

Ep #202: 5 Common Coaching Business Mistakes to Avoid



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With Your Host

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Hey, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf, and you're listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills*, Episode 202.

To really compete in the coaching industry, you have to be great at coaching. That's why every week, I will be answering your questions, sharing my stories, and offering tips and advice so you can be the best at what you do. Let's get to work.

Hey coach, welcome to the podcast. I'm so happy you're here today. I have something fun to talk about today, and I can't wait to share it with you. I have been offering a new mastermind, it's called Reimagine. You have probably heard me talk about it, unless this is your first time listening to the podcast, and then hello, welcome.

And don't worry, today is not about the mastermind. The podcast isn't, but one question that I have had, because Reimagine is more of a business focused mastermind, one question that I've had from several people and some colleagues and some friends is, "Why the shift into business coaching?"

First of all, it is not a complete shift into business coaching. I think that both sides of our businesses are so important. Coaching skills and being client centered will always be my love. And one thing that I noticed... and I have actually answered this on the podcast before, but now I have a better way to say it...

One thing that I have really noticed over the years of working with my clients is that when we're focusing on coaching skills, especially in my more advanced offers, there are things that come up in my clients' businesses that are actually affecting the way they coach.

When I've answered this before, I think I said something like, "When I have a new offer, I like wait until it's kind of oozing out of me." It's demanding to be put into the world and that's why now's the time to offer it. But this is just a more specific answer of, really, why that was coming up for me, why I

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really started noticing it a lot and just thought, “Okay, this is the time this has to be in the world.”

Because as I was working with, especially some of my more advanced clients in the advanced offer... When I say “advanced clients”, I just mean clients that have been maybe coaching longer, just a little more advanced than their skill. They've worked with quite a few clients.

I would just start to notice that some decisions that they had made around their business, or some things that they thought they needed to be doing in their business, were really starting to affect the way that they were coaching. And maybe even some decisions that they have made that they don't love, that they don't know how to kind of unwind or get out of are really starting to affect the way they feel about coaching.

Which of course breaks my heart, because I want every coach to love what they do and to really not be able to wait till they get to the coaching part of their day. And I was just noticing that they had maybe created a structure, or created a timeline or created goals or just created some of these business things, business processes that weren't aligning with the way they coach and with how they like to interact with their clients.

So I have actually created a new series called the CEO Series, which is five videos. It's a video/audio series... We'll put the link in the show notes... where I kind of address the top five very general mistakes that I see a lot of coaches making.

In this series, I talk about why they're important to notice, why they are keeping you from being in love with your business, how they're affecting the way you show up to run your business and to coach your clients. But I really focus more on the business side.

So in this podcast, what I want to do is first, obviously invite you to grab the series and download it. It's a free series you can watch and listen on your own time. And then, if you're listening in real time, there is actually a live coaching component to it where you can come after you've watched all the

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things and come coach with me. We're going to offer a couple of those. Again, click the link in the show notes, it'll give you all the details.

But what I'm going to talk about in today's podcast is I'm going to tell you the five things that I talk about in the series. I'm going to mention them very briefly, but I'm going to, instead of focusing on the business side... because this podcast is called *Mastering Coaching Skills*...

I'm going to tell you why these things get in the way of you showing up as the best possible coach for your clients, and how you can start making little, teensy divots into the quality of your coaching and how much you love coaching your clients. Okay?

The first one, the first mistake that I see a lot of coaches making, especially as their businesses grow, as they get more experience, is that they forget that they have two roles. They have the role of the CEO. And with that role of the CEO, what that means is that you're in charge of every single thing.

Now, if you're a newer coach and you're listening to this, no problem. This is not going to be over your head. This is going to be things that you can start to look for right now and hopefully start to avoid some of these things. And one thing I should have said before I just dove right in is that everything that I'm going to go through, every mistake that I mention, they're all things I've done. They're all things a lot of coaches have done.

So this isn't like, "Ooh, find the one that might be for you." I guarantee, I bet most of these are for you in some way, either right now or down the line, or in the past; we've all been there, done that with most of these. Again, I dig more into each of them and I give very specific step-by-step instructions of how to turn them around in the CEO Series, which you can download in the show notes.

Okay. So let's get back to it. The first one is that you just forget you're a CEO, right? You forget what that means. So many coaches, including myself, including a lot of you, get into this habit of, when you're building

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your business, thinking that you need a coach to help you. Or you need someone to tell you what to do.

Now, this is not a bad thing at all. Obviously, right? I'm a coach. I'm not telling you not to buy coaching. But when it goes kind of wrong is when you put so much weight on your coach; you put all the decisions on your coach. You start to outsource all of your power as the CEO, right? And you forget that so much of coaching, and the coaching hopefully that you're doing with your clients is helping your clients build that inner trust, helping your clients build that inner guidance.

But when it comes to your business, you sometimes are forgetting that, right? You're outsourcing all of it. You don't know what to do if you don't have a coach. And this isn't, again, a bad thing. It's just something to notice if this is coming up for you. But think about how that can really start to affect your coaching.

Because if you're doing it, and you aren't aware that you're doing it, then you go to coach your clients... even if you're coaching them on something totally different... even if you are coaching them on nutrition, coaching them on their marriage, coaching them on parenting... whatever it is, anything you're coaching them on, if you forget that the entire point of coaching is yes, to help guide our clients, but to help guide them in the direction they want to go... to help them learn how they interact with the world... to help them make the decisions in a way that they want to make them... to create the results that they want to create.

If you forget that for yourself, it's so much easier to also forget it for your clients, even if it's just in the smallest of ways, right? So if you become very dependent on your coach, then you're going to think it's totally normal when your clients do that with you.

And there's a line here, right? I'm not suggesting, of course, I'm not suggesting that they shouldn't have a coach, they shouldn't have a business coach, that you shouldn't have any kind of coach... have all the

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coaches that you want to have And just always remember that the point of coaching is that you are building self-trust, or you're helping your clients build self-trust, right? That you are guiding them in the direction that they want to go. So that's the first one.

The second mistake I see a lot of coaches make is that you haven't taken a second to really think about your personal values and how you translate those into your business. Now I've talked about values on the podcast before. You can go back and listen... I don't know what episode number it is, but I'm sure we'll link it in the show notes.

You can go back and listen to that if you've never heard all the amazing reasons that you should know the values of your business. But I want you to think about if you haven't done this. And I think of values as kind of my guide, right? It helps me make... They help me make decisions. They help me really feel secure and confident in the decisions I'm making because they're very aligned with who I am and what I believe.

They help me know that if I hear someone saying something that's like, "You should be doing this, you're doing it wrong," or whatever, it really helps me decipher: Is that true? Should I be doing that? Does it align with my values? Should I not be doing that? Is it a match?

Values can just really help guide every single thing that you do in your business; every decision you make, every offer you create, everything. So when you forget those, it can also be easy to not notice if your clients aren't following their values, right? It's kind of linked a little bit to the first one, to just looking to you to make decisions or to guide them, versus finding that inner guide, their inner compass.

I think values, our values, are really kind of that inner compass that guide us. And if you are an extension of your business... or your business is an extension of you; you're not an extension of your business. But your business is an extension of you as a human, then of course, your personal values are going to be mixed into your business values, right?

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They're going to be very similar. When you really start to use those as your own compass, it can be really empowering for your clients, for you to help them make decisions based on their values, to follow, not just something that might be your opinion, but to really dig into what do they believe about that thing? What's the value that they want to follow in different situations?

The third one, and this is the one that... Listen, when I was creating the series, the CEO Series, I almost took this one out because I was like, "Ooh, this is going to maybe trigger some coaches." And here's what I want you to know. I already said this and I'm going to say it again.

We've all done this. We've all been there. And some of you might not really do this as much, but some of you so. You only surround yourself... or maybe not only... but you mostly surround yourself with other coaches.

When you think about your network, whether it's on social media or networking events or... The network that you are often surrounding yourself with is mostly coaches. I used to think that this only happened in certain circles, because that's where I was seeing it happen. But what I've come to learn, after a long time of working with coaches from all over the industry, is that it's actually quite common among most coaches and so many coaches.

And it's the reason that sometimes you hear coaching being compared to network marketing, or coaching being compared to multi-level marketing, and things like that. Where it's kind of happening in a vacuum, like everyone's hiring each other. I've talked about this also in previous podcasts and it is not ever bad for a coach to hire a coach. I highly recommend it.

Actually, if you're a coach and you've never worked as a coach, I highly recommend working with a coach and just seeing what that experience is like and having those transformations.

But what you want to be careful of... Most of you listening, you probably went to a certain coaching school, a training program, a certification program. Maybe you have done multiple of them. Maybe you've been in the

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same mastermind for a while and you're surrounded by the same people round after round. Maybe you go to live events.

I'm thinking of... For example, I just saw an ad earlier today for a Tony Robbins event, right? I know a lot of coaches that go; I've never been to one, but I know a lot of coaches that do that kind of thing. So you go and you go with the same people every time, and you get a hotel together, and it's a whole thing. And that is amazing, right?

You've heard me talk so much about finding colleagues, finding support, finding friends in the industry, finding your people and sticking with them. It's so good.

And also, if you're forgetting to expand that bubble to build your audience, especially if you don't coach coaches... although even if you do, this piece is still important, right? If you only surround yourself with coaches, just think about how that affects your coaching.

Now I've actually seen this in action as I've evaluated coaching. I can tell, and I've given this feedback in the past, where I can kind of tell when the coaches who I'm evaluating are so used to speaking to other coaches, that now I'm them coach someone who isn't a coach, and the client looks a little lost because the words they're using are very kind of coach speak, industry speak, right?

Or assuming that their clients know certain things that they might not know. And it really... This is such a small thing, but it has a big, big impact on your coaching. Again, in the series, if you want to download it, I tell you very tangible ways, three steps for each of these, how to solve them. And I talk about this one too, how to expand your network and why, on the business side, why it's so important.

But I really want to make an argument for why this is super important also on the coach side, in your coaching, how it affects your coaching, how it makes you such a better coach if you know how to speak to all the humans, not just other coaches, and you know how to describe coaching in

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a way that anyone could understand it. And then you know how to guide people through coaching in a way that you could do with anyone.

The next one that I see, especially with a lot of experienced coaches, is that you, over time, you start to use coaching as a weapon against yourself, right? You use the coaching against yourself. You use self-coaching against yourself. And sometimes in very small ways, and ways you might not even notice that it's happening.

Anytime you find yourself saying things like, "Well, let me coach myself into doing this thing. I'm having so much resistance come up, I just need to coach myself through it." Sometimes that can be true, right? Sometimes it's like we want to do big things, we want to accomplish big things, and some resistance comes up that we might need to work through.

Or something comes up that we're like, "Okay, I know I want to get on the other side of this. Coaching is an amazing tool, let me use that to get on the other side of this thing that's coming up for me."

But sometimes, and this can be very sneaky the way it sneaks in there, you can start to use coaching in a way that is more like, "I really don't want to do this thing, but if I coach myself hard enough, I can get into it. If I just keep coaching myself and keep coaching myself, and don't give up, and I just keep coming back to it, eventually I will be able to change the way I think about this. I'll feel like I want to do it."

And I would just offer that if you're doing that to yourself, I guarantee it is also showing up in your coaching with your clients, even if it's in the teensiest ways, right? It might just keep you from seeing other options. Because as a coach, there are always different things you can coach on, right?

If your client is like, "Here's a thing I want to accomplish," and you're like, "Okay, let's coach through it." "Oh, this block came up or this resistance came up." "That's okay. Let's coach through it." Versus, sometimes we might say, "Well, that's one path, but is there another path?" You can

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always use coaching on any of the paths, but sometimes we forget to just even consider there might be other paths here.

Let me consider: What do I really want? What's the outcome I really want? Have I even questioned if this is what I want? Or is this just what I think I'm supposed to want? And so if you're doing it with yourself, then the equal thing could be showing up with your clients, right? Where you don't question, "Okay, hold on, let's pause. Is that what you really want? Or is that what you think you're supposed to want?"

Is that what someone else wants for you? And so you're just making that decision. And now you think if you just coach hard enough on it, you can get through it.

And the last one is that you forget that growth isn't linear, right? You forget as the coach in your coaching business, you forget that there are so many ways to measure growth. There are so many ways to plan your business, to hit goals, to shift goals, to pivot, to make changes.

You might be stuck in a situation where you are hearing certain things from your mentors or your coaches, and you hear them saying like, "Here's the best way... Here's this path, you should definitely go this way." And you start to internalize that the only way to create that success is to follow that path that they're telling you, right?

And this isn't anything against them. I'm not bashing any coaching. What they're doing might be totally fine. But the way you might be interpreting it, or internalizing it as the coach, is like, "Here's the only path that is acceptable." And again, forgetting to check in with yourself.

Forgetting to say, "Is this what I want? Or are there times when maybe I purposefully stop that growth, or slow down the growth, or push pause for a minute while I figure something out? Or push pause while life happens," without making it mean anything about yourself?

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So if you're doing that as the coach, and you have that overdrive button pushed all the time, and it's just, "Must succeed, must succeed, must succeed, set bigger goal, set crazy goal, set huge goal, keep going, keep going, keep going," and you're driving yourself forward like that, you forget that there are actually so many other options. That that is totally optional, that path.

When your clients come to you for coaching on this similar thing, even if it's on a different topic, you might miss it. You might not realize that they've just created this picture where it's like, "Here's the one path. That's the only way forward. And it's the only way I can believe that I achieved the thing or believe that I'm successful."

So I invite you to check in with these things. To really sit with yourself for a minute as the coach and the CEO of your business, as the coach and the person who gets to make all the decisions about what you do and how you run your business, and remind yourself of these things.

To sum it up, remember that you're the CEO. You get to make every decision for your business, that only you know what's right for you and for your business.

Remember to lean into your values, especially when you're making decisions. And when you're choosing what your path is, what your growth is, and how you want to serve your clients.

Remember to not only surround yourself with coaches. I know sometimes that can feel very convenient and easy, but it really does hurt your coaching and hurt the growth of your business.

Remember that we never, ever, ever use coaching as a weapon with our clients or with ourselves.

And remember that growth is never linear. Right? I'll leave you with the visual, I'm sure you've seen it, of... I have no idea who created this, I've seen it a million different ways. But it's what you think business growth will

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look like and it's just a straight line up and to the right. And the other one next to it is like what it's actually like, and it's a squiggly up and down, back and forth, all over the place, but still generally up and to the right. It doesn't just go from point A to point B perfectly linear; it goes all over the place. That is part of building a business.

So I hope this was helpful. And if you heard me say something that you're like, "What? Yes, I need to know more," go to the show notes, click the link, and sign up for the training so you'll immediately get all of the videos delivered to your inbox; all of them all at once.

I don't make you wait, because when I sign up for something, I'm like, "You better get me." If I have time right now to click the link and commit to the thing, I just want all of it all at once. So that's how we're delivering it to you. You get your own little link, with your own little client portal that has all the videos.

And there's also a private podcast. If you'd rather listen, you can just listen to the audio; you don't have to watch the videos at all. And then, if you're listening to this in real time, make sure to also come to the live coaching, which I cannot wait for. We're going to coach on all these topics. We're going to go through, "What's the one that came up for you that you know is getting in your way? And how can I help?"

Alright, until next week, my friends. I will see you, or talk to you or whatever, then. Goodbye.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *Mastering Coaching Skills*. If you want to learn more about my work, come visit me at LindsayDotzLafCoaching.com. See you next week.