

INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COACH OF THE YEAR 2019

Jo Emerson

Coach / Human Behaviour Expert / Author

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"Jo, you are inspirational! I am a better leader because of our work together and my team is unrecognisable from before. Thank you!"

Phil Smith, MD, Sodexo Central Services UK

Why work with me?

In short, because my work is powerful - it is changing people and the cultures they work in for the better. That's why I won the prestigious International Executive Coach of the Year award (2019) and why companies across the world are choosing to engage in the Emerson Process.

"WOW! We are now back to reality after an amazing week. I cannot thank you enough for the time we had with you. What a fabulous start - it really set the tone and got us off on the right foot. Everyone found out things about themselves that they were either avoiding or not aware of and it seems to have had such a profound and positive impact.

We absolutely adored you and wanted to keep you forever!!! The week carried on being incredible, with big decisions on the way forward being made but also a real sense of team being formed. Thank you, Jo!"

Alison Jordan, CEO, Pete's Dragons

I truly believe that we disable the workforce when we treat people like a commodity. However, when we honour the humanness in our workforce we create teams of people who work powerfully together because they believe in the company they work for, they believe in themselves and they believe in the power of team. These people have no time for silos, internal politics or backbiting at the water cooler – these people are more interested in collective success, mutual support, truth seeking and persistent innovation.

As a coach it is my job to inspire people to firstly **believe** they can change and then to help them to find the answers to **how** they can change. All I really do is tap people into their own inherent wisdom, which is usually buried under layers of fear, cultural lies, office politics and ego. Once they have found this wisdom (individually and/or as a team) they are then on the way to transforming themselves and their cultures.

"I've been nagging Jo to put her team-building process into a book for ages now because her system really works. Her personable, honest, dynamic approach to coaching and team building is so refreshing. Her work is unbelievable effective both short and long term. She worked with my peer group to build a highly performing team and the results have been astonishing."

Patrick Forbes, Procurement Director, Sodexo Central Services UK

As an executive coach I work across 5 distinct areas:

- **TEAM BUILDING** – using The Emerson Process (see below).
- **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT** – training leaders in emotional intelligence, team building and coaching skills.
- **1:1 COACHING** – using my unique blend of experience and training in coaching, 12-step change modalities, the Pathfinder process, CBT, trauma recovery work, and positive psychology to coach executives 1:1 in order to help them thrive in the workplace, find balance and smash their personal and professional goals. I often coach people 1:1 alongside their team-building process but I also coach many execs across various sectors who come to me for stand-alone coaching support.
- **PUBLIC SPEAKING TRAINING** – coaching executives to identify and overcome their fears around public speaking combined with training in how to give a great speech (using my own training in theatre and as a BBC journalism to assist.).
- **EVENTS/ WORKSHOPS** – As a guest speaker I often give talks or run workshops on what it takes to be a high-functioning team, robust leadership, communication, conflict and confidence.

A little more about The Emerson Process

The bulk of my work with executives involves team building but on a very deep level. I take ailing, dysfunctional teams in which people are struggling and turn them into powerful, functional teams in which the members thrive and the company consequently grows. I also work with teams who are doing 'okay' but not brilliantly. They also emerge into highly functioning teams. How do I do this? By working from the inside out.

I have never been a believer in emotional sticking plasters so I knew from the get-go as an executive coach that if I was going to make a difference I had to help teams plug into what was really going on for them personally, collectively and corporately. This means building trust, demanding and modelling rigorous honesty and creating a safe space for some very difficult conversations.

Using a combination of influences (mainly Patrick Lencioni, Stephen Covey, Brené Brown, basic coaching tools, DiSC, parenting techniques, my own book ([Flying for Beginners](#)) and 12-Step change modalities) plus 7 years' experience as a coach, I have developed my own model (The Emerson Process), which takes teams on a journey into the past to find out how it is affecting the present before they can move into the future.

The process takes a minimum of 6-months involving several team away days and coaching alongside for those who would like it. Teams members often cry and some people storm out (rarely but it's happened!) as understanding of each other start to blossom. Then, as egos begin to soften, the truth starts being told, resentments get aired and cleared, team members start trusting each other enough to admit their mistakes, wonky working patterns get challenged and innovative solutions come to the table. People understand how they tick and how others tick. They are aware of old tapes (paradigms) playing (personal tapes, team tapes and corporate tapes) and how these can negatively affect the business and so these tapes start being challenged. Team values are decided upon and committed to, accountability conversations are held, and efficiency improves. Then other teams across the business start to notice 'something different' about this team and this team tell them it's because they've come to see that collective success is way more important than individual success. And all the while the business benefits because attrition rates drop, efficiency and standards rise and the bottom line improves.

I think the real testament to my work is that the MDs and CEOs of some of the businesses I work with often call me to check that what they are planning aligns with the principles of the work we've done together. They trust in the process and they trust me; this is a huge honour and a privilege that I don't take lightly.

The Emerson Process is currently being turned into a book – watch this space!

Corporate clients to date

Sodexo Central Services UK

Sodexo Transversal Finance Team

Sodexo Food Platform UK

Dyson

RWE AG

Tillery Valley Foods

The ODI (Open Data Institute)

Telefónica (O2 UK)

Amazon (UK)

Soho House Group (Babington House)

Korn Ferry

UWE (University of the West of England, Bristol)

PCRS (Primary Care Respiratory Society)

University of Gloucester

TTI-EMEA (Techtronic Industries (UK) Ltd)

Pete's Dragons

Backhouse Housing

Campus Living Villages UK

TRANT Engineering

The Guinness Trust

Testimonials

(some clients have asked to remain anonymous)

“When I began working with Jo, I was looking for how I could do more, more, more – be ever more efficient, more productive. What quickly became apparent through Jo’s coaching is that what I really needed to do was less, less, less. My commitments, business, personal, work, social and otherwise were at critical mass. I was completely out of balance with a healthier and more centred me – and thus, despite the constant grind, I was actually being less productive. The process with Jo was fun, highly interactive and very skilful. She helped me to centre, prioritise, slow down and place my focus and energy on the most important things. She helped me to gain that all important goal clarity, and get some tighter strategy and realistic timelines in place. She was quick to spot my perfectionism, helping me reframe the mire of trying to make everything perfect and focus on ‘progress not perfection’. There’s a saying by Abraham Lincoln: “Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe”. It may be a cliché but that resonated with me while working with Jo. I feel like she’s calmed me down and helped me to think in a more strategic way. I am clearer about my boundaries, and definitely feel a shift towards greater intellectual control and a more balanced outlook. Work is far more organised, more tactical and my business is sustaining itself nicely without overwhelming me – and as an added bonus, I have also lost 20lb in weight, no doubt an outcome of a more ordered mind.

Jo is down to earth, funny, and unpretentious and the sessions were a healthy reminder that life is only as serious as we make it. I look forward to continuing to work with Jo in the near future and recommend her highly.”

Paul

“I’ve worked closely with Jo over the last two years. She has significantly helped me personally to achieve my goals whilst also helping me shape and build a senior team who are ready, motivated, self aware and understand the value of ‘team’ and the role they play in it. She has a unique skill in bringing teams together by creating trust, self-awareness and commonality. Through Jo’s work, my team have a deep understanding of each other and how to get things over the line. Her inside-out approach is the only reason we are as strong as we are.”

Philip Smith, Managing Director, Sodexo Central Services UK

“I worked with Jo for a short period of two months in her capacity as a personal performance coach, to support me in making some important career decisions. Don’t underestimate how powerful a coach like Jo can be and what a difference it can make to your life. Jo’s professionalism, enthusiasm, wit and humour, patience, empathy and support – aided by her technical expertise of coaching – enabled me to work through my short term goals with confidence not trepidation, excitement not procrastination, to a very successful outcome. I can’t thank you enough.” **Sam, BDO**

“I’ve been nagging Jo to put her inside-out team building process into a book for ages now because her system really works. Her personable, honest, dynamic approach to coaching and team building is so refreshing. Her work is unbelievable effective both short and long term. She worked with my peer group to build a highly performing team and the results have been astonishing.”

Patrick Forbes, Procurement Director, Sodexo Central Services UK

“I wanted to take the time to thank you for the two excellent days we just had all together. It just demonstrates again what we can achieve when we all work together to as a team. What an incredible output. I am proud of us and what we have achieved with your support, Jo. We know now what we need to do. Let’s keep the momentum and the TRUST. Thank you.”

Laurent Arnaudo, Global Finance Director, Sodexo

“I have known Jo now for several years. We first worked together when I was part of a site leadership team in a different part of the company and we are now working together again, in my new role. Jo is inspirational. She has the ability to look at you and somehow see your soul and what’s really going on deep, deep inside.

Whether the coaching sessions are face to face or via Face Time, her warmth envelops you and you feel a deep sense of trust; Trust – not just because she is a qualified coach, but because of who she is deep down – open, honest and sharing of her life experiences also – and that brings meaning to the advice you receive and the plans you put in place, they really do mean something, you know she cares about you and wants the best for you.

I have found that speaking with Jo changes me – I come away from sessions with a renewed energy and sense of faith in life. Whilst Jo challenges and questions me (and those challenges and questions can be uncomfortable) they’re never draining, they are somehow uplifting as if her questions are freeing me and allowing me to change things that aren’t working for me.

When Jo first started working with me, it was as part of our on-site coaching programme. As a site leadership team, we knew we needed to make changes – we were not an effective wider site team; we had issues within our management team (that reported to the leadership team) and we knew there were barriers to break down, but we weren’t aware of the extent of the broken relationships, the fear and mistrust.

Jo had an uphill struggle to wade through the issues and to make the company face the truth – that changes needed to be made. The early days were tough sessions, breaking down barriers that had been built up over years took time and

the honesty in the sessions was at times tough and emotionally heavy, but out of that hard work, we started to see the light. Over time changes were made and the separation of the management and the leadership team had impacts over and above what we expected – the leadership team became the strongest, most trusting and effective leadership team the site had seen; meanwhile, certain issues within the management team had to be resolved. After some personnel changes the site is now improving both in terms of performance and staff engagement.

When I received a promotion to a new part of the business, it came on the back of hard work at the site and various strategic projects and was just a few months after a close friend and trusted colleague died at work. I kept telling people that I was “over” what had happened, but I was still hurting. And I didn’t realise how much the baggage from the last role was holding me back until I had my long-awaited coaching session with Jo.

My new line manager had suggested coaching internally, but I knew deep down that I wouldn’t benefit from that in the same way as a session with Jo. After all, she knew me, the real me – the me from before, the people and place from before and I trusted her; I didn’t want to have to explain the past few years to someone new, someone who wouldn’t just “get it”, someone I didn’t trust as much as Jo. After a few tears had been shed, lots of honest discussion that I couldn’t have had with anyone else (including Jo being brutally honest with me, with facts I didn’t want to hear, but needed to), I left the room renewed; able to finally let go of the chains to the old place, to move on and make the new role a success.

Now I am working with Jo looking forwards, to the future and new opportunities (and future promotions) and on becoming a more effective me – for the benefit of my company, my family and me.

Thank you Jo, for your advice, your warmth and sense of humour, your challenges and straight talking; for making me face the truth and not allowing me to hide behind excuses and ultimately for believing in me.

THANK YOU”

Suzanne Harris, Head of Finance, Tillery Valley Foods

“I was literally terrified of public speaking but if I wanted that promotion I had to get over it! Jo, you completely changed my mindset to the point where I smashed it! I quite enjoy public speaking now – who knew?!”

Nick, TRANT Engineering

“I wanted to write a few lines as a testimonial on my experience of working with you as a coach. We have now been working together for around 18 months and I have found the process both enjoyable and extremely effective in terms of impact on both my professional and personal life.

I am an entrepreneur running a new business in a capital heavy industry, which I have found – at times – very stressful. I am also a husband and a father to two young kids who has relocated his family to take a big (but calculated) risk. I came to you to work on two things. Firstly, managing the work load – in particular in striving to be effective with both the big and small issues which arise – I naturally find the former easier than the latter. And secondly, to manage my ability to keep things in perspective between work and home.

Your strength as a coach stems from your ability to understand people and to get under the skin of what drives and defines them. And therefore to comprehend – very quickly – what they will find easy, where they have blind spots and which types of things will build up as stress.

You have consistently been very effective for me across the things we have sought to work on. You have achieved this through a mix of supporting dialogue and consistent challenge – which have encouraged and allowed me to work through strategic issues and big decisions logically – as well as clever effectiveness hacks – e.g. allocating time for the small issues consistently in the late morning.

Above all, you have been supportive and believed in what I am trying to achieve across both my work and home lives. And I believe I have been more effective – and just better – as a result.”

TB, Entrepreneur and CEO

“WOW! We are now back to reality after an amazing week.

I cannot thank you enough for the time we had with you. What a fabulous start - it really set the tone and got us off on the right foot. Everyone found out things about themselves that they were either avoiding or not aware of and it seems to have had such a profound and positive impact.

We absolutely adored you and wanted to keep you forever!!! The week carried on being incredible, with big decisions on the way forward being made but also a real sense of team being formed.”

Alison Jordan, CEO, Pete's Dragons

“Just wanted to drop you a note to say that both my presentations went really well! I’ve had lots of positive feedback on the presentation from delegates and both my boss and his boss are really happy! Thanks so much for all your help so far! Our sessions were a real boost. My boss even commented that it was clearly visible that I’d had some training. And another colleague said it was the best presentation I’d ever done!”

Bettina Bush, TTI-EMEA (Techtronic Industries (UK) Ltd)

“I found the sessions to be very positive. It was so beneficial to work together with colleagues to create a feedback culture to be implemented in the organisation. I came away from the workshop feeling very empowered and positive. The vibe throughout was very relaxed and encouraged us to speak freely and confidently. Thank you very much for such an enjoyable, interactive session. It was a fabulous opportunity to work with colleagues in a relaxed environment.”

Stephanie Dunstan, The ODI

Closing words

In May 2011, I was diagnosed with breast cancer and I lost a friend to suicide. Facing mortality so starkly was a profound experience because, in my shock, I realised I had been sleep walking through my life and had to make some changes. My marriage and my career choices (I'd been a BBC journalist and worked as a freelance PR/marketing consultant after starting a family) had been based on "shoulds" rather than on "deep wants".

So, I made the agonising decision to leave my ailing marriage and to start living an authentic life. By July of that year I was recovering from surgery (I've been very well ever since) and began life as single mum of three little girls. I knew I wanted to find a career I was passionate about and after several months I stumbled across coaching...

From the minute I walked into my first training session I knew I had 'come home'. Finding coaching was like falling in love and I have been unbelievably blessed to train in a career I am passionate about and through which I can have a positive impact on the lives of others. I absolutely love my job and to see people and organisations thrive is amazing!

Coaching has made me a better mother and friend and, now that I'm remarried, a better wife. Coaching has given me the tools to change my own life and the lives of those I work with. I've published a book as a coach (massive life ambition tick!), I've written for all the national (and some international) big name newspapers and magazines, I've been on national TV and radio as a coach and I write my own national advice column. But, above all that – coaching has plugged me in to my authentic voice and I try every day to help my clients do the same.

It is an honour and privilege to do this work and I look forward to helping you and your company reach your fullest potential.