



60 Seconds with...

REYNA MATTHES



Reyna has been an executive coach since 2000, and is a founding Director of Executive Central. She has a busy schedule of individual coaching, group programs, keynote speaking and training coaches through the Executive Central Coaching Academy. I caught her after work one evening at her beloved Manly.

You wear a lot of different hats in the coaching sphere. What do you enjoy the most?

All of it, really! I enjoy the variety. I love engaging with audiences when I'm speaking. It's great to bring things to the table for discussion, and see people become really animated. I love the Coaching Academy because the extended time together means that I can see where the participants are going with their own coaching journeys. Individual coaching is always a joy as it provides the opportunity to develop deep relationships over time. I also love my work with Strengths. It's great when people see the value and impact of using their strengths.

What energises you most in all this work?

I get a huge kick out of helping people map their careers. I get them to think about all aspects of it. I use a Career Map to help them think through their aspirations as a leader, what they want to achieve, and how to get the right support so they get where they want to go. I can use my own strengths in this activity!

What are your strengths and how do they help you in coaching??

Futuristic – seeing the future, opportunities, stretching people, setting strategies
Activator – whatever they bring to the table, I'll get it going and make it happen
Individualisation – finding the uniqueness in people
Maximiser – working with the client to create excellence
Positivity – well it's just who I am really!
I bring this to all my work.

What energises you outside of work?

I'm an ocean swimmer. I train regularly and swim in as many races as I can.

What do you think about when you're out there, or do you not think?

I do have thoughts.... It's a really calm place for me. I look at the seaweed below – and the gropers, turtles and coral. Sometimes it's meditative, sometimes I'm writing a speech, sometimes I'm thinking about my daughter or other family stuff. I love walking out onto the beach, knowing that I've finished a race. The only frustrating thing is when the goggles leak or fog up!

What about sharks?

I see little ones but I just ignore them. Best to block that fear out. I stick by Eleanor Roosevelt's advice to 'Do one thing every day that scares you'. I think we all belong in the ocean so it's best to share it respectfully.

You've been coaching for a long time now. What changes have you seen?

We work in a much more global world now, with change accelerating at a much faster pace. Also people are more interested in positive psychology and developing productive mindsets than they used to be. Fifteen years ago a lot of coaching was remedial – so only something to use if there was a problem. Now it's common for leaders to have a coach. People see the value of it.

I know you're passionate about the Women Leading Program. What changes have you noticed in that space over the years?

Without going into the statistics and policy arguments, I'd say that the main thing I've noticed changing is that it's now firmly on the agenda of all good organisations – large or small. There is a huge focus on diversity and inclusion, and it's good to see the gender agenda still highly visible.

I happen to know that you are an avid traveller. Where are you going next?

I'm going to Lord Howe Island for a week with a group of swimming friends. It's stunningly beautiful there, both above and below the water.