

AN INTUITIVE APPROACH TO DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS



AN INTERVIEW WITH ANNETTE BIRKHOLZ DIE BOGENAKADEMIE - ARCHERY SCHOOL OF THE YEAR

Annette Birkholz is a certified systemic consultant, coach and facilitator. She has qualifications in systemic organisational development (artop /HU Berlin) and systemic coaching (certified according to DBVC) as well as several years of international experience as a media expert and programme developer for political educational trips and international conferences.

In 2010, Annette founded her own business consultancy Incendo (incendo-berlin.de), along with her intuitive archer school, the Bogenakademie Berlin (bogenakademie.de). The focus of her work at the interface between art, business and health are programmes on leadership, conflict management, transformation, mindfulness and resilience. With her systemic archery method and other experience-based interventions, she enables managers and teams to deal with their own strengths and weaknesses. The clients learn to recognise their own patterns, to strengthen their visions and to connect to their personal resources.

In addition to individual experience, their clients (teams) experience in so-called archery choreographies the nonverbal leadership of teams and organisations. The on-going negotiation of personal needs with those of the team during the systemic shooting sessions is a powerful support in the development of resilience and visions. We spoke to Annette to find out how complete organisational cultures can be mapped, mirrored and developed using systemic shooting.

What is intuitive archery?

Intuitive Archery, as the name suggests, works with intuition. Therefore, we use traditional, hand-carved wooden longbows without a target device. The target device is substituted by our gut feeling, our intuition. We don't target while drawing the string. We hit the target without targeting. We do focus. But focus and target are two different things. We target with our eyes. And we focus with our mind. It is interesting that the world champion of intuitive archery in the 2004 Olympic Games was the almost blind Korean, Im Dong-hyun.

What benefits can archery bring for businesses?

We facilitate (personal) learning, reflections on leadership issues that really matter and change processes with two simple tools – bow and arrow. The main idea is that an archer has all the skills that a business leader might need. Archery is a blueprint for (self)leadership: intuition, mindfulness, attitude, dignity, focus, release, sovereignty, balance, strategy, patience, finding the right moment, braveness – all those resources and more can be found in and trained with intuitive archery. It is also a great experience for teams to connect in such a way that they prepare

for a simultaneous shot. The sound produced when all arrows hit the target in unison – that is a wow-moment that a team never forgets. However, it is also important to reflect on the experiences on a meta-level, to draw learnings and transfer those learnings into the daily working space. That is our specialisation.

What kind of clients do you cater for?

We cater for small and medium enterprises and international corporates. We work at international change summits. We facilitate global leadership retreats and leadership journeys and offer executive coaching for individual (business) clientele.

What advice would you offer to first time archers?

I always invite first time archers to bring all the feelings they may have: happiness, worries, stress and thoughts. The bow and the arrows open up and archery provides a profound peace of mind.

What workshops do you offer?

We offer on demand workshop for (female) leadership, team building, resilience, mindfulness, and culture. We also offer regular open workshops and open archery retreats for individuals. And, as already mentioned, I cater for individual coaching.

Can you tell us about your interdisciplinary productions?

As I consider archery as an art and a state of mind, I enjoy working with artists from other disciplines such as actors, musicians and dancers. It is a mutual inspiration for both sides with highly innovative results.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Yes, archery is something that every person can relate to as the bow is such an archaic tool. I am convinced that we can use the bow as a teacher and learn a lot about ourselves as individuals, as well as our team culture as a collective. Through archery, we can grow and become more resilient and agile in these VUCA times we are living in.



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