



Q&A with Virginia Diamond

Founder, Diamond Insight

Her Corner (HC):

Tell me a little about your business and what made you decide to take part in the Accelerator?

Virginia Diamond (VD): I faced a crossroads in how I manage and grow my coaching and consulting practice. I've successfully grown and had a thriving practice, but not necessarily thinking through financial targets or marketing systematically. Her Corner has been instrumental in helping me do that, in a way that grows my business, fits my life, and enables me to have greater, more meaningful impact.

HC: Describe the group dynamic and what effect that had on your experience in the program.

VD: Our Accelerator team is full of smart, fun, open women, willing to be honest and vulnerable with each other. Our support for each other, led by the intrepid Fred, made such a difference in our learning and growth!

HC: You had some quick success after starting the program, will you share that with us and the effect it had on your overall mindset about your business?

VD: I realized I had been on autopilot for a few years. I had landed a new contract three years ago which was a game changer for my business. I had spent the last three years really scaling up--and was honestly a bit burnt out. Her Corner helped me see that my client base was not diversified enough; in 2016 it was 96% with that one big client! Now that same client is only 68% of revenue, after just a few months of intentionally focusing on meaningful marketing.

HC: What was the hardest part of the program for you and how did you work through it?

VD: Wrapping my head around the more comprehensive and thorough spreadsheets. Working 1:1 with Fred [the facilitator], as well as in the sessions, really helped. I am not scared of excel or math--took calculus and statistics in college, and worked at the big consulting firms for a number of years. However, having not gone to business school, I didn't have those resources on hand.

HC: How did you use the independent coaching time with the facilitator, and what impact has that had on your business?

VD: Getting clear on goals, how I spend my time. Getting clear on financials, using the spreadsheets. Getting clear on my strategy for pursuing interesting work. And just laughing!

HC: Share your advice for other women considering the Accelerator.

VD: Do it! Don't hesitate! This is one of the best investments I've made in training and development since I started my business in 2004.



Q&A with Marcia Call CEO, TalentFront

Her Corner (HC):

Tell me a little about your business and why you thought now was the time for the Accelerator?

Marcia Call (MC): I started my business in 2012. 2013 was my “Dale Carnegie Year” – I was winning a lot of friends and influencing people, but making almost no money. In 2014, my efforts started to pay off, but I didn’t really feel like I had my hands on the levers and dials that would help me grow. I was in one of the Her Corner dinner groups and felt like I wanted more. I called Fred and told her I thought I was too small. She laughed and said, “It’s not about your size, it’s your mindset. Are you happy where you are or do you want to grow?” Since growth was my focus, I signed up. I want to be in an environment with other women business owners who are focused on the same things I am.

HC: Work/life balance is a tough thing for many women entrepreneurs, did the Accelerator help you in this area, and if so, how?

MC: During our first session, self-care was right out there on the table. This was an entirely new idea for me. I’d always put my head down and worked hard. In my 25-year career, I had spent zero time thinking about self-care, let alone doing anything about it. I was intrigued by this conversation. I committed to spend the first moments of everyday in meditation and self-reflection -- I read and journal. This has become an incredibly centering practice for me.. Her Corner set me on this well-being journey.

HC: How has the Accelerator changed you as a business owner?

MC: Prior to the accelerator, I was on DO mode. Now, I am on REFLECT and DO mode. It’s like a carpenter who measures twice to cut once. I make a lot fewer mistakes and much better decisions. Plus, my investments of time and money pay greater dividends.

HC: What was the most surprising thing you took away from the program?

MC: Two key things jump to mind. First is that you can learn a lot from a business owner of any size. How you spend your time, how to delegate, when to grow are common to businesses of any size. Second, tears are healthy. Having spent most of my career in male-dominated businesses, there was no space for emotion – mine or anyone else’s. Her Corner gave me a safe space to talk (and sometimes cry!) about my business and I knew it was going to be okay.

HC: What is different about your business now?

MC: I am much more mindful of my money – revenue and expenses, income and profitability – than I have ever been before. At this point, I love looking at my P&L, preparing the “line of sight” revenue projections, and poring over the cash flow numbers to figure out when and how to invest in new efforts, project, and staff. I’m definitely a better planner and decision-maker now.