

## **Confident Women Lead Podcast**

### **EP 61: Why Representation Matters?**

Hey Hey!!

Happy Juneteenth!!

I'm going to try and keep part 2 of this series short. In Part I we discussed 'What is Representation' and I told you that representation is a choice to be seen and that in order to do that you must have faith or belief in you.

Today, let's discuss why Representation Matters.

Representation Matters because it "represents" the transfer of knowledge" amongst a group of people.

Let's run through some examples of how this plays out at work.

What I have found is that the bosses I have had in my career have seen my awesomeness but they didn't know how to cultivate it or what to do with it. You've seen this too, maybe with a boss who just doesn't know what to do with you or even how to provide you with meaningful feedback. They like you but they don't know how to help you progress.

Here is a juicy nugget, one that I'll be breaking down even further inside the Confident Women Lead community next month so don't sleep. If Representation Matters because it "represents" the transfer of knowledge

then what I want you to understand next is that the transfer of said knowledge has already taken place in white society.

See they have their daddy's who have been in corporate America, who understand that it's a system with an objective and it has rules. They know what those rules are. They've explained them to their kids (i.e., the people you work with). So, there's no need to take performance reviews that seriously or even feedback because it's a formality but it doesn't determine anything of relevance. The relevant things such as relationships aren't documented.

For example, how many of you have received stellar performance reviews but have not gotten promoted?

So, what does this mean for Black Women and society. It means that we have to choose to be seen. By being seen it provides the opportunity to move into leadership positions where we can obtain greater levels of knowledge and understanding. Once we have that knowledge then we 1.) culturally have to share it and 2.) Sista to Sista you have to hear me when I do.

It's been my experience that white people are not going to tell you the rules, they are not going to say the thing or communicate it in your love language. That doesn't mean they won't help, drop hints and things like that but they are not going to put the pieces together for you. In some cases, I don't even think it's malicious. It's just that we don't culturally

speak or do things the same way culturally. Again, this is why representation matters.

A white colleague said to me like “Anita, you would go so much farther if you would be a little softer”. Now from her perspective she meant well. She was trying to help. What I heard in that moment though was that I needed to be different or less direct. Which may have been the case but listen that’s a basic understanding. What she was actually saying was Anita, people like you, they see you but you’re breaking some rule.

Listen, rules will be and can be broken based on cultural or environmental norms.

On the flip of that the Black Men who were the representation that I had in corporate America spoke my language. Culturally we don’t just do things just because we want to understand the why. Or maybe that’s just my language. I remember, being thoroughly annoyed that I had to go to a meeting some new guy had put on my calendar. I did not see the point at all. I remember and in fact I’ve clearly never forgot it when a mentor of mine who was Black said. Anita, you assign value to a person, situation or conversation in advance. He then went on to ask questions about the meeting in order to demonstrate that I had no real data or reason not to go. Then finally he explained why this mattered and why he pointed it out. When we dismiss people or remove opportunities to have meaningful conversations with people, we limit our ability to make connections and build meaningful relationships which are critical to everyone’s success.

Representation Matters

I want you to know the rules and have the knowledge to be a leader at work. July, inside the CWL community I'm going to be teaching how corporate America works and rules of the game. This will be a part of my new Legendary Leadership Method Accelerator. It's for those that want to figure out what's going wrong, why you can't get promoted, even why you and your boss are bumping heads. I'm literally going to show you how the game works including telling you the rules (that you are likely breaking) but I'm not teaching you the rules because I want you to play the game. I want you to understand the game so you can see it at play and then leverage it as you lead. You can't dismantle what you don't understand. So, make sure you stay tuned into the podcast.

To recap, Representation Matters because it is how information is gathered and transferred among a group of people. At every level more information is gathered. What we have to do now is start the process of transferring the knowledge amongst our community.

In part 3 we are going to discuss how you can "Re-Present" at Work

Confident Women who Lead because understand the transfer of knowledge is what makes them a legendary leader.

Have a beautiful Juneteenth.