

# E97 - DBA Client Spotlight - How Fernanda turned her passion into a business she loves.

Welcome to The Empowered Edupreneur Podcast. My name is Michelle Smit, and I am an ex-teacher turned online business coach for Edupreneurs, the owner of Digiteach and a six-figure entrepreneur. I am in love with empowering educators just like you to create freedom filled online businesses and lives they love.

If you are looking to up level your skills, your finances, your mindset, and change the trajectory of your life as an educator in business, then you are in the right place. Think of this podcast as your weekly dose of business and mindset development to help unlock the infinite potential within you to play bigger with your life and go after your dreams.

We are going to have so much fun. Much fun together. So thank you so much for pushing play today. Now let's dive in.

Hello, hello. Hello everybody. I'm so happy to have you here and listening because I've got such a special guest for you today. I will let her introduce herself to you and tell herself about all the magic that she creates in her business and all of that. But she came into my world. I think it was like two years ago.

Yeah, we'll talk about it now. But two years ago she came into the Bootcamp and then into Digiteachers Biz Academy and it's been really cool to connect with her again today to see where she is now, what she's achieved. It's been two years now. She is pretty inspiring. Her story is inspiring.

Her name is Fernanda Karofsky Mora from the Books and Culture. That is her business and I'm going to let her introduce herself to you now. But thank you for being here. So happy to have you and chat to you today.

Hello, everyone. Hi, Michelle. Thank you for having me here. So nice to be a part of your podcast. I listen to it all the time.

That's really cool. That's awesome to hear. So tell us first about you. Tell us about yourself and your business, who you are, who you help.

I'm first and foremost a book lover, and that's I can say that my, the community I have built around my business is a community of book lovers, and I'm a literature teacher, so I teach mainly 18th and 19th century English literature.

Books are my passion, I love talking about books, and I work at a Dutch university, and I have worked in different universities, and I have taught different ages and different students from different cultures. But I really wanted to open up the possibility of really studying literature meaningfully to a wider public, so not only people who go to university to have an English degree.

But also those people that love to read and are perhaps hesitant about reading the classics of literature. perhaps are intimidated by those big names on their shelves. So I would like to be this guiding person in their literary journeys. And that's how I came up with Books and Culture. So I say that I help book lovers around the world to read the classics of literature meaningfully.

And for that I offer online literature courses and workshops and It's been a really, really nice journey so far.

Wow. That is amazing. So basically you took your passion, and you made it your business, right?

Exactly. Yes.

Wow. I think that's awesome. Taking something that you really love you made the thing that you love to do every day something that you do for work, and you monetized it.

Exactly. So that's something I would normally do myself. So I like studying. I think people that choose an academic career, they love to study. So I would just do it by myself if I'm interested in, let's say, gothic literature. I would do a little research myself, and I love creating content. I still do have a YouTube channel, I used to have another one before. So I used to make content for the

internet, but I really believed that that content had potential, and that I could really use my passion and my skills, and yes value my time and my expertise.

And instead of offering, of course I do still offer certain things for free online, but also taking the time to create courses, masterclasses, workshops, and to share my passion with others. So I really like creating presentations and PDF files and questions. And I feel it's just amazing that people are interested by that and want to join me in these adventures.

Oh my gosh. Yeah, I think that is really, really cool. So what year was it when you came, and we started working together at the beginning?

That was 2022.

Okay. So it's two years ago. That's correct. And you first joined, was it my Educators Income Booster Bootcamp?

Yes. So I remember the day I saw your ad on Instagram at that time. So it was a bit before I got married. And I was also at the end of my PhD trajectory. So I was thinking, what could I do after that? And I was also planning on starting a family. So I wanted to find a way to create more sources of income, something that I could do from home.

So I had already the plan to create an online course. But if I hadn't met you, I would have made a huge mistake, and I'll tell you about it soon what mistake that would have been. But I remember I saw your ad and I thought, oh, this is exactly what I need. I need someone to help me.

I have the knowledge. I know what I want to teach, but I don't know how to structure that in a course and how to even, yeah, record a course, where and what platforms. Especially, you always say that it's the promoting part is very important.

Otherwise, you create something, you open the doors and there's no one there.

Yeah, so it's also like the selling part of it. So people always think about, oh, the creation part of the course, but they forget about the selling part of the course. And I was trying to be like, hey guys, this is really important.

You should focus on this, the selling of it and things like that, especially in that bootcamp.

And that's the hardest part for me, to be honest, to this day, I find it really hard to sell.

That's the common thread for especially educators. That's the one that's the hardest.

I'm still working on that skill, but I've learned so much in the past two years, I think I've gotten better at it. And I know that's something I need to work on. But if I hadn't met you and done the Bootcamp, I would have definitely neglected the promoting part, or I wouldn't know how to do it.

Yeah, you wouldn't know how to get your actual amazing program and offer out into the hands of people, right?

Yeah, and the thing is that I would probably have had no or very little participation or reactions, few reactions, and then I would have probably quit. Like, oh, this is not working. I'll just go back to what I used to do before.

Yeah, for sure, for sure. And that is the worst. I always get really frustrated when I see that. I see someone's got a passion or a dream. They really want to do this thing. They create an offer. And they can't sell it and then they just give up on the dream instead of just learning like a launch strategy and just planning it and executing it and just following someone's recipe, like people give up and then it's just really difficult to see because I'm like, here is a recipe. Just follow the recipe and obviously it's going to be easier said than done, but you get better at it.

After a few times of launching and selling and promoting and the way you talk about it, you just get better as you do it.

Yeah, definitely. I had never heard of launching before or funnel. I remember at the Bootcamp, that was one of my questions. What is a funnel? And that, of course, is part of the whole process.

Without that, like you said, the amazing content you create just goes to waste, even if people want to have it. If no one brings it to their attention, it's impossible for them to find you.

Yeah. And of course this is your passion, and you love to create courses on books and literature and all of this stuff. But ultimately you need to earn an income because, you've got to feed yourself.

And if this was going to be a hobby that you just did on the side that you didn't need to earn any money from, then sure. You can just create products and just have fun creating them. But people aren't going to necessarily buy them. You're not going to have that impact.

You're not going to make any money. And that is why you wanted to create a course, right? You wanted to make money, and you wanted to set yourself up for motherhood, basically.

Yeah. This is also one of the things I struggled with. So, exchanging my time for money and believing, I believe in myself and in my content, but believing that it is possible to ask money in exchange for what I offer. Mm. And that's something we, we work with at DBA. I think in the goals sessions that we had Mm, that we talked about. The coaching calls. Yeah, the coaching calls. Yes. We talked about changing our mindset and really feeling confident about ourselves and our, I don't want to say right, but yes, our right to, to ask for money in exchange for our time and dedication and expertise.

That's huge. That's such a big one. Educators have a tendency to undercut themselves. And that's just because what society does in general, they just don't value educators as much.

And then we get programmed to believe that we can't charge, we can't earn a lot. Or we can't do this and that. And so there's a lot of that programming that we have to clear out and rebuild these new beliefs and things like that, which is a process. It's not saying that happens overnight. It's a journey and it's like we all on this journey, we'll continue on it.

But a lot of magic happens when you start doing that work, because then you can get to a place where you create a product, charge for it, and sell it. And you're okay with someone paying you for it. That's when you can start making money, really.

Yeah. Yeah, it's a change of mindset. Like you said, for educators. It is hard indeed.

It's especially hard. And women. I feel like female educators, that's double whammy. There's a lot of programming that we've got to push past. There's a lot of discomfort around money. There's a lot of scarcity and fear and a lot of stuff like that. And I'm sure, you know now. You learn the strategy, you learn how to do things, but then it's a lot of internal stuff. It's a lot of overcoming your own resistance and shifting your mindset and identity stuff. It's pretty deep, the work, how far it can go.

Think yourself as an Edupreneur like you say, instead of an educator.

Yeah, exactly. A lot of things being offered on the internet for much less. But once you compare the quality, you, I realized, well, I spent a lot of time preparing and doing research and all the years I've studied, all the experience I've had up until now. So what I offer. It's definitely different from what you see, for much less on the internet.

Absolutely. And it's also just like your lived experience, your wisdom from your whole life. All of the studying that you've done for all of the years, the skills that you've built in reading and literature and understanding that world. That's years and years and years of you building that up.

And it's just your unique style of teaching and how, who you are as a person, like all of that is valuable. And all of that differentiates you from others because no one's got the same story as you and people are paying not just to learn X, Y, Z, they're also paying you to learn from you because they like you, they identify with you, they like the style of the way you teach, all of that stuff. That's another thing people don't want to go and sell courses because they're like who's going to buy from me?

Because if there's other things that are cheaper. But you are your own unique, you're so unique, right? And if you just infuse that in your offers, you can increase the price, they're more valuable and people who resonate with you will come.

That is so true. Yeah. Yeah. That's why I have developed my main offer in the past years. Taking into account the feedback and what I've learned from you.

So now for instance, my main offer has three tiers. So depending on the level of engagement, personal engagement they have with me then it's a different

price. And I think it is a nice way to offer different possibilities depending on what the person is looking for.

Yeah. That's like a little easy pricing strategy that you don't have to go create three different programs.

You just take the same program and create three different price points at different support levels. And it's a smart, effective way of selling your courses and stuff.

But let's go back to. So you knew you wanted to create a course. You came into the Bootcamp, you then after the bootcamp decided to join the Digiteachers Biz Academy.

You joined the gold package and then we had, I think it was calls together and all of that. So from there, what did you know at that point? And where were you at at that point and where are you at now? What has happened in this time?

So I think now I must talk about the huge mistake I would have made if I hadn't met you. So at the time I was thinking about creating a literature course. But in my head, I had this idea, I have to put everything I know in this course. And it's going to be huge.

The history of literature from the Middle Ages to contemporary times it's going to be very complete, but I would probably still be working on it to this day. Because it's too much information.

It would take too much time to create and perhaps there aren't people that are interested in it. So you said, no, don't do that.

I think I remember this.

And I was like, oh, you know, she's right. And also to plan ahead to sell the course and then then make it as you go. Yes. So I think, okay, so instead of the history of literature, that's something that interests me, but perhaps it does not interest everyone.

And perhaps I can focus on specific things. So first, I thought of what does a reader need to know? In order to have a meaningful reading experience. The

basic tools, concepts they need to know. And with a lot of examples that I accumulated from my teaching experience. So then I completely changed my mind set and completely changed the structure of the course.

So that was very important. That was essential, really, at the beginning of my journey.

Yes. Did you already change that in the bootcamp? Did that aha moment happen in the bootcamp?

Yes, because at the bootcamp I had already thought of a working name, working titles, a working name for the course.

And yeah, we started building the skeleton of the course already in Bootcamp. And you go over let's say an overview of the launching process, but I really thought I needed more guidance, and I really wanted to know more and to do this right. So then I wouldn't have to do it again.

And then I wouldn't have give up during the process. And I really felt confidence in you and a good connection. So that's what you said before. It's not just about the content, but also who you work with. We have a lot of things in common. I know you also came to the Netherlands, you had a Dutch partner.

These little things that really made me yeah, connect with you in a more personal level. And it was great. So in this past two years, I created the main offer, and I launched it three times, I believe. Then I changed it into an Evergreen offer because of my pregnancy. And then I knew I was not going to have the time to do any other launches during those first months of motherhood.

So I wanted to put things in the automatic for a while. But I've built a community and there are some students that I feel very close to, and I've done other things, and they're always there. Other short courses on specific subjects, such as I have a course on Frankenstein, so that's a shorter course.

And another one on Jane Austin and other short stories as well. And I wanted to continue with the live element of the original offer before it went Evergreen had this live component. We met weekly. But then when it went to Evergreen, then there was no more of this live components, but I really miss that.



Although it's always difficult with the different time zones, I have students from different countries. So then I decided to create something new and to create the workshops, which I offer four times a year. And then they are live and then I can connect. My existing students who are part of the academy and also new students who can join the workshop first and if they're interested, then join the community.

Amazing. My gosh. And it's crazy to think that you didn't know how to do most of those things. And now you've done so many things. The tech side of it, how much you've learned just on the course creation tech side of things, like how to have the pages and the funnels and all of that, then actual course creation part, then like the content creation of social media.

You've learned a lot, you've done a lot of stuff. And also you had a child. Like, yes!

That's crazy.

Yeah. So it's been quite a journey and I'm so proud of everything I've learned. And if I hadn't seen that ad on Instagram two years ago, I had that urge to create something.

But perhaps if I hadn't taken action right then that plane would have died, and it would have been really a loss. Because yeah, the business is growing slowly and it is a different type of client, clients or students because it's not something that they need. But something that they're passionate about.

So I know it's a different niche. Yeah. But it's also something that I am passionate about. And I do have the confidence and now that I'm back on track, let's say after this motherhood roller coaster. I have so many ideas and I really believe that the business can grow even if it's at a slow pace I have confidence that it will grow.

That's amazing. Could you imagine your life right now without it?

No, no, no, it's me, I'm Fernanda, but I am also books and culture.

Yeah, I feel like that is it. I think that's so amazing. You've built this thing out of nothing and now it's providing. Firstly, it's allowed you to stay at home with your child and it's set up systems for you to sell your course all the time and make money pretty much quite passively.

If someone just buys it. You've set up that freedom for you as a mother, you've had to enjoy your time with your child. And now you can go back to just creating the things that you love in your passion. I always am like what better thing is that than to make your work like your passion, your work in some ways.

Yeah. Every day I see something, oh a new book or perhaps an interesting quote. Oh, this would be a nice post, or this would be a great course, or this could be something for a masterclass in the future.

Yeah. Inspired. Like you're inspired and you can be creative. No one's telling you what you're allowed to do. You get to do what you want. You get to be creative in your business. It's so satisfying. I also couldn't imagine my life without my business as well. I think that's a good sign that we're on the right track. Yeah, it's really amazing.

And tell me as someone who's now gone on this journey from, almost not knowing much, just knowing you wanted to create a course to having done this and having your own business now.

And joining the bootcamp, joining DBA, what would you say to the person who's like listening right now, who also has that inner feeling of wanting to do it, but they're scared, something's holding them back. Whatever it may be, they're not able to take that leap. What advice would you give to them?

There will always be something holding you back. It's the same with books. I tell my students all the time to read outside of your comfort zone. That's the only way you will challenge yourself as a reader. And after the journey, you will become a more confident reader. It's the same when you're in this business journey, if you never take the leap to do something different.

Of course it's more comfortable, even though you're not 100 percent happy, it's more comfortable to just keep going to school if you teach at a school or at a university and keep doing the same thing you've done in the past years. But if

you have that urge to do something different, to create something to turn your passion into your business, it is scary.

It will always be scary to face the unknown, right? That's why you need guidance, right? It's really hard to do it on your own. If it's reading classics of literature or starting a business. It's really hard to do it on your own and you will most likely give up along the way, unfortunately. But if you have someone there to guide you and show you the way, and also other people with you, so if you're part of DBA. So I got in touch with other people that were in a similar situation, and we even created at the time, a WhatsApp group.

I met one of them personally because she also lives in the Netherlands. And we were just supporting each other and say, oh, you're doing a great job. Oh, this is so nice what you've created. And that really motivates you to, to keep going. So if you feel like creating something and starting your own business. Do, but with the help someone's guidance, then you will continue your journey to the end, and you will do it right.

Otherwise you may get lost. There's so many things, so many different suggestions or recommendations on the internet. Do this. No, do that. Use this. Use that. You need to choose one path and follow.

Yeah. Oh yeah. That's some good advice. Because the internet is very overwhelming. And there are like a million ways to do it, but yeah, choose one person you resonate with, invest with them, follow their path and stick to it. And face the fears, because the fear is going to be there. It's going to be scary, you have to overcome a lot of resistance and fear to get where you are now. As you move forward in growing your business, you're going to have to face new fears.

That part of building a business, right? I don't think it's for everyone. But for the certain people who know that they're not really happy in the current educational systems or the way that they're living their lives. And they're ready for change and they're ready to expand and they've got a bit of grit and they're ready to work and create something. Then it's for you, right?

And it's going to be scary but face your fears. I think that's really helpful advice from you. And tell us for our book lovers, literature lovers who are listening right now. How can they find you, where can they get a piece of your magic online?

So they can find all the available courses and workshops on the website, [booksandculture.club](#). Or on Instagram, I'm @books.and.culture. I post pretty much daily and there are a lot of things available on the website. And if they would like to join the Academy, it's called the Creative Reader Academy. I really believe in creative reading. So really engaging meaningfully with the literary text, going beyond the book pages and we build a community and if you would like to be a part of this community, this fascinating community of book lovers from all over the world.

It's magical, like you say, that we share this passion for books. You're more than welcome to join us at Books and Culture.

Oh, amazing. How cool just to be part of, if you are passionate about books and creative reading and literature to be part of an online, almost like a book club online, that you can connect with other passionate readers, share your books, learn with each other.

I think that's really, really cool. So definitely go check her out. Go follow her on Instagram, go check what she has out on her website. I'm going to drop all the links on this episode show notes.

But yeah, it's just been so nice to connect with you again, Fernanda, it's been so good to chat to you and just hear your story to be able to see where you were two years ago and where you are now. And knowing that you did all this stuff to prepare you for motherhood. And that you didn't just speak about it, you actually went and did it. You were so good at just executing and taking action and just doing it.

You've done a lot. You've really achieved so much, you should be so proud of yourself, and I'm excited to see where you take books and culture. I'm excited to keep seeing it growing and growing and growing and you getting these This bigger community of book lovers doing what you love.

I think it's really awesome. So thank you for being here and sharing your story with us.

Thank you so much for having me, Michelle. It was great.

Awesome. Before I say goodbye, I'm going to be hosting my live Bootcamp again. So this is something I haven't done this year yet. So I used to do it like three times a year and I haven't done any this year. So it's really special. It's my live Educators Income Booster Bootcamp. It's the event that Fernanda came in first.

Where we mapped out her first idea of her offer, the skeleton of it. It's a five-day Bootcamp and I'm going to help you take that idea that you have for a course or a group program.

We're going to flesh it out, map it out, step by step by step, I'm going to help you. So by the end of our time together you have a clear offer that you can then go and launch, sell get out into the world. It's really an amazing live event.

So if you want to join that you can get on the wait list. There'll be a link in the bottom as well. And those on the wait list will get an early bird bonus when the doors open. So it's going to open pretty soon. Next week sometime. So yeah, it's been so good to chat to you, Fernanda.

Thank you for your time. And we'll chat again soon.

Thank you bye bye.

Bye, ciao, ciao.

Thanks so much for listening to today's episode. If you haven't yet joined the wait list for the Educators Income Booster Bootcamp, then head to my website at [digiteach.biz](https://digiteach.biz) to sign up. This is going to be the best live training experience, helping you take your knowledge and map it out into a desirable course that can sell for years to come. So that you can scale your income and impact like crazy.

I appreciate you so much and I can't wait to connect with you in the next episode. In the meantime, go create a business and life you love.