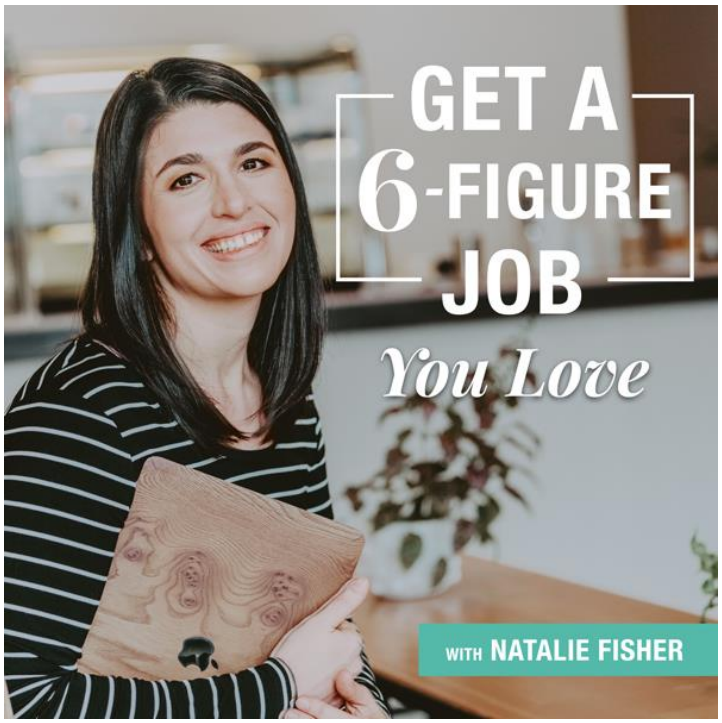
Ep #50: Making Quantum Career Leaps: A Client Success Interview with Kelly



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Natalie Fisher

Get a 6-Figure Job You Love with Natalie Fisher

You're listening to the Get a 6-Figure Job You Love podcast. This is episode 50, Making Quantum Leaps in Your Career with Kelly Wilcox.

Hey there. Welcome to the Get a 6-Figure Job You Love podcast. I'm your host, Natalie Fisher. I'm a certified career mindset coach who also happens to want to skip all the BS and get to what it really takes to create real results for you and your career. On this podcast, you will create real mindset shifts that will lead to big results and big changes in your career and your income. No fluff here. If you want to get a 6-figure job you love and create real concrete results in your industry and make a real impact, you're in the right place. Are you ready? Let's go.

Hello. Welcome to the podcast, everyone. Today, we have another very special guest joining us. One of my amazing clients, Kelly. She is a graphic designer. She has got 20 years experience and she specializes in learning and development. She's doing a bunch of really cool things in her field. And today we're going to talk about her journey from where she was being very underpaid for the amazing work and value that she was already bringing, to making a huge quantum leap in her career and opening up possibilities for a lot more. Kelly, why don't you introduce yourself in your words?

Thanks Natalie. My name is Kelly, and like you said, I have a lot of experience with graphic design. And I now find myself in a role of instructional designer, which is a part of learning and development industry, training industry.

Yeah. Awesome. So you've come a long way in a short amount of time. So want to talk a little bit today about what challenges you were experiencing when we first started, what mindset you were in when we first started working together?

My mindset when we first started working together was, I would describe it as just hitting a wall repeatedly and not getting anywhere, I think.

Yeah. Say more about that. What did the wall feel like?

It was frustrating. I felt bad about myself, made me feel worthless that I wasn't good enough.

Yeah. You're not alone because a lot of people experience, there's so many people that are going to be at home listening to this feeling the same way. Right? So thank you for coming on and courageously sharing with everyone.

Thanks.

Yeah. Now that we look at it now, there's absolutely no reason for you to view yourself in that way, but that's where your brain default goes, which is what happens to many of us. So when we started working together, moving forward from there, what were some of the key things that helped you shift out of that mentality?

I think for me, it was going back and looking at the work that I had done over my 20 years of experience, and then finding the impact that, that had on the people that I worked with, on the companies that I worked for. And I hadn't really thought about my work in that way, I just [crosstalk 00:03:21].

Yeah.

... person that would do the work because I enjoy the work, but I never really saw the impact of my work because it was always just one project straight into the next and never really looking back.

Yeah. Mm-hmm (affirmative). Just in that go, go, go, work, work, work mentality.

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Yeah. Totally. Not taking the time to look at the value and the impact that you'd brought along the way.

Right.

Yeah. And this is really important for talking about the result that you were able to create, is making these shifts along the way is what actually creates you to be able to show up in a different way and then ask for the value that you really deserve to be paid that's commensurate with what you're contributing. So moving through the shifts of being able to see the value, I know that we had talked before about the way that you were able to see it and how that was for you communicated through the amount of people that you were able to touch with your work. So would you mind talking a little bit about what you do and some of the training that you put together and how you were able to see how you impacted people through the work that you did?

For me, learning and development is more than just e-learning courses. Learning isn't an isolated incident that happens over the course of your career, over time. But some of these cases where I was working on learning projects, I would try and think outside of the box of the e-learning. So, as we know now that video is a big thing for learning and development, so I helped to implement that into the company that I was working for. The videos themselves were training videos, or sales training videos. And that really helps the sales people to understand, not how to sell, but how to interact with their clients on more of a human level and have, just be curious about what the client was asking for. I did it in a way that was generic enough that it was impactful for other departments.

Yes. So I remember that. And so that was something else that was brought to light where you were getting all this feedback you weren't really paying attention to it. So a lot of the times when we're in that mindset that you were talking about how you were thinking that your work wasn't good enough, or you weren't good enough, we don't even see the feedback that we're actually getting to say that what we've done has been impactful. Right? So I remember [crosstalk 00:06:00].

And that's what [crosstalk 00:06:00].

Yeah. Go ahead.

Yeah. And that's what made the job hunting so hard because during while I was working, I had great feedback. I was considered a high-performing employee. Yeah. I felt like I was really well-respected while I was working. And then when I got laid off and started looking for a job, it was completely the opposite. So the work that I thought I was doing and the success that I thought I had it wasn't showing up when I was interviewing.

Totally, yeah. Really important point to make there, because that's exactly what happens, right? And your value didn't go anywhere. Right? You still had all that value to contribute even more so. And having the results not show that right away with the job hunt, we often tend to make that mean, oh, I must not be as good as I thought, or our brain just defaults to that lower confidence of, oh, I guess I'm not as good, and that's why the work that coaching does and going through that process helps you to realize that never changed. Right? You still contributed all that, and you're even more valuable now after having gone through the work of the job hunt and the believing in your value and all that, that even helps you become more valuable and your brain grows and evolves there too. So, yeah. Glad you mentioned that.

So now looking at the challenges, so being able to do that and face that, and then going to interviews, how would you show up after you could see your value in a new light, see how you had impacted these companies and how your work did have a lot that you had not even contributed yet. How did you show up in interviews differently?

Well, I think prior to coaching sessions with you, it was really frustrating going into interviews and trying to express why I was successful in a way that was helpful for the companies that I was interviewing with. So, after coaching I felt like there was a huge shift. I came into interviews from a completely different

mindset. I was just more curious in what they had to offer knowing that where my value could be [crosstalk 00:08:27].

Yeah.

... the company.

Totally. Yeah. And I noticed that shift in you too where you were much more discerning about what you were asking and what you were willing to accept and how you were approaching it from, I have a choice here and having multiple opportunities open at one time, you were really approaching it from that sense of, what do I want? And is this going to be in line with my long-term growth? So it's such a huge different way to look at it versus, I'll just take whatever comes along when there was no reason for that, because you were a professional with a lot of experience and a lot of value to offer. It was just that you had let that circumstance of not getting the first few interviews you went on, get in the way of that value. So yeah. What do you think the biggest fear was that you had to overcome to say yes to making an investment in coaching?

The thing that I said yes to you was that I just felt misaligned, I guess, in the beginning, knowing that I know that I can do the work that's described in the job description, a hundred percent I can do that work, but then during my, the job search process, I figured out, I guess, where it was that the mistakes that I kept on making was the interview part. So wait a minute. What was the question?

Well, I love what you just said, but yeah. The feeling misaligned and with the job description and then your ability to describe it. I think that's where a lot of people are as well. So I'm glad you put it in those terms, because that's really a good way to describe how I think a lot of people are feeling, just misaligned with what they can do, but yeah, we can go back to the other question that I was asking. You answered a different question, but it was great. So we're going to keep that. What was the biggest fear you had to overcome when you said yes to the experience of coaching with me?

The biggest fear? I don't [crosstalk 00:10:30].

Maybe you didn't have any fears.

I had a fear of interviewing.

Yeah.

As I went into it, high anxiety, I had scripts ready and I felt like I really had to prepare for interviews in a way that anticipated what people were going to say, but every interview is different, and you never know what people are going to say. You never know what the company culture is like, so you don't know how they're going to ask the questions, or what. Yeah, that format. So I think [crosstalk 00:11:01].

That's a great answer. Yeah. That's a great answer because it goes to the deeper fear of, if I do this, if I invest in coaching, this means I'm going to have to keep going to interviews. And you'd been to a few that you hadn't felt great about. So that was the courageous step where you're like, I have to keep going, and if I'm going to do it, I want to do it better. I want to get some help with it kind of thing. Yeah.

And even after my interviews, I would have a moment of disapproval in myself and I think I was way more harder on myself than I needed to be.

Yes, absolutely. You were being. I remember. So yeah, the fear of interviewing is a common thing that a lot of people experience and then that's what makes them normally be like, okay, I don't want to go to another interview because I felt awful after the last one. And so in the comparison of how you used to feel to how you feel now about interviewing, how would you describe that contrast?

I would say, bring on the interview. Right? Sitting here with you, having this interview, I would prior to coaching, I never would have thought that I would be, I don't know, confident enough, or knowing in myself enough to answer these questions. So I see it show up [crosstalk 00:12:18].

Yeah. And not really fully knowing what I was going to ask either.

Yeah. And I see it show up in my job now that I have, that I love, even just in meetings that I have with them outside of the interview, the success of this is showing up.

Yeah. Absolutely. And I think one thing that you did really well was really tapping into that curiosity of, I'm going to be curious about what it is that they're doing, what it is that they want, and totally shifting the focus from yourself to them. And I think you did that really well out of the other clients that I have. That was like a really big shift I noticed in you, is how you showed up. Can you talk about how you did that?

I think so. I think for me, it was coming from a place of scarcity. So there's a job opportunity that's coming up, I have to have it, I have to get it. It's perfect for me. And then I just have to make them see that I can do this job compared to a mindset of abundance. So there's always going to be job opportunities. There's always going to be companies that are innovating and fit into what I find important in work. So, that mind shift I think is huge.

Yeah. Absolutely. Yeah. That is huge. Yeah. And that allowed you to relax and be like, okay, if it's not this one, it'll be the other. And yeah. And have the results come in pretty quickly. So what do you say, in what way was it most worth the time and work spent to get the result that you have now?

In what way? Specific. That's one thing too that I had to work on was just being specific with things.

Yeah. I noticed that, because you didn't, this is something that a lot of people have too, you're not alone on this, is they forget the amazing things they've done. Right?

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

You're like they just leave their brain. I had one client who'd won an award and she's like, oh yeah, I did. And for you, you're like, oh yeah, I did impact all those people with my training videos. Right?

Yeah.

So it's so, yeah, it's such a common thing. And you don't have to be super specific, you can just talk about how it was worth it for you.

The coaching and training was just finding the confidence that I knew was there and just making that connection between that confidence and the value.

Yes.

That I can bring to my work and to a company.

Yeah. Absolutely. Yeah.

Yeah.

I think you put it really well earlier when you said your confidence and ability to talk about it didn't match your belief when you looked at the description to say, I can totally do those things. Right?

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

When you looked at the job descriptions, did you ever see things that you didn't match up with on there? Were there ever little things that you were, oh, I haven't done that before, or I don't have a ton of experience in?

If there was 20 things listed, there would maybe be three things that I couldn't do. So the bulk of the things that were listed, I felt confident that I could do.

Yeah. And how did you think about those three things? That's something that a lot of people have, they're just like, oh, well I can't do everything. I don't check all the boxes.

Yeah.

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

I think it was a fake it till you make it type of scenario. So I would try it and lean into things that I did know.

Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

But I didn't know how to connect those things to the things that I didn't know. So learning how to, I guess, yeah, just connect the value to the things that you don't know, because that experience just helps you [crosstalk 00:16:09].

Yeah. And also having that willingness to just figure things out, even through this process of the job search and having going from a before to an after, and having all these realizations, it's just that willingness to figure things out no matter what. Right? So even if there's a few things on the description that you don't know, I feel like you really made that shift into having this confidence that you can figure it out and out of all the candidates, you have probably a lot of experience in comparison, or more than them. And even if people listening don't have that experience, it's the willingness and the confidence to figure things out that is more important than actually checking all the boxes.

Yeah. Yeah. And I didn't know how to explain those things during an interview when they asked about the things that I didn't know.

Yeah. Yeah. And so how did you manage it afterwards?

By using my ability just to learn new things. You're learning things every day, so [crosstalk 00:17:06].

Yes. Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. And you're a learning specialist, right?

Yeah.

So not only do you teach other people and help them learn, but you are a very good learner as well because of the work that you do, right?

Yeah. Some of the [crosstalk 00:17:19].

You understand the psychology of learning new things.

Yeah.

Perfect. So specifically, let's talk about your, so you got the new position and that happened fairly quickly. So tell us about this new position and the possibilities that are available for you now.

This new position is a instructional design position and it is with a technology company and they are a small Canadian company and it's up and coming, and I'm super excited for the opportunities that are within this company. So when I found the posting for the role, I knew that I could do it. And it was specific to more of the design portion. So as an instructional designer, there's a lot of emphasis on writing, but this position, there was an emphasis on graphic design, which is right in my wheelhouse. So I just applied.

Yeah. So the applying work for you, so sometimes it doesn't always work where you apply on the job boards and you get the opportunities, for you that was working. You were also making some connections, but also the position is, you said that you are brand new in that role. So there's nobody else there. You're going to be creating your own path forward and you have an opportunity to make a big impact on how they do their learning and development.

Yeah. That's the plan. I feel like just the opportunities that are there are so open. And if I hadn't gone through this coaching I don't know that I would be able to show up into the job in a way that was contributing on an innovation level. So understanding that might impact in my past positions can help and all that experience I can draw on for moving and innovating the learning and development department in this new company.

Yeah. Absolutely. And I know that you had strong beliefs about how learning and development can be done and the best way to do it, and what you'd seen and experienced before. So now it was a matter of owning those things and seeing the value that those opinions bring and that innovation brings in order to add value to this new place where they really welcome your ideas, and they want to hear what you have to say, and they want you to have those opinions. Yeah. And having the belief that, yeah, there was a company that existed that wanted exactly what you had to offer and was happy to pay you more for that. So, yes. Sorry, go ahead.

Yeah. And if I hadn't been curious about it in the interview, I wouldn't have known to even ask about it. So if they were just filling the position just for a role that checked all these boxes then I wouldn't have known that there was going to be greater opportunity within the company.

Yeah. Yeah, exactly. And so by asking those questions and stuff, can you share some of the questions that you asked them about how your learning and growth would go in the company, your trajectory?

I think it was just the fact that they, it wasn't a brand new role. So I just asked questions about where they saw learning in the future and what they're training and what their clients were using currently, and then suggesting small things, or asking if they had tried certain methods.

Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. So just using my expertise to flush out what they were hoping the role could be.

Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. And coming in there as an expert, being these are the things that we could try, or have you done this, and then you end up in this really rich discussion about what you're trying to achieve instead of worrying about not being good enough.

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Yeah. And then they saw that that was valuable. And yeah. So this is a big leap for you because I remember when I first met you, you were being severely underpaid for the work that you do. And I think it's really important that we talk about this, because I know a lot of people are. And so the alignment with the amount of money that you were making before and now being able to have made, it was a $23,000 jump from where you were, that's reflective of the value that you then believed afterwards you were contributing. So how do you feel in terms of having made this jump? What allowed you to make this jump? And what's next for you after this?

I think what allowed me to make the jump, going over the work, my past work, and really listing back how it affected, who it affected, and then multiplying that by the number of people that worked within the company, then you can start to [crosstalk 00:22:26].

Yeah. And the fact that they're still benefiting from the work you did, even after you've left. Right? Where you've gone has had an impact years after you're gone they're still using and implementing. Did you say that you saw something on LinkedIn that you had designed or something, that someone had posted?

Yeah, it wasn't this job, but there was an older company that I worked for. There was a tool that I saw a company in New Zealand who is affiliated with the company that I worked for, they were using this tool. And that was something that I worked on probably over 10 years ago. So to see that now.

Yeah.

And they were so proud to have it. So I think that gave me a warm fuzzy.

For sure.

Yeah.

And just we never know who we're impacting, or how much we're impacting. Right? Because even if you hadn't seen it and there's probably lots of stuff that you haven't seen that people are still using that you have done in the past and you just don't know, but just having that belief of all this compound effort that I've put in it amounts to something and it's being used by other people enough to give anyone the warms and fuzzes. Yeah. Awesome. Yeah. And so what will you use moving forward in your new role, from what you've learned through the experience so far of coaching?

I think that just getting in touch with that value that I know that I have, that I created, use that as a springboard into success by just not being afraid to offer suggestions, because I do have a background and some experience in what I'm suggesting. So yeah, just that confidence now is completely different for me. My friends even notice it when I talk to them.

Yeah. And I totally notice it too. I feel like you're a different person from when we had our first conversation.

Yeah. Yeah.

Absolutely. Yeah. That's so great. So did anything surprise you when working together?

I think my ability to be coached may have surprised me.

Yeah. So what was your secret with being so coachable and taking everything in? And what would you advise someone who is considering signing up for coaching, wants to get the most out of it, wants to do what you did? How would you advise them?

I think I was at the point of, I guess, surrender. So I'd been to a bunch of interviews prior to coaching and I had just beaten myself up after. So I was tired of doing that. So I guess I was just like just needed to stop making what I perceived to be mistakes.

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. That's a really good answer.

Had to stop beating myself up over stuff that I can't control, but be able to adapt and, yeah [crosstalk 00:25:29].

I think that's the best answer. I love that. Basically you're saying I was surprised by my own abilities.

In short, and you have the ability to summarize things.

That's fantastic. Yeah. And that's the best win we can hope for, right? You get to blow your own mind, because this is all you. Right? So thank you so much for sharing. And what does life look like now after having worked together, and I know that we're going continue to work together. What do you feel is different for you now on a day to day?

Now I can pinpoint what it is I need help with. So before it was just, I don't know what's wrong with me, I don't know what I'm doing wrong, but it's just changing your mindset and framing your mind in a different way. Like you say, it's like a command center upgrade.

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. Awesome. So what would you say to someone who's on the fence, not sure if this is right for them?

Just do it, because you do have the ability to do it. Yeah. It's just a mind shift. So it's like when you're learning how to do squats, and you're doing squats over and over again, and you have pain in your knee, but you just need to make that tiny adjustment, and just be conscious of that tiny adjustment.

That's so perfect, I love analogies. Yeah. And that's it. A few little shifts and then you could have quantum leaps that you weren't able to have before. And that's also comes to mind, the analogy of hitting the golf ball and I don't play golf, but I've heard this and it resonates because I've seen it happen with people who they're going to hit the golf ball and it's going completely in the wrong direction, and then they make this one little tiny shift as to how they are hitting it, what angle they're hitting it at. And

then it goes the right direction and it goes super far. So, yeah. And so last question for you, how would you describe coaching to someone who's never experienced it before? Someone who doesn't really know what it is?

I would say it's like doing the wrong exercise over and over again, or the wrong, not the wrong exercise, but your technique is not correct.

Yeah.

So you're putting more work than you need to, into the thing that you're trying to accomplish.

I love that so much. Yeah. Yeah. Missing the part where you can make it easy. Another analogy just that came to me is that if you ever see a bumblebee hitting its head against the window over and over and it can fly out the window, but it just doesn't know that there's another path it can go around.

Right. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. That's how I felt about coaching too. Yeah. Yeah. And we've discussed, I have my own coach and I have been coached. And so I totally resonate with all these analogies and it's just so eye-opening and yeah, I'm so honored to be working with you and have to show these results with everybody and share your journey. And I think you have a really good way of explaining things. So it's awesome to hear your voice on the podcast and getting that insight from somebody else who's gone through it and had so much success. So thank you so much. Is there anything else you want to share before we sign off?

Just to thank you for being such a great coach.

Oh, thank you so much, Kelly. And I thank you for being such a great client.

[inaudible 00:28:57].

Awesome. Yeah, we could go all day. All right.

It's a Canadian thing.

Well thank you. Yes, it's totally a Canadian thing. We're both Canadians. Awesome. So thank you so much for being on the podcast and yeah, I look forward to seeing what else is next for you.

Thanks for listening to this episode of Get a 6-Figure Job You Love podcast. If you're ready to dive deeper into your career mindset, and start creating bigger, more impactful results in your career, join me at www.nataliefisher.ca/getstarted. I'll see you over there.