

The Job Hunting Podcast

Transcript 19. What we can learn about career management from watching tennis!

Hi hello there and welcome to The Job Hunting Podcast. I'm Renata Bernarde your host, and in this podcast I give you tips, advice and I sometimes interview people to help you nail your next job and have the best career: a career that ties your dreams and your life together, and not only pay for your bills but also moves you towards your goals and your aspirations.

As I said before, if you've been listening to previous episodes, my dream is for this podcast to be a one-stop-shop for you. If you are a career enthusiast, if you're currently job, if you are a veteran professional facing career disruption, or if you're a rising star who wants to learn as much as you can this podcast is for you. Here you will to hear from experts and professionals that came before you, are a few years or decades ahead of you, and have great stories and examples to share on how they have achieved their career goals.

Today I'll be sharing with you another audio of a recent Facebook Live Video. When I started The Job Hunting Podcast in late 2019, I also launched a Facebook Page, @renatabernarde.co, a Facebook Group The Job Hunting Podcast Group, and an Instagram account, @renatabernarde.co, and in fact I also have a Facebook group for this Job Hunting podcast it's called The Job Hunting Podcast group. I've been building up a following on Facebook and I do weekly Live Videos usually on a Thursdays AEDT. I use it as an opportunity to deliver unscripted presentations on topics that have been on my mind, and it's great to address it there and then, and get it off my chest.

This Facebook Live Chat was about my observations of the Australian Open Games, tennis games, that I watched live and on TV. If you have been following me, it will come as no surprise to you that I really enjoy watching tennis, and I have many times over made analogies between the game of tennis and job hunting. So here in what is my longest Facebook Live, and the reason being I'm obsessed with tennis, I analyse many traits, behaviours and strategies the players and their teams adopted, which I observed, and in my view are strongly correlated with their success, or lack of.

But before we go ahead, I hope that by now you have joined my community, yes? If not, or if you are a newbie to this podcast, you should definitely join! Go to www.renatabernarde.com/join and sign up. I will send you free webinars, free guides and templates that you can use to job hunt, there are specials happening all the time, like free consultations with me, and I send you a newsletter every week with the new podcast and other special content that I put together just for my community. The link to join is also in the episode show notes, or on my Facebook page or my Instagram account. So without further ado, here is my analysis of the most recent Australian Open of 2020. Note that this is a live audio, so if sometimes I say hi to someone or make a comment about something, it's because it's happening in real time. So just keep that in mind.

Hello, we're live! I am so happy to finally be back doing live. So today the Career High will be about tennis. I love making up analogies between tennis and career coaching. I think it's fantastic and many times on stage and when I, I'm invited to speak or even in my course programme and content, I build those analogies along the way. I just think it's easier for people to understand. I'm also very conscious, unlike some other coaches and presenters out there. They can use their clients as examples. I really don't feel comfortable doing that. Even if I try to not say their names or anything. Melbourne is such a small corporate world that I have to be very careful what I say about clients. So I usually use examples of, you know, in pop culture, in cinema movie, music or sports to build analogies to make my case and make people understand the importance of whatever I'm trying to do, be it brand, talking about branding, you're talking about strengths development and

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performance coaching and all of that. So I try to avoid using my clients' examples. I do have some great testimonials on my website, but that's by the by.

So I went to the Australian open on Saturday night and I had the best time. I saw the wonderful Ash Barty who is the Australian young player who is ranked number one today. And she is just such a ripper. As I say here, you know, she's bloody amazing. We all love her, she has the right attitude and I want to talk a little bit about her game and what I saw. And I usually pay attention to the player, their demeanour, how they present themselves, how they walk into the court, how they start off the game and develop their game throughout the match. And I also pay attention to the box.

The box is really important to me because I usually build those analogies about having a team and having your boardroom or having your own box of coaches, supporters, family members, everybody that's there to enhance your game. And it's really interesting. And I'll finish off by talking about Federer and, and he has the best books always I think following tennis or you know, since his beginning and his boxes always pitch perfect and I'll talk a little bit about that as well. But I'm going to start by discussing this first game, which was Ash body against an American that's ranked number 18. So pretty good. You know, a good match of two really, I would say close to equal players because number 18 and a, you know, a group of 200 that's amazing. Right? And age wise in terms of their body weight, they all looked really kind of even.

Ash has a very consistent use of her top strength. And look, I haven't read anything more technical about her tennis and I'm not a tennis connoisseur. I don't really know all of the ins and outs. I watch it, I really sort of look at it from a coaching perspective, but I can see that her backhand is unbelievable. And if you're there watching live, like it's very different from watching on TV because if you're there on court, tennis is kind of a... It's not like watching football or soccer or big game. It's more like basketball, you know, tennis. It's like you're in this confined space so you can really watch what the players are doing. And her backhand, she slices the ball in such a way that the ball just goes over the net and it's, it drives us crazy the spectators, because we really never know if it's going to go above the net or not and it has a little bit of a twist to it, so it never really, you never really know where the ball is going to end up on the other side of the court.

That's definitely her strength. You know, I've played a little bit of tennis in my youth and the backhand is not an easy one to do and she does that all the time very consistently. A lot of back hands and the entire Rod Laver arena just goes, "Ooh", all the time because you never really know what's going to happen to that ball. And you know what, that strength of hers is rather risky because many times that ball didn't go her way and didn't serve her well and she didn't win the set or you know, in the games and sometimes it was really almost like too much of a risk it felt. And you almost wanted her to change her game to avoid making those mistakes and having that issue of the ball not going across the net. But she never wavered. You know, she just kept on going extremely consistently, very much in the zone and never really changed her game.

Even when it wasn't serving her. She just kept on going very consistent, very well prepared mentally as well to deal with the setbacks at times, did not waver. The perseverance is really incredible and the trust that she has in her method, her training and her game is really impressive. And I have read a couple of articles that were written about her coach. I know she has an excellent coach and he has given one of these articles and in fact, I shared on my newsletter a couple of weeks

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ago and I know that this is something that he works very holistically with her in terms of from a mental state and all the coaches do. Of course, that's all about coaching. But I was really impressed with her perseverance and her strength in keeping attached to her strength and not changing her game and not making things up when she saw it wasn't working for her, she knew in the end that her strength would pull her through and it did.

And it's just a matter of just keep it, keep it going, keep it going all the time. And knowing that even though sometimes that ball didn't go through, mostly it did and mostly it's such an amazing technique that she has developed that it serves her well.

The other thing that I wanted to talk about, Ash Barty is her leadership style. So she's now number one and as a number one player for many years with, we've had a different type of leadership in that space and the female tennis world. We had Serena Williams for example, who is a very different player, you know, very strong, extremely powerful, much more mobile on court and has a much more of a variety of techniques that she uses. And she in terms of her personality as well is very vocal, is very emotional, and we have now created this link between that style and the leadership needed in the tennis because it has been such a long tenure for Serena, as a top leader.

And Ash being number one, what I overheard around me as I was sitting is that "Oh, her game does seem like the game of a number one player." I've heard that quite a lot. And, they were saying things like, "Ah, I wonder how she became the one-on-one, the number one player. What did she win to be the number one player?" You know, people were still uncertain about that leadership style. They were uncertain about how she got there. And they were not identifying her as a leader, even though they like her, even though they think she's a wonderful person, everybody does. She really is quite lovely and interviews well and has a great demeanour and a personality. It is attractive to the spectators because they tend to like people that are likeable. They didn't see her as a leader. And I think that that shows that we need to widen our range or an understanding of what leadership is.

And leaders have different makeups, different strengths and different ways of achieving their goals. And she is very comfortable in her skin. I don't think it gets to her. And eventually what's going to happen is that the spectators and everybody will get used to the new leadership style. And if she stays there long enough, the next person that comes behind her will have that similar sort of situation. And I love that. I think it's good for us as a society, a civil society to understand that there are different leadership styles and I think it's good for my clients, for example, to see themselves as a leader and understand their social capital, their professional capital, the competitive advantage that they bring to work, even though they're not like their boss, even though they are not like the person that was there before them in that position that they are aspiring to get. Through, you know, a job hunting for example.

So yeah, that's a good example for me to use. So I thought, wow, okay, interesting that that we're getting, I'm getting to hearing this feedback from the crowds, including the people that went with me and I was very sort of silent, just observing and listening and thinking, yeah, I get it and I get it from my clients as well and I'm going to use that. So what else did I want to talk about? Ash? You know, the things that she says very often on court after a game, you know, doing the best she can every day. Such a good motto. And it doesn't play her down it, you know, because you can see how much effort she makes and how confident she is in her skin. And that very comprehensive coaching that she receives. You know, that's amazing confidence that she has in herself. And that idea that

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not being a leader in others' eyes, you know, you just have to have the perseverance and the confidence to navigate that and position yourself in your own leadership style.

And even though she doesn't seem like to play like a number one player for now, people will eventually understand that she brings a lot to the game because she does. So I thought that was all very good. And look that day for Ash, I knew I had one more thing to say. It wasn't her best game and she performed okay. She won. I mean she's clearly better than a number 18 and she won that game, but she was playing under stressful circumstances and it was the day she received her Young Australian of the year award. So she, she knew about it a couple of days before as they do, they announce it to the winner a few days before. But that was the day that everybody else found out. So there was a lot about her in the news. And stress comes not only from bad things happening to us, sometimes good things also enhance or increase our anxiety and our stress and our cortisone levels and it just sort of, it's not a normal day, right? It's not a normal day if you made a Young Australian of the year on Australia day, it was Australia day.

So, and there's like a whole bunch of things being written about you in the news and people want to interview you and you have a big match. So of course there was a great amount of stress, but she performed really well under those stressful circumstances. And I don't want people to downplay that happy stress because happy stressed does happen and can affect your performance as well. So you have to keep that in mind. And I, I thought it was a good point to make. Then I wanted to talk about the Australian Nick Kyrgios playing Nadal also on a very stressful day when Kobe Bryant, the American basketball player died under terrible circumstances and Kyrgios and Nadal both, you know, were upset about it. Kyrgios, I think most especially because he has a great love of basketball.

He wanted to be a basketball player. He's quite a tall guy and I think he had great ambitions as a young man to be a basketball player. I think I've read that somewhere a long time ago and he was quite emotional walking into court and I mean Kyrgios is always very emotional anyway if you watch tennis you know. But the other interesting thing about that game, and I watched it on television, is the fact that they are real life opponents so they don't like each other very much and that's pretty well known in the tennis world and they were playing on this stressful day and Nadal won. One of the things that I was really surprised, like I had no idea and I was like, "yes, I love this", is an analysis that Australian open people are now doing. They didn't have a lot of statistics and they keep improving on their technology and their analysis of the game every year.

I'm so impressed. But this year they were able to look at the energy expenditure and the calories that those two players spent on court. So after the first set and then I kind of lost track about it on, on what was being, I don't know if they kept reporting on it, but after the first set Kyrgios has spent double the calories, than Nadal. He had walked way more on court up and down than Nadal. And he was all over the place in terms of his game. And wow, I was so impressed. Right? So you think that two top players playing against each other would be quite even in the way that they spend calories on court and they sort of move around on court? No. No a complete difference. And I think it was John McEnroe, he was, you know, doing the commentary and he said, if you want to lose weight, play, like Kyrgios if you to win a match play like Nadal.

And I thought, yup, absolutely 100% because the whole point of what I do as a coach is I help clients waste less time, less energy, feel less stressed when they're going through a competition, which is, you know, job hunting, job searching, career advancement and so on. And you want, that's

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the benefit of having the support and having the knowledge and the tools and the right tools to activate your career in a way that is successful but also less stressful. I think that that's really important. I mean, Kyrgios could have won that match, but he would have ended up wasted. I mean, as he's as he did, way and in a much, in a worse situation, in a worst position for his next match than Nadal. Right? Just by spending so much of his energy, both physical and emotional as well. So Kyrgios is well known for being an uncoachable tennis player.

He's really difficult to deal with. He doesn't follow rules, he doesn't follow advice or guidelines. Many times he has had no coach and he is, you know, growing and learning and seems to be positioning himself better in this tournament than ever before and he's being praised for it. But that amazing amount of energy he spent on courts shows that he has a lot of work to do, a lot of work to do with his team and with his box. His box, terrible, I think in terms of the support that they give him. They love him, I'm sure they do. They just don't understand. And because there's a lot of family members in the box, they don't understand the power of the box in the same way that other top players have. Right? So at one point, Kyrgios even yelled at his box to say something along the lines of, "come on, like help me out here."

I think he did say "say something" and it's like, okay, I've just done something and I want your support and you're not there for me. And after that the box kind of re-energize itself, but you don't want a box looking at their phones, which they were, and not paying attention to you because you need them to be there 100%. As a coach, you're always there 100% behind your, your client, your player, your student. Right? And they weren't. And I thought that was really interesting to see. The other issue with Kyrgios that I think is something that bothers me as well in the corporate world is this idea of the authenticity issue. Oh, you know, you have to be an authentic leader. And Kyrgios is perceived as being very authentic. He's authentic on court. He wears his heart on his sleeve, he's a genuine guy. You know, all of those things that are said about him because of the way that he reacts, you know, really emotionally and powerfully to things that happened to him.

Well that doesn't get him the win does it? And I think that people may misrepresent what authenticity is, also in the corporate world. You see, being authentic as a leader is a privilege, right? So my role as a coach is to get you your job, is to get you your promotion, your, achieve your ambitions. And I like to instruct them and recommend that my clients be human beings and, and allow themselves to be human. Sometimes in confidence that they have a confidant and that somebody that they can privately share their issues with, but they don't keep opening up and being completely open and authentic and frank and honest about every single thing that happens to their careers or at work or issues that they have. That will not serve them to get their promotions right? So that misrepresentation of authentic leadership and I things take a while to get into the world we live in from, you know, research that's being done.

And there is a lot of research that that serves as counterpoints to authentic leadership research to say, look, it's not the best. You know, most of that I've been getting from Stanford. I follow that leadership and business school, work more closely and you know, I've been getting lots of papers and articles written about how people are focusing too much on being authentic. There is also an issue with of bias, gender bias, diversity bias and the idea of, you know, people that are from an Anglo Saxon background feeling like everybody can be authentic. And then people that come from a different background, like myself and many of my peers that are migrants that come from different cultures and diverse ethnic backgrounds that, the diversity in the corporate sector is not

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there for them to be completely authentic about their values and their cultures and the way that they perceive leadership and teamwork.

It's different in different countries. So you have to remember that, when you're working with people that come from different countries and when, especially in Melbourne there's a lot of that is spoken about it before. A lot of that happening with big companies coming in, winning tenders and bringing in leaders from all around the world to work here and manage Australian workers or vice versa. And you know, a lot of clashes going on because it's difficult to communicate across different values, cultures and backgrounds. And with the work that I do with Mind Tribes, we do a lot of work on that. It's still, there's still a lot of work to done. So yeah, I don't think that being authentic has served Kyrgios that well. He, in my view, should have a confidant, and I hope he does, and give himself permission to be human and to feel all that frustration that he has.

He's a young guy who was really emotional, very frustrated with things not going his way and understand the game. And this is something interesting. So Kyrgios is playing a game on court that's not really tennis. So it may serve him in different ways. It may serve him to build a public profile and to be a celebrity and to have a different career outside of tennis, maybe as a radio jock or you know, like an influencer or some type of celebrity like that in the career that follows tennis. But in tennis it won't serve him because he's too easy to read. And Nadal can read his frustration and use that against Kyrgios all the time. And that's what the commentators were saying. And as soon as John McEnroe would say that, it would happen, you know, you could see Nadal was like, yeah, I can see that you're really sort of way right now and I'm going to use that against you.

And so there was no poker face from Kyrgios and Nadal could read everything that was going on in Kyrgios' mind. Now Nadal on the other hand, follows a very strict formula. He's extremely formulaic. I've been following him for years and I've been to many of his matches and I've, at least once a year ago to a match. And Nadal is there. I'm very lucky. So you never know what you're going to get in the first couple of days at the open. He's so systematic that and so analytic, and he has this process that he needs to follow. And for the viewer it's actually off footing and it's funny and we make fun of him, but he wins. And you know, maybe you don't have to be as formulaic and systematic as Nadal is, but knowing that you have a winning formula for your profession, for the passion that you're following and it's served you, why would you change?

So you know, he follows it over and over again, but he's very analytic and he knows how to adjust. So at the end of the game he was asked, because he won. So there was a little interview with him on court and he was asked, "We noticed you changed your game and you're playing more at the back of the court." And, and his answer was, "well, I failed before by not doing that. I've gathered intelligence by watching Kyrgios play other players. And I know, you know now how he plays. I'm older," you know, he didn't say that, but I'm just adding up. He's older so he has a different body response and, and performance that he can do on court. So he changed his game. And those things are the things that I tell my clients to do all the time when they are, unsuccessful at a job interview or job application.

Look at what you've done, adjust your game, do market research and intelligence, understand what's going on outside your control, your, the things that you're doing and adjust your game. And if you're getting older within your, you're a veteran, you're not an early rising star. And many people applied for lots of jobs when they were younger. Spend a lot of time within an organisation. Now they're much older, they're applying for jobs again, but they are applying, playing

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the game as if they were younger. It's not going to serve them anymore. So that's kind of the adjustments that I do as a support coach for clients. I'm like Yes I love what Nadal is saying really good. And finally I want to talk about the King Federer. So after Ash Barty, I saw Federer, and that was a very easy game for him. And then I saw him again on TV, I forgot the name of the player, very good player he was playing against and it was five sets.

It was a very long match and it took forever for him to win. He won. He won very humbly. He knew that, you know, he won by tiny margin. But, what I liked about watching that and not what I think serves as a great analogy for career coaching is that as a veteran, he used all of the benefits available to him. He made the best out of every single rule available in the tennis game too, to his advantage. So he took time off, he discussed things, you know, it's very much like what you should do. You should know the rules of the game. You should know how to extend your opportunities as much as possible to give yourself time to recover. If you're out of, you know, if you ran out of ideas or if you ran out of energy, if you don't know what to do, or in his case he was injured or so we think he was, I don't know.

But regardless, he used all of those benefits and those, those rules to his advantage bought himself some time and ended up winning the match. And this is a really good analogy for me to use for clients so that they understand that it's really important to know how to play the game. It's important that you are good at your job and that you have all these skills and all this experience and all of that. But if you don't know the rules of the game and, in my case recruitment and selection, executive search and hand hunting, how hiring managers choose, how the selection panel will assess you, none of that works for you. Right? So it's a different set of rules. And if you've been out of that game for a long time, you don't know that game anymore because things have changed a lot in the last two, three, five years, let alone a decade.

So yeah, Federer is absolutely on top of things. The other thing that I said before I love about him is how doesn't matter how good a player is. He still needs support. He still feels humble. He still feels vulnerable. That's the word, right? And you can see that vulnerability in Federer, especially if you're on court, you can see that he has this vulnerability about him, which is shocking to us because we look at him play and we think, wow, you know, he's so amazing. And then you can see, for example, that his box will always stand up to applaud him. And that, just that physicality of standing up, you know? And making that statement to him is really important for him. And they are extremely passionate. They are always completely concentrated on his game. It doesn't matter that he's fantastic and that it's, he's going to win.

They're always much more plugged into the game than any other box I have seen for the past 10 12 years that I've been going to the Australian open and you can see that on TV as well. You just watch. And the Williams sisters also have that great support in their box and I'm always really interested in that and I think it makes a huge difference. And he looks at the box and he asks for that feedback all the time. So that vulnerability is really, really interesting to see. So what else? Well, I guess from for the tennis, I think that's it for me today. I do have people that I know, friends of mine that work at the tennis and just as a bit of trivia, they sometimes surprise me with their favourite games. I always ask them who was, who is your favourite player?

And they have always told me people that I didn't expect to be, you know, so great and lovely. Especially with support staff, you know, handing towels and minding locker rooms and driving people around and all those sorts of jobs that you have to do. And so they, they're lovely people out

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there and sometimes the, the ones you don't expect. So I think what that says is that being in the arena as Theodore Roosevelt said, you know, it's something that requires a mask and requires you to play the game and play well and have that poker face or that game face on. And we don't really know exactly if that's showing the sports men or women, their personality completely. So it shows that they are in fact great players, but they have a completely different persona on the other side of the court. And I'm fascinated by that tonight.

I wish I could tell you more, but that's as far as I can tell because I don't really know much. And also, you know, my friends can't tell me. So that's that. But anyway, I hope you have enjoyed knowing a little bit more about tennis and understanding a little bit more about strengths and playing the game, being in the competition, having a good amount of coaching and support, the difference between authentic leadership and just leadership. Really. Yup I guess that's pretty much it for our career highlight session today and I hope you have enjoyed it. It's going to be saved and it will live forever on my Facebook page for you to listen at any time. So what's going to happen next is I'm going to pop out and get ready for my next session at the job hunting private group and you can search it just job hunting podcasts group search for that on your Facebook, join the group very quickly.

I'll look to see if you're there, sign you up very quickly because I have a bunch of questions that I have received over the past few weeks that I haven't been doing any live and I'm going to address all of these questions inside the group. And the reason why I address it inside the group is because I feel better by doing that. My Facebook page is public, my group is private. By signing up to the group, you sign up to the rules of the group, which is to protect the members' stories and identities and they'll be there to support each other and to provide accountability and advice and support, supportive environment for, for the people in the group. So I feel it's a better place for me to be answering questions, even though I always answer the questions anonymously. I don't say who they are and I tried to take any away any sort of sector or company information, but I still think it's better to answer inside the group.

So if you're interested, because you can learn so much from hearing me talk about questions that are asked from other people, sometimes the group, the, the learning you get in a group is exponentially higher than just one-on-one because some things you don't know, you don't know what you don't know. So if you have other people asking you like, Oh, well, I hadn't thought of that, and there you go. So you can learn a lot by just listening to what other people are asking and interested in and curious about. So I will be there. I'll see you all there, so thank you. Bye.

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