



How Hybrid Leaders & Teams Promote Inclusion in the Workplac...

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SPEAKERS

Ginny Bianco-Mathis, Mitch Simon, Perrine Farque

- M** Mitch Simon 00:10
Welcome to another episode of team anywhere where CEOs, leaders and experts at building teams, companies, organizations and amazing
- G** Ginny Bianco-Mathis 00:21
cultures share how to lead from anywhere in the world. I'm your co host on the east coast. Jim Bianco Matheson, I'm
- M** Mitch Simon 00:28
your co host on the West Coast, Mitch Simon, and we invite you to join us team anywhere. Today on the podcast, we have Corinne farke, author, speaker and expert on diversity and inclusion her book is called inclusion, the ultimate secret for an organization's success. perine shares with us how to create a feeling of inclusion and belonging even with today's dispersed workforce. She gives us tools on how to conduct inclusive meetings, ideas on how to retrain managers. And yes, how to build strong connections where people feel that they belong on their team, anywhere. Hello, and welcome to another episode of team anywhere. I'm your co host Mitch Simon on the west coast and on the east coast. I've got my co host, Dr. Virginia, Bianco Mathis, and today we're excited to have on the podcast

perrine farke, an author, speaker and expert on diversity and inclusion. We're excited to have print on the podcast because we've been searching for the perfect person to help our listeners navigate how to implement diversity, inclusion and belonging in a hybrid world. So great to have you on prain. How are you?

P Perrine Farque 01:45
I'm great. Thanks, Mitch. And thanks for having me today.

M Mitch Simon 01:48
You're so welcome. And for those listeners who haven't figured out your accent, where are you?

P Perrine Farque 01:54
So I'm based in London, United Kingdom. But as you might hear, I also have a bit of a French accent. I'm I was born and bred in France. I'm gonna be a bit of French and English accent in there.

M Mitch Simon 02:04
Wow, great. So that is already a lot of diversity on

G Ginny Bianco-Mathis 02:07
Yeah, that's right.

M Mitch Simon 02:09
So as we do with every guest, please share with us brain. What is the one thing and I love this question, what is the one thing that surprised you the most about yourself?

P Perrine Farque 02:18
I surprised myself by how I guess how much I could I never knew how much I could learn. I, you know, sometimes you have, sometimes you have an image of yourself, you think I'm that person. And actually, when you go through something difficult, like COVID, the pandemic and everything, you discover things that you can do that you didn't know you could do. So just the level of resilience level of great level of perseverance, really was kind

of a discovery for me. I never knew I could do only a thing. So that Yeah, that was a surprise for me. You know,

G Ginny Bianco-Mathis 02:53

I love Yeah, I love what you just said, because it opened up the window for possibilities. And I think almost everyone that are in our kind of world that we live in for the podcast, could probably say the same thing. I hadn't looked at it that way. Yeah, the possibilities. Absolutely wonderful thing.

P Perrine Farque 03:17

I think a lot of people have had to deal with the completely unplanned situation. And we all had to deal with it. Some people dealt with it in different ways. But from my from my perspective was like, okay, the only way through this through it, right? And you discover things that you you do that you never knew where possible, like level of resilience, and just and yeah, that's been a great, great journey for me. Yes.

M Mitch Simon 03:43

So I'm gonna dig, I'm gonna dig a little bit more, because you, you said, You know, I didn't know that I could be that person. So I'd love to ask you, what was that person who you knew yourself to be? And who is that person that you know yourself?

P Perrine Farque 03:57

Yeah. So the the idea of, you know, starting this diversity and inclusion, consultancy, and coaching is something that I had had on my mind for a very long time. And in fact, I was sort of doing that a little bit on this side. But the idea of just throwing myself in it and writing a book about it and publishing a book. I mean, if you'd asked me 10 years ago, would you publish a book? I say, yeah, who are you kidding me? You know, an author, or, but I just did it and it just happened almost naturally. So that's an example of something I've done that I never even thought about, you know, I mean, you know, and so yeah, just pushing myself doing things, new things actually made me realize I can do so many more things that I never knew I could do.

M Mitch Simon 04:46

That's right. That's great. You know, we had we had early in the podcast, we had Mike Robbins on the podcast, and he shared his story of why he was interested in writing a

book, really on inclusion and diversity. What was about your story, your history that you chose diversity and inclusion to write about.

P

Perrine Farque 05:06

Yeah, it's a great question. It's a very personal story, I guess. I've always worked in the technology industry in the software industry. And here in London for a lot of companies. And as you can imagine, it's very straight white male dominated environment and competitive, very competitive environment. And I was often Well, first of all, I was often the only woman in the room. But then when I became a mum of, you know, two young children, I was often the only mum in the room. And when I looked at the table around me, all the other people in leadership were men and their wife was often either not working, or she was working part time and looking after the children while I was working full time, and my husband was working full time. And we had two young children with no childcare. So it was very, very hectic. And you know, they had those late night meetings, 6pm 7pm no problem for them, because they didn't have to worry about the school rather than dinner. I had to worry about that. When I received the call from nursery saying your son is sick, can you pick him up right now he's got fever temperature, I had to go and run. They didn't have to worry about that. So and then all those like small, subtle, you know, acts every day I and just made me feel there must be a better way. Why is it this way. So this is a personal story of feeling. Sometimes I was the only woman in the room, the only mom in the room made me want to, you know, help companies create a more inclusive environment, increase it from mothers, and then in I guess, women and people of color, and LGBT Plus, you know, not just from women and mothers, but every every type of employee should be supported, and be successful in their carrier.

M

Mitch Simon 06:50

Thank you. Thank you for that story. So let's get the terms down. Now, the name of your book is inclusion, the ultimate secret for an organization's success? Yeah. And in the book, you share the definition, as many books do is the definition or the distinction between inclusion and belonging. So what is the difference between inclusion and belonging? And why are they both? Often,

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Perrine Farque 07:11

I think, in my experience, or in my mind, inclusion is really the feeling of being heard and seen and valued for who we are. So when we go to work, and people, you know, say hi, and they say your name? How are you today, and when you share an idea, people listen to your ID, and they, you know, they listen to it, they value your comment and your

feedback. For me that's being included. So for example, I had this amazing inclusive leader called Steve, I always talk about him. He's literally the most inclusive leader I've ever had. And he would come to work in the morning, he would open the door, we had an open space. And see he was our VP of sales. He didn't he was a busy man. I mean, he didn't have to, you know, do all the things. But he would say hi to everybody, he would say everybody's name, he would just go to everyone, even people who were not in his team. And he would say hi, and they say they're cool their name. How are you today? And he would have a nice word for everyone and say, you know, you would remember everything. How was your wife anniversary last night? How is your kids getting better today? You know, how is your your run your marathon training isn't going well, he would just remember everything. And this is an example of an inclusive leader who created through inclusion in the team people felt included. And then belonging, I think is the level beyond this to the sort of the ultimate, you know, the ultimate level where people feel they belong, like, like a team they belong to, like almost a tribe, you know. And I think as human beings, we're all hardwired to belong, like Bernie brown always talks about that really well. We're hard, right? We're here for connection, that's where we're at. We're here for so belonging is when you feel you're part of the tribe, and you're part of something you know, you shared culture. So it's almost the ultimate level above. So they're very close, you know, inclusion, belonging, and belonging is really your you feel they're your family. They're your extended family.

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Mitch Simon 09:05

I'm just wondering how you, you know, how you're looking at? I know your book is really recent. How are you looking at belonging and inclusion as it pertains to those hybrid types of workspaces?

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Perrine Farque 09:15

Yes, no, you're right, because you know, hybrid work has changed the way businesses operate has radically changed the way teams operate around the world. So you know, it is it is here to stay, I believe, at least hybrid world hybrid work is here to stay for many organizations. Not all of them some some, you know, condo, high restaurants, for example, but you know, technology for sure, a lot of industries are going to embrace fully hybrid. So, you know, there are ways that that managers can create inclusion, inclusive environments in hybrid work. And so for example, especially, I think meetings meetings are very important. You know, we all spend a lot of time in meetings. I think I was doing a poll the other day, it's about 70% of our time as employees is spent in meetings. If More. So the way we navigate meetings remotely or even in hybrid settings has changed. So things like monitoring who speaks in meeting because you can have a mom at home with her

children maybe, or she's at home because she has to do the school run in the morning or the school run in the evening, maybe. And so you might have more Actually, I was reading this more male employees who might be physically in the office, maybe because they have less childcare duties. And maybe some mothers are more likely to stay at home and work from home because maybe they are doing the school run or look after an elderly relative. In that case, how do you make sure both are treated equally fairly and heard. So monitoring who speaks in meeting, speaking time, you might even locate someone whose job or task is to monitor speaking time, make sure we allocate similar time doing Round Robin, for example, going around the table observing people's dynamics in meetings as well. If there is any thing like, you know, bullying, or maybe interruption, a lot of interruptions are the people at home interrupted more often than the people in the office, you know, in paying attention to the small things like, you know, gossip or jokes around the watercooler, right. So people in the office might, while we wait for everybody to join, they might make you know, some of his banter or jokes or you know, chat with the people at home might not fully understand or be part of so paying attention to this small things like that. And it's okay to have a face bender and to love and include the people you know, who are remote as well. So those are all things and you might as well take the opportunity of remote work and hybrid work as a as a people thing, or as a leader to revisit your promotion policies. So for example, things might be outdated. If you look at your performance review, and KPIs, your performance review numbers, it might no longer make sense to measure someone's success based on their office presence, for example, or it might no longer make sense to judge someone's performance based on their them helping do certain tasks in the office, like, you know, welcoming new guests and things like that. So just revisiting making sure your performance reviews policies are updated, based on this new setting. Those are all small things that you can do as a leader to create that inclusive environment in hybrid work.



Ginny Bianco-Mathis 12:33

There's two things you said I really, that really resonate with me one is what you just said about really looking at, what are even the definitions of that. You can still have presence. But you better have some bullets underneath that, that include certain things for folks that might be in the office. And you may also demonstrate it if you are hybrid, or virtual. And there's some bullets for that. Yeah. Right. So you take each one of those and broaden the definition. So it's, it's more inclusive. Yeah. I also love and it might mean, free, I think there's an article in this a whole different way of defining facilitation, you mentioned, maybe you have someone whose job it is to all right, who hasn't spoken, who has, oh, wait a minute, if we're going to do some breakout discussions, who's in what groups? And and I heard someone recently say, Oh, we ended up putting up all the people that are virtual in one group and all the people that are in the office and another No, no, no, no, you

have to mix that all up, and then have the technology to make that happen.

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Perrine Farque 13:51

Yes, absolutely. And I think you touched on some good points here, and also training and retraining your leaders and your managers. I think nowadays, a lot of managers are young. I've seen that in technology. A lot of people are in their late 20s, early 30s. They're like straight out of uni, very smart city school smart, but not necessarily emotional intelligence smart. They've never been trained on how to manage a team of people, especially remotely. And so we have this new generation of young, what I call young managers who've never been trained on how to manage people, and they're doing a terrible job at it. And it's not their fault. They've never been trained, but really then that creates an environment that's not very inclusive for lack of education, really not bad intentions, but lack of education. They don't know how to build trust and psychological safety.

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Mitch Simon 14:48

Praying, you know, you talked about your work as a marketing manager and never feeling like you belonged. What can managers do today to make sure their teams feel seen especially in a world where we're not in the office or when we are Others might not be in the office.

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Perrine Farque 15:01

Yeah, and I will answer your question with a story. Because, yeah, you mentioned your story. So I'm in one of my previous roles, I was an employee, and my manager was pretty young, I think she was in her mid 30s. And one thing to mention that we were both in separate continent, you know, I was, um, you know, in the United Kingdom, she was in the US. And so it was very difficult for us all to have a report to build report, you know, being so far away. And so during our one to ones, obviously, remote, everything was remote doing our one to ones, there was no basic, you know, eye contact, or no, you know, how are you or you know, how are things going, it was just straight into business. And that made it really difficult to connect with that with with her to connect on a human level, right. So talking about business was, of course, important, but you know, it's hard to talk about key business issues and challenges when you don't have that basic connection. So one of the things I would definitely advise managers and leaders to do is to, to make sure they make time to build those very, very important connections with their team, right? Even if you're remote, even if you're remote, especially if you're remote, you know, take the time to understand your your person, ask, How are you? How are things going with you,

you know, don't don't dive straight into business, because it's going to be counterproductive, even if you only have half an hour to talk. And even if you have a lot of key things to discuss, I promise you that if you spend the first five minutes to build connection and ask them how they really are maybe the first 10 minutes, you're gonna get so much more than them, because they're going to feel heard and valued and and respected, I guess, then they will open up so much more, and your business conversations can be that much more productive. So it's a long answer to your question, but really take the time to build authentic, genuine connection, you will get so much more in return.

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Mitch Simon 16:56

I was wondering if if you are actually on the receiving end. And you you know, what's amazing about your story is that you're you were saying before that your manager in the US was actually spending an hour on the phone with you every week. Yeah. Which which to me sounds like well, this is a manager who really, quote unquote, cares about you. And, and yet, this manager was very personable. What if I'm, what if I'm on a team and my manager, you know, decides that he or she is, is committed to me and spends an hour on the phone with me and never asked me what's going on with my life? Well, what I what I do, because I think a lot of the a lot of the books on inclusion and belonging have a lot to do with the manager, what the manager should do. What could a what can an employee do? That doesn't feel like they belong?

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Perrine Farque 17:45

It's a it's a fair question. It's a very, very good question. Because, you know, I like in your in your way of thinking you're thinking, you're taking responsibility for the relationship, right? You are, You can't expect the other person to read your mind for so they also have their own, you know, challenges going on that you don't necessarily know about. So I like your approach about taking ownership. I'm a big believer in taking ownership. So your rights, you might be on the receiving end of that like of inclusion, you might be the employee, but it doesn't mean you can't take action, you could start you know, baby steps, start with baby steps. Maybe you could be the one saying, Hey, how are you today? or How was your week? so far? You know, how was your How was your day? How was your weekend? And just take it from there and just build baby steps, you know, you can see if that person is responsive or not. If they are then try to dig a little bit deeper. Is there anything I can do to help you? You know, what are you working on at the moment I can I can help you. What help do you need from me? Maybe you can be the one to leading by example, even if you're the employee, even if you're you know, I guess and they are the boss. And that's something I guess in perspective, I wish I had done. I wish I had taken more ownership and responsibility for the relationship. Of course, it's a bit scary. And of course, it's a bit

uncomfortable to be the one to take the first step, because you might just get a big no in return. But if you don't do anything, I mean things are not going to improve. So yes, I agree with you your question, I think you can, you can and you should take ownership and be the one who builds connection and interest.

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Ginny Bianco-Mathis 19:24

It goes back to something you just said before this, which is creating some kind of space, so that these younger folks who now they're role models might be around the world. Sometimes might be in an office or not, and have to learn the things we've asked of them for years. Anyway, how are we going to make that happen? Well, sometimes just putting it right out on the table right? saying, you know, it would be very useful to me if blah, blah, create those kinds of interact now, then the employee can begin to ask, and what can I do? Right, or here's what I need. Make those okay cup give them permission. There. That's much, much better phrase that I have found. Yeah, I have found a lot of leaders. And I'll shut up in a second. But it was such a, it hit me over the head, I had a leader who was struggling a bit with this hybrid virtual, and I said, you need to start one on ones. Now you have the person in India and you have the person over here and you and come up with a, what do you got? What are you going to talk about and make sure you spend about 15 minutes? She called me up a week later. And she said, Oh, my gosh, this blew my mind. How wonderful it went. Because of all the things you've been saying. The whole inclusiveness, and someone is talking to me establishing trust to have those one on ones. Yeah, thanks for for raising that.

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Mitch Simon 21:22

Thank you, Jenny, for that story. Now, in the book, you share the difference between the appreciation and appreciation. And I wanted to know if you could share with our listeners the difference between depreciation and depreciation? And also, what I'm interested in is, is a lot of managers depreciate their, their team members, and they don't even know that they're doing it. Yeah. I'm just wondering if you could share this the difference between the two? And how can a manager start to realize that they actually are when they don't realize that they are?

P

Perrine Farque 22:00

Yeah, great question again. So in again, in my, in my mind, when an employee feel depreciated is obviously the opposite of feeling appreciated, they're not feeling heard. They're not feeling valued. They're not feeling seen. They're not feeling respected. And, you know, the impact of that on disengagement is huge, because the employee is going to

use disengagement as a coping mechanism, right? They need to cope with that situation of being unheard and seen and valued. Never heard in meetings, never asked for their opinion, always the last to speak. And then we run out of time. And so they're going to have to go in a way that's most likely going to be disengagement and complete disengagement, and possibly looking for a job somewhere else. So and the managers might not notice that because they might be either self absorbed or busy or whatever, whatever. But in to an extent, it could even be a form of bullying.

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Mitch Simon 22:57

What are some? What are some? If I were to ask you what are the number one, two and three things that a leader could do to build more a more inclusive? team? What would what would those actions be?

P

Perrine Farque 23:09

Yeah, what one strategy I always talk about that is I talk about the unwritten rules. I think I talked about that a bit earlier. If you're a manager and you want to create a culture of inclusion, you want to talk about those unwritten rules. And by that I mean, state out loud what behavior is except is expected in a meeting, what kind of attitude is expected in a meeting in terms of who should talk, listening, you know, sharing speaking time, etc. Pay attention to the small stuff, right? So speaking times, we know that women tend to speak less than men in meetings, for example, and it's true across different industries. So pay attention to who speaks and give all employees have voice every single day, there was a study by Yale psychologist Victoria brisco, she found that male senators in the us with more powers are spoke more often on the senate floors, rather than their junior colleagues. But female senators with equal equal longevity didn't speak as much. So you know, observing who speaks, give every employee a voice every single day in meetings, etc. And also educate your leaders and hold them accountable every day on inclusive leadership, really encouraging you encourage your leaders to understand what does it mean to be an inclusive leader, how to support under represented employees in the company. So those are all small things that leaders can do to create a more inclusive work environment.

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Mitch Simon 24:46

Great, final question is why? Why are diverse inclusive teams more productive overall? Like why should we do this?

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Perrine Farque 24:53

Yeah, I mean, there are a lot of studies out there demonstrating the link between productivity and inclusion. So have our business Review McKenzie, of course, Boston Consulting Group and Deloitte. They've all demonstrated, according to studies, there is a link. One of the reasons is when teams are diverse, there is a diversity of thoughts, which leads to more creativity and innovation. So there is a clear innovation when here, diversity of thinking also with inclusivity, when people feel included, there is a basic layer of trust, which means psychological safety, which means holding each other accountable. And so you can push harder to get results, because you can have those difficult conversations that are necessary in business. When there is no inclusion, no trust, no psychological safety, it's hard to keep each other accountable because we're scared of having those conversations. So those are some explanations as to why diverse and inclusive teams perform better?

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Mitch Simon 25:56

Great, I'm actually have one more question, which is, I'd love to know what your journey has been in writing the book and publishing the book, and of course, going out there, and I'm sure you're doing workshops, and you're doing speeches around the book, what has been your experience there?

P

Perrine Farque 26:12

Yeah, I started. It's very organically, it started very organically, I started writing a lot of blog posts around different topics around diversity inclusion. And the more I wrote, the more I enjoyed writing, and the more I researched, because, you know, every time I write a blog post, I do more research, more research, more studies. And every time I really enjoyed it, I was like, that's really interesting. Oh, that's really interesting. But that's really, I need to know that. So I was, I really enjoyed the process of writing and learning new things. And I just organically started writing, writing, writing, to a point where I thought, Well, wait a minute, I have a lot of content there. Maybe I could do something more than just writing blog posts. So one thing was, well, I did leverage a lot of existing blog posts and articles I had been writing a lot for, you know, publications and media, but also just, you know, it just happened really organically. So I just wrote that book, very, almost in a, you know, very quickly, but in one go, I just decided that said, I'm writing the book. So I was in the zone, and I was writing and writing and writing. I just you know, and then I worked with a publisher and someone who helped me make it look nice, and helped me deal with all the logistics of publishing. And that was it. So, you know, for me, once it happened organically but two, I just one day, I woke up and I decided that said I'm writing the book, I don't care. What do you want, you just need to decide, I just decided that said, I'm doing this thing. So

that's that's the story.

M Mitch Simon 27:42
Beautiful, beautiful. It's like live your dream.

G Ginny Bianco-Mathis 27:45
That's where I focus. I said, Let it flow. That's

M Mitch Simon 27:49
great. So where can our listeners find you find your book? Find your TEDx talk?

P Perrine Farque 27:56
Yeah, so you can find my website, which is my first name last time together that come for infarct comm you can find me on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, it's all just search for my name, Varun farik. And my book is on Amazon. So if you just go on Amazon and search inclusion in the book section, you will find it.

M Mitch Simon 28:16
Okay, great. Great. Well, great. Well, gosh, thank you so much. brene. Thanks for reaching out to us. Thanks for a wonderful conversation around inclusion, and belonging. And thank you, Ginny. Yes.

G Ginny Bianco-Mathis 28:31
Thank you. You're welcome. No, I was I was thanking you for input for some wonderful thoughts to build on. Yet this other layer that our leaders that are trying to manage in these hybrid teams, and world really need to keep at the top of, of their techniques and game.

P Perrine Farque 28:54
Thank you so much for having me. It was a pleasure chatting with you, Mitch and Jenny. And I really love your work as well. So it's such an honor to be with you today. Thank you.



Mitch Simon 29:03

Thank you. And so for listeners, if you've loved this podcast, which we have immensely, please share this podcast with with your friends and your colleagues and give us a rating give us five stars, so that other people will know five stars, right, right. Yes, yes, it was five stars, so and other people will be able to find our podcast. So we thank you and we look forward to seeing you next time on Team anywhere