people are answering, "How can you be a security guard?" And I'm always hitting back with, "Well, the brain is quite a big muscle too." And it's just that it just comes across with the communication and everything, how you can maintain security even with just words. So it's definitely a fun fact of my past.

0:05:04.7 WB: I remember you told me that when we first connected and I was shocked, right? And nobody can see us. We're just doing audio, but you're very fine frame.

0:05:16.0 SL: Very petite, yes.

0:05:16.3 WB: Yes. So when you think of a security guard, you normally think of the bodybuilding type person.

0:05:23.3 SL: Definitely. Definitely. Definitely.

0:05:27.3 WB: Yeah. So you mentioned you're from Finland. Maybe you could share a little bit of your background and who you are, where you come from and what you've been doing.

0:05:35.4 SL: Sure. Happy to do that. I come from Finland originally, as you mentioned already, and I've been traveling ever since quite a lot when I left. I left originally because I met, tada, my husband and that's the fairytale where it started. He's from America. So we moved right away to Chicago where he's from. A big cultural difference coming from Finland, moving to Chicago where I thought everybody's killed and it's just guns and war every day. And that was a little Finland stereotype that I had. But definitely moving abroad was a huge step for mine. I was living abroad already when I was 17.

0:06:13.9 SL: I was partially living in Paris and then I moved around quite a bit with exchange student in school. So living abroad was already somewhat familiar to me and working with cultures. But my husband played professionally volleyball and that allowed me to travel quite a bit on different countries. And that's where the literal journey started. And we moved to Switzerland and back to Chicago. And after that, moving to Czech Republic where we then ended up staying as well for a little bit, partially because of this little pandemic that we have going around. But mostly because he's getting older and volleyball was already a little bit towards the done. So yeah, we stayed in Prague and that's where I found a career and continued my life. And ever since lived and loved Prague mostly because of the beer, but also because of the country. It's very pretty. But about the traveling side, that's where I come from.

0:07:12.2 WB: I've been to Prague. It is a beautiful city. It's one of my favorite European cities for sure.

0:07:17.5 SL: Gorgeous.

0:07:18.9 WB: You also mentioned Chicago. I've been in that...

0:07:21.9 SL: Also gorgeous.

0:07:25.3 WB: Yeah, also a very gorgeous city. And I was totally blown away to be honest the first time I went there. However, I also had that stereotype that you mentioned about people being shot everywhere. I can distinctly recall sitting out on the Starbucks outside the shop, just at a table at Starbucks. And I was concerned. I was thinking drive-by shootings. I hear about this all the time in Chicago. I'm at risk. I can distinctly remember the stress level going immediately up. So it's quite amazing.

0:07:58.2 SL: It actually gets easier the more you live there. I lived there about six months on one point and that's when I started working there and everything. I think my husband was more nervous for me than me. And I just had in the back of my mind, "oh, I'm a security guard. I can do whatever." And then I realized maybe I can talk someone out of a gun if that would come across. But thankfully so far so good and I'm still happy living and loving Chicago, so.

0:08:26.0 WB: Yeah, it's been my experience that most of the stereotype thinking that we have is typically that, right? And when you get to experience it up close and personal, it's never...

0:08:34.3 SL: It changes.

0:08:35.7 WB: Never quite that way. Yeah, which is...

0:08:38.2 SL: Indeed. I had a lot of people in Chicago asking me, oh, so have you have you ever had a pet penguin or so you guys have just polar bears walking around your streets and do you live in an igloo? And I honestly thought these has to be jokes. And then I realized they are not. People actually think this when it comes to in the States. Obviously very small percentual, but it's just insane that there can be people who actually are thinking that we live in igloos. Rather do, I did use them a little bit. I said, "oh, yeah, for sure. I have this penguin. His name was Martin." And I've made up this whole cover story. And then like months later, I told them I was lying the whole time. And they kept telling to their friends, "oh, I know this Finn who has a pet penguin." It was hilarious.

0:09:22.9 WB: You do have a direct line to Santa, of course. Right? And the reindeer is taking you there every year.

0:09:27.0 SL: Oh, definitely, yes. He's my grandpa. For sure.

0:09:32.1 WB: Fantastic. I'll let my daughter know that I was speaking with somebody that can connect directly. I look forward to that. Anything going on in your world at the moment, apart from newly married, of course. Congratulations, by the way.

0:09:47.3 SL: Thank you so much.

0:09:47.6 WB: Anything going on in the world that's exciting you?

0:09:50.2 SL: For myself, it has to be my career at the moment. It's it's definitely an exciting... It's exciting every single day, no matter who I come across, who I can talk with. It's just it's so valuable when I can share some of my values with people. And I absolutely love it to my heart. But at the same time, I would be lying if I wouldn't say our soccer career. I'm also playing soccer here in Prague and we are actually hopefully being promoted this year to the second league. That would be very, very, very great. And would just combine my 2022, 2023 kind of love to soccer as I'm also a huge Messi fan. So he finally got the trophy he deserves. So hopefully we can get that to this year with our team in Prague. So that would be that would be very great.

0:10:38.0 WB: It was quite a spectacular game, of course. And we're releasing the show at the moment. I guess the dates are around March sometime, but we recorded this show a little bit earlier than this. The World Cup is not that old for us. So for those who listen at the moment to the recording, you might think that's a bit strange. That was a few months ago, maybe. But yeah, that's not so.

0:11:03.0 SL: Messi will deserve it even years from now.

0:11:07.0 WB: What I found really interesting was the guy that scored the hat trick in a final.

0:11:11.3 SL: Ah, Mbappé, yeah.

0:11:14.3 WB: Not only a hat trick, but also kicked one of one of the penalty goals. So he literally put the ball in the net four times was on the losing side. That's phenomenal.

0:11:26.7 SL: That's unfortunate. But I mean, that's just going to skyrocket his career, I'm sure. And he's so young still. So he has the time. So it's a brilliant player as well.

0:11:35.1 WB: Very true. What I'd love to hear from you is in relation to your career overall, not necessarily just about your coaching career now, but anything in the past as well that you can think of. That was somewhat pivotal for you that led you in this direction to where you are at the moment.

0:11:55.8 SL: I would be lying, Wayne, if I didn't say it's the trophies of Eastern European Championship. It's definitely something that when when I won the first year, so I won one of the one of the championships on 2021. And and then that's what is kind of my realization that I can do this. I can public speak in English, which is not my native language. And that's where I kind of took a small steps towards it was like a little trampoline towards something new. And then the second year when I competed again that year, I competed in three different categories. I got first in two of them and the second place for one of them in the Eastern European Championships. And that definitely was the pivotal point of I realized that this is what I need to do. This is what I was born to do. And this is this is my path. And it truly just skyrocketed my mind to what I can be and how much I can help people in the future. So I definitely would be lying. And I think it would be unfair for me not to use that as the answer for that question. So definitely that that was just a very big highlight.

0:13:05.5 WB: I can only imagine the feeling and the elation that must come with it.

0:13:11.9 SL: Yes. After you pass out and cry a little bit, it definitely is great.

0:13:16.7 WB: This lead into this was through Toastmasters, I believe, right?

0:13:21.7 SL: Yes. Yes, indeed.

0:13:22.0 WB: And for any leader that's listening, looking for an organization to practice public speaking, then you know, Toastmasters is probably the number one world organization in this regard. I have had the pleasure of working with several people who have been highly ranked as well. It's great to connect with you and...

0:13:42.0 SL: Toastmasters really is... I like to call it your playground in public speaking. It's a fabulous organization where you can just practice and get feedback. Definitely not individually the best to learn, but as a group. And if you want to learn just just to get out there and just to talk to people, Toastmasters is fabulous. I have nothing bad to say about the organization. It's the core reason why I'm doing public speaking to this day. It definitely broke my shell towards this area. So I definitely have to give a huge shout out to that organization.

0:14:15.1 WB: You offer the perfect scenario if you tie it together with as a coach in public speaking and then you have an avenue through Toastmasters to practice it through.

0:14:25.8 SL: Yeah, I normally recommend to all of my clients as well to join Toastmasters unless they're already part of it, just because it's just such a fabulous way of where you can practice and you have all the time in the world to practice. So it's great.

0:14:38.0 WB: And just for anyone wondering, no affiliation with Toastmasters. Just a big fan.

0:14:42.8 SL: No. I wish.

0:14:48.7 WB: I've seen many of the product that's produced and it's very high quality. So far, I understand that you love traveling. You're a sports person.

0:14:56.4 SL: Indeed, very competitive.

0:15:00.4 WB: Very competitive. But I have to say, none of that fits with my stereotypical view of the Finnish.

0:15:11.3 SL: Indeed, I'm not normal Finn. No, I get this a lot. And even my father-in-law had it in his speech in our wedding saying, I don't think Susanna is from Finland. My mother had an argument with that. But it was definitely a funny joke. I've always been kind of an outcast in Finland. I've been a little more talkative. I've been a little more socialized. I've been a little more smiling than everybody else. It's definitely a culture that you need to kind of get into the people and get to know them to really see the true them or just have them to drink a lot of alcohol and they will show the true side as well. That's the other point. I am very American that I didn't know of until I moved to the States. It was definitely a realization like, oh, wow, maybe I belong here. It was indeed great.

0:16:02.7 WB: Yeah, it's incredible. I work for a Finnish company for for 10 years. So I understand exactly what you're saying. And hence my comment. Also, to your point about drinking a lot of alcohol, there is a lot of love of that white fluid called vodka. I've noticed.

0:16:20.9 SL: Unfortunately, but definitely.

0:16:24.8 WB: Let's move into talking about all things communicative and particularly around the leadership area. So if we look at what brought you into this field, apart from the public speaking and the acknowledgement of you have a talent in this area and you needed to grow it. What was your career prior to the going out into coaching? So how did you move into this area with the leadership?

0:16:56.0 SL: I had many different roles in the past where I was in leadership positions. But the latest one that I have, I was working with a Fortune 500 company here in Prague and I was being an internal communication advisor globally in the company. And I loved my job. It was great. I just realized eventually that corporation and corporate work is not my alley. I need to spread my wings and do something for myself. But while I was working in this company, I definitely realized that there is a huge lack of communication towards the leadership and going towards the entry level people. And it made me furious. It was something that I was constantly pointing out. I was the out norm who was always saying, why are you not communicating this directly to us? Which obviously for any of your listeners who are in corporation, you might think, "she's crazy." But but definitely I love challenging people. And that definitely was an area where I could do that. And it was it was well received as well. And it was kind of open minds of, oh, I have not been direct conversation towards my peeps.

0:18:01.8 SL: And and that's when I realized it's not just that corporation. I was talking with multiple people around me who worked in multiple different corporations in multiple different countries. And they all said, "oh, but Susanna, that's just corporate. That's just how it is." And I thought in my head, "how can this be how it is when leaders are rather machines than humans?" And it was insane for me to realize that this is what we have kind of called now the norm of the leader can just be a title rather than be a coworker still. And remember where you come from. And and then I realized it kind of happens naturally when you are getting these titles and you're getting higher salary and you don't think I should be any more in their level or I should be a little higher. And I think that's sad because I think we should always remember the human side of it. And that's when I started really realizing that it's about the communication. We don't know how to express our emotions correctly. We don't know how to communicate correctly. It's something we've just unfortunately lost over the years. Maybe it's because of the smartphones that we could just send a message rather than call, or I don't know what is it about it?

0:19:10.4 SL: Is it the pandemic that made it even worse? But it's something that I definitely want to make a difference as much as I can being in this world. And that's where I realized that those leaders just need help. They just don't know how to do it. And that's that's what I'm there for. That's where that's my role so far and in the past. So where I come from.

0:19:30.3 WB: And I think that's a good question. You know, what is the trigger or is there a trigger or is it a slow transgression to this point or lack of communication? My own feeling is probably the latter. So there's a number of factors that are adding to the scenario that we have now where there's the breakdown in communication. And as more and more people go freelance, they're working more virtually, working from home. The face to face is gradually disappearing. I don't know what the solution is, but it's definitely something that has to be addressed.

0:20:13.0 SL: I felt like it was just I see it constantly that leaders don't even realize how little they communicate towards their employees. It's sad to realize that that's where we came... That's where we have come from. And that's where we are now. So that's why I love challenging people and I love telling them, why don't you just talk to the people? Why don't you just meet them up for a beer? Like just communicate with them, but don't communicate about work. Communicate about yourself, your life, all of that, because it's just we forget it so easily because we create this wall for work so we can have a work life balance. But there can be both, even if you are human for your employees. So it's more of a realization and then working towards the better communication after that.

0:20:58.1 WB: I can imagine trust coming out of the exercise and you start to build a relationship. You know, all the things that you need for a strongly performing team or organization. So, yeah, it's super critical. What I can see and I don't know if it's coming across in the audio for the viewers or listeners, but I can see that you are very passionate about the topic. And I'm wondering how much you feel that passion and even having a purpose is critical for the role of communicating effectively.

0:21:38.4 SL: I feel like you can have less passion. I have a passion 100% of what I'm doing and I love every day of it. But even when I meet with these leaders and I see that some of them maybe got the role just because they worked in the corporate for that long and they were just kind of pushed to take the role rather than having a passion to apply for it. It's insane how much you can change the mind and you can actually communicate towards it. But I would rather than answering to your question directly, I would say that it is insanely important to have that passion when you're trying to come across to people why it's important. So in my shoes, I could not do what I'm doing because it wouldn't come out authentically for those leaders who desperately need the help without knowing that they need the help. But when it comes to the leaders, passion is something you can create. It's something you can grow. It's just something you maybe if you didn't address it well enough with the communication point of view, you don't know that it's there or you just lost it over the years.

0:22:38.0 SL: But it's a great place for myself to have and with my passion, I'm loving every day when I see the results with my clients. I see them coming back to me saying, "oh my God, I opened up with my family more because I realized that I can communicate better or I realized how important the communication is." So it goes so well beyond with just your employees. It goes just with yourself communicating to your family, to yourself, to your peers, to everybody. It's so crucial and it's just super sad that we've kind of lost it over the years. But that's why I'm here. So I'm doing the best I can to make a difference towards better.

0:23:15.5 WB: And you mentioned a very important word there, I think, authentic. Talk about how being authentic as a leader comes across through their communication. If you don't mind.

0:23:30.0 SL: Yes. Yes. So for example, I do have corporate workshops that I work with and one of them is particularly for leaders. And it's about the leadership, but not really about the leadership itself. It's more of the human connection behind the leader. And we're always going through we're doing a lot of self-reflection and we're doing a lot of problem solving in this way. And in a gentle way, we're going about kind of seeing maybe if you are the problem, if your communication methods are the problem rather than your employees who you might be blaming. And it's not the case, nearly not at all. But there is so many times when unfortunately the people who are just a little too used to what they're doing and they've done it for years. They start to be a little more machine about it rather than staying in the human side. And that's where I always try and tend to remind the people, if you're not authentic, the people won't follow you. They will start finding new jobs. They will start finding seeing if the grass is greener on the other side. Everyone is a human. We want a human leader.

0:24:37.0 SL: But it's just we tend to forget to look back where we came from. Look back, "Hey, when I was an entry level person, would I work with a leader like this?" But it's so much more towards the self-reflection and going through of how long have you been in the role and have you actually forgot the human side or are you just doing this just because it gives you a salary every month? So it's a huge difference there. And the authenticity just goes in between and it's just juggling there trying to be on both sides. But unless you actually control it and learn the better communication methods, people will respect you more when you do that. And it's just human nature.

0:25:17.2 WB: If I was to have a talent from the audience who said, "Wayne, I need help in my communication." And I sent them across to Susanna. What would you do with them? How would you bring them on board and understand what their needs are and start working with them?

0:25:37.0 SL: So how I see everything is I make every single one of my clients authentic and personal because that's the only way how it works with communications. One size fits all does not work in this niche. That's just how it is. So with myself, how I do it, I always have I say it's a 20 minute meeting, but I love talking. People love talking. It normally goes about 30 to 40 minutes. So we communicate and I kind of see how the personality is. What's the core actually issue behind it? And is there a pain point that we can actually acknowledge already on that 30 minute call? Just because it's quite factual that it's easier to see something that you're doing wrong from the outsider perspective. And as I've talked with you before, and I'm very straightforward, and that's something that I take huge proud of because I see even in my niche, these coaches who are kind of just trying to make money out of a niche just because it's a niche where there is not that much talent. And there's a lot of people who are afraid of public speaking, for example. And they forget that there is a human on the other side and maybe they are not afraid of public speaking.

0:26:46.7 SL: They might be the greatest speakers that this world has seen, but they have something where they don't come across authentic because they are just talking the words rather than putting the emotion behind it. So there's so many different issues that you can have when it comes to the public speaking side of the whole area of the communication. So in that call, we kind of acknowledge, how could I help? I'm telling them, how could I help? I'm seeing my point of view. I am being extremely straightforward and brutally honest. So it's something I always acknowledge before the call. I'm always saying, "if I see a problem, I will tell it to you." It's something you don't get from all the coaches. I know multiple ones who do try to do it as well. And it's crucial, in my opinion, in coaching when you can say what's on your mind and what's on your heart, because I want my clients to say to me as well. I'm totally fine being challenged. I'm totally fine having the follow up questions and challenging my thought and we can always communicate further with it. But that's where the first step towards communication starts from.

0:27:47.7 SL: I see how they acknowledge some of the mistakes maybe that they have done in the past. I see how they acknowledge their feelings, how they acknowledge overall the communication and how they communicate. And this call is just completely, I offer this just for everybody for free. I don't feel like it would be worth it to charge anybody from a call because I feel like there's so many people who just needs to be pointed out what is there. They might not even need coaching. But in the end, I do tell them how I could help. And then I tell them what the package options are, how I could help and what would be the option that we could continue with. I have clients mostly around the world. So mostly I work through Zoom, but I do have also clients in person. Every time if I happen to be in that country, I normally tend to go and see my clients in person and have a coffee with them and just communicate how they feel or even if it's a past client, just to see how they changed. And it's just the human touch towards it is extremely important for myself.

0:28:49.6 SL: And that's also a reason why I don't work with that many clients at once because I do want to keep it personal. I don't want to turn out to be a machine. I don't want to go meeting to meeting to meeting to meeting, just repeating the same thing. I'm always trying to make it personal for my clients. And that's why I have a limited amount of positions for clients all the time. But it's better for me because I'm working only for some weeks with clients and then I can work with some right after or I contact them afterwards if I say, "Okay, now I would have free. Do you want to do you want to work with me now or do you have no time where you could invest your time and your energy towards learning?" And then we go from there. But mostly I always find a good gap, at least for a little package, if they don't want to take the full seven weeks of intense public speaking learning. So it's a very important area for me that I keep it very personalized and very human. So that's a main value in my coaching.

0:29:48.2 WB: And what is it that you help them with? Is it their confidence in public speaking? Is it the pitch, the way they use their voice or is it all these different different approaches?

0:30:00.4 SL: So, yes. So as I said, I have multiple different packages. For example, as I mentioned, the seven weeks massive program that's literally going from scratch zero to all the way for knowing everything there is to know about public speaking. It's insane and intense seven weeks, but it's worth it. I've seen so many results from people. However, I don't always tell that this is the best option for people. If I, for example, see that someone is very confident, they just don't know how to have a structure. Then I offer them a little less of a let's say four weeks program or three weeks program. And then we go from there and work from there. So it's as I said, to keep it personalized and keep it to the value that the customer can actually get something out of it. Because I don't want someone to go through one week fully of how to become more comfortable and confident when they are the most confident people in the world. It's something that I'm not trying to step on anybody's toes. If you feel confident in your skin, I love it and I will respect it.

0:30:58.5 SL: And then we will learn something else. But yeah, the main aspects that I do work with people, I have clients who are extremely nervous of public speaking. And it's just terrifying to their guts. It's just they cannot do it. They are. I love working with these people. They are extremely great because when you see the results, they are so happy and it's pure joy that comes out of them. And it's insane as a coach to see. And I absolutely love that. And then I work with people who just have a little bit of problem of people not listening while they're doing their presentations. They might be very confident, but people go to their phones or people are not really there. Or when you ask a follow up question, nobody can answer because they actually weren't listening to you. This happens a lot.

0:31:46.5 SL: So, yeah. So then I work with these people of just how to make more into your speaking, how to become a more leader of a speaker rather than just speaking. And then I work with some people with just very minor areas. I have, for example, to this day, we have thousands of people creating content online, which is great.

0:32:07.5 SL: And I work with some people who are creating content, let's say LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram. Those are the three that I have right now. And then we work on how that content could be better, how how they could get more views towards it if they are just talking it. It's different if they're doing some extreme content that has nothing to do with public speaking. No, I'm your wrong coach. There's for sure a correct one for that, too. But if they're doing just speaking videos, that's where I help a little bit more of how that could be more beneficial for their viewers and how they could get more viewers. And and it's all three of them are extremely different, but all of them are very crucially important. So it's a pleasure of mine to work with my clients, no matter what the issue is.

0:32:53.4 WB: I'm about to embark on a research project looking at how leaders can become more effective through their communication, through their storytelling communication during change initiatives. So typically what we we've learned through neuroscience studies in the last decade is that humans don't like uncertainty and change is all about uncertainty in the majority of cases where they don't have the control over it. And therefore it creates this threat response in the brain. What my research is looking at is how can leaders become more effective at reducing that threat response? I'm just wondering, I was listening while you were talking, I was just wondering within your coaching, do you cover storytelling and or do you talk about change for leaders and how to communicate change better change initiatives better? For storytelling, that is a crucial part of public speaking. It is something I do with every single one of these areas that I work with. It's people can relate to stories. If you can deliver a story, people will watch it. People will listen to it. It's just human. So, yes, definitely storytelling is a part of every single one of my coaching for the change part. That's something I implement.

0:34:16.5 SL: It is in the leadership workshop that I do, but it is also something I implement if I see the need for that specific individual. Because there are some people who know very clearly how to lead a change, but they don't know how to lead the everyday. So it's an interesting balance between those two. But yeah, I do implement that also when it's needed. But there is such, I think it's in my opinion, as far as I've seen, I think it's 50/50. Some people really know how to take an action when there's a change and something crucial is happening. And then the other 50 is just helpless. So it's always something, as I said in the first call, I'm always taking notes. I'm always taking as much information out, asking a bunch of questions. It's uncomfortable, but I love it. And it's definitely something that I hold true to my heart because then when I see that maybe that change part would be very interesting and needed for that individual, then we implement it into the package and we go from there. So definitely.

0:35:17.7 WB: Right. And I can imagine influence and impact are also factors that you analyze during that conversation. And you have that capability built somewhere into your packages as well.

0:35:32.0 SL: Yes, yes. As I said, with the seven weeks, I did use the word insane for a reason because that seven weeks truly is you need to have the time, you need to have the investment to yourself, you need to have the energy to go through it because it's just so much about public speaking and it's exercise, it's homework. It's so crucial that you can put all of your energy into it that time. So and that's why there's a lot of my clients who want to start with the seven weeks, but I can clearly see that they don't have the time or the energy right now. And that's why we start with something smaller first to see if they could continue with the seven weeks and then we continue forward, if we see the need there still. But that's definitely something that I have in there.

0:36:17.7 WB: Well, it sounds incredible, Susanna. Is there anything that we haven't touched on? I'm just conscious of the time. Is there anything we haven't touched on that you think would be valuable to cover?

0:36:30.8 SL: Well, when I looked at your podcast and I was obviously had our meeting before as well, so I think we touched quite a bit of the parts that I teach for leaders. I do want to highlight one last thing for the leader point of view because I do work also with the employees. I do work with the people who they are the bosses to, who they are these critical leaders to. So for them and for anyone who wants to be a leader in the future but isn't right now, that is always going to be crucial to know how to communicate. That's never going to go away. No matter how much there is all these kind of communication channels where you can just write a message, communication is something that will never go away. We will always need to communicate. So that's something I do want to highlight that even if some of your followers or your listeners are future leaders or aren't leaders at the moment or don't feel like a leader at the moment, I still do work with them just because I want to highlight that it's not only for leaders, it's definitely for anybody who I work with.

0:37:34.8 SL: The only limit that I have is I don't work with anybody who doesn't know English, obviously. And then I don't work with people who are 16 and under because I feel like there isn't yet enough of the emotion behind it where you can actually make a difference and I want them to build it by themselves and I want them to build their own point of views and views to life because I have a lot of clients of mine who come to me saying, "my son would really benefit from this, can he work with you?" And I always tell them, "Well, now you know how to communicate better, now go home and show him how you communicate. That's already going to make a big difference for you and your son." But in case things don't work better by the time when he's 17, I do work with everybody over 17 and plus. Just because I've noticed that that's kind of the age where you kind of know already what you are in your mind. Yes, you're still a child, but it's still you have your own brain, you are capable of choosing what you want to be in the future.

0:38:36.3 SL: So that's definitely just something I want to point out because I have a lot of people always coming to me, "Oh, can I put my son or daughter there?" It's always something I want to point out as a little self-reflection back off, see where that's coming from. It's your son, it's your daughter. Let's go from the parenting side and show where the leadership and where the emotion and the communication comes from. And they will learn already a lot from that.

0:39:00.9 WB: It certainly sounds like an incredible journey, Susanna. Where would people connect with you? Where's the best place they can find you?

0:39:08.3 SL: Yes, so well, right now you can find me just from LinkedIn with my name is probably going to be the easiest for you to find. But you can also just go right away through my website and you can get there right away the link of booking a call with you, susannalahteela.coach. And that's where you can find me. And then there's right away a link of booking in a call. And that's where we can go ahead and see how I could help you better and see what I could do for you.

0:39:39.2 WB: Right. And people can follow you on LinkedIn, as you mentioned, as well.

0:39:43.1 SL: Definitely, definitely. I'm active in LinkedIn. I'm also in social media, in Facebook and Instagram, if any of your followers are in these social media as well. But LinkedIn definitely is my most active platform.

0:39:56.2 WB: It's been a wonderful conversation, as expected...

0:40:00.8 SL: Likewise.

0:40:01.8 WB: Based on our first connection. And I've really learned a lot myself. And I'm sure our listeners have learned a heap. I hope that people reach out and connect with you. You offer a fantastic service. And everyone that knows me knows that I have the utmost respect for communication as one of the pillars of sound leadership. And therefore, I like to have regular guests on the show that talk about communication. And Susanna, you've added to that arsenal as well. So thank you for all that.

0:40:40.9 SL: Thank you so much. I truly appreciate your podcast and the values. Definitely, if communication is one of them, it's definitely crossing to my heart a lot.

[music]

0:40:52.3 S3: Thank you for joining us on the ET Project, a show for executive talent development. Until next time, check out our site for free videos, e-books, webinars and blogs at coaching4companies.com.

[music]