

Ep #1: Create Your Ideal Life & Interior Design Business



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With Your Host

Desi Creswell

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Hey designer, you're listening to episode one, how to create your ideal life and business.

Welcome to *The Interior Design Business CEO*, the only show for designers who are ready to confidently run and grow their businesses without the stress and anxiety. If you're ready to develop a bigger vision for your interior design business, free up your time, and streamline your days for productivity and profit, you're in the right place. I'm Desi Creswell, an award-winning interior designer and certified life and business coach. I help interior designers just like you stop feeling overwhelmed so they can build profitable businesses they love to run. Are you ready to confidently lead your business, clients, and projects? Let's go.

Hello designers, welcome to podcast episode one. I am so excited to be here with you today and let's just say this podcast has been a long time coming. I'm especially excited to be able to share with you in this format because of the impact that podcasts have had on my own life.

I can remember being a commercial interior designer working in Chicago, being out in the mornings, the sun rising, running along the lake, and listening to podcasts learning about entrepreneurship, which had never even crossed my mind when I set out to become a designer. And that was really when I started to tap into this idea of owning your own business.

Podcasts are also how I was introduced to mindset work, which led me to my mentor and many other mentors that I've had since. And it's also how I've connected with so many of you already through this medium by being a guest on some of the leading podcasts in the interior design industry, such as *Well-Designed Business*. And I'm just so excited to be here with you.

Podcasts have truly helped me transform so many areas of my life and I'm honored to be in your ears introducing concepts and strategies that really have the potential to transform your life and business. One of my favorite parts of my work, both when I was an interior designer myself and now as a coach, is really building those relationships. And I would love to hear about your own transformations and takeaways, if you choose to share them with me, either over email, social media, or in the form of a review.

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I often say that I'm the coach that I wish I could have hired when I was practicing as an interior designer. And what I'm going to share today is foundational to building a life and business that support one another, as opposed to being in contradiction, where one of those things has to suffer. This concept is your life and business vision. It is the crucial first step to a fulfilling, profitable and sustainable career as an interior designer.

When you create this vision, you're creating a roadmap for self-defined success. And this vision also helps you make quick decisions and easily identify your top priorities so that you can streamline how you spend your time, energy and attention moving forward. I'm going to be walking you through why having a vision that encompasses both your life and business is so important, what you can do to get started today, and a few of the common obstacles I see my clients face when setting or implementing their vision.

Before we dive in I just want to give a shout out to one of my clients in my group program, Out of Overwhelm, she is living this business and life vision. Every Friday we celebrate in our group all the things that are happening for each of the designers. And what she shared is, "I've been on vacation at our cabin this week and I've really been allowing myself to completely unplug and it's been great. I've checked in a few times, but overall I haven't been feeling any anxiety or overwhelm about starting back next week with a pile of work to catch up on.

I took some time before I left to break down current projects into smaller tasks, delegate them and attach some due dates, which has left me feeling much better prepared for when I return." So I just love that. We are able to live our lives in the way that we want to and also create a successful business, and this client is proof that that is possible.

All right, so let's dive in. I know that many of you are feeling overwhelmed and feel like you're being pulled in a million directions in your business, and that really there's nothing left for you then at the end of the day. And this is so easy to let happen. It's exactly what happened to me when I started my residential practice.

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I really thought that being my own boss would mean I was in charge of my schedule, able to take vacation without worry, and be with my family that we were planning on starting. Because I didn't have what I'm sharing with you today I ended up just creating another job for myself. Without a vision, you end up trying to be everything to everyone at all times. So let me just ask, where does that leave your business and you, as its most important asset? Burned out and stuck.

The key to setting and actively creating your ideal life and business is to set a destination of what you want your life and business to look like in the future. We need it to be as clear as possible. Now, this doesn't mean that your vision can't evolve, or that you have to figure out every last step along the way, or even that you need to get there right this second, this is not a race. But your vision creates a roadmap and you're always in charge of where you're headed and how you get there.

I want you to think about having a new client and meeting them for a consultation. You don't know where they live, maybe just that they're west of wherever you're located. So you hop in the car, and you just get going, hoping eventually you'll make it. Now, this sounds kind of ridiculous as I describe it, doesn't it? You would never do this for an appointment, and yet this is how so many designers end up having a business that is really built by default versus intentionality.

So let's talk a little bit about how we are going to get you started with creating your ideal life and business. So the first step really is always defining your vision. And one of the ways you can get clear on this vision is asking yourself a powerful question such as, what do you really, really, really want?

I want you to let yourself dream here. The answer "I don't know" is not going to be allowed. All of my clients know that I don't allow that as an answer. And the reason is the phrase "I don't know" shuts you down from your own internal wisdom. You're not going to be able to access what you really, truly want when you're telling yourself I don't know. So let yourself imagine what would be incredible.

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Now, another thing that often comes up is that you might be afraid that you can't have whatever this vision is. And that's totally normal. So if that is one of the things that's coming up for you as you ask yourself what you want, I want you to give yourself permission to do nothing with this information, except give yourself the gift of the truth. Tell yourself what you really want.

Now, it's key here that we get specific about what it is that you want, so let me just give you an example. We don't want to say I just want work and life balance because what does that actually mean, balance? That could mean a million different things to different people. So get specific. So that might be having lunch midday with friends or being at home with your kids over the summer. Those are both examples from clients.

And that will be specific to you. So what does work life balance mean if that is part of your vision? And when we get specific, this makes it so much easier to use your vision as a priority filter. What I mean by that is filtering through opportunities, requests of your time and attention based on what this vision says. So, do the things that you say yes to support this vision? Do the things that you say no to support this vision? And are the actions you're taking on a daily basis moving you closer to your vision or farther away?

I want to let you know I do have a resource that's going to help you define your vision for yourself and walk you through everything that I'm sharing here today on the podcast. So go to www.desiid.com/vision and I will send you the life and business vision journal, which is going to walk you through all of this. So definitely check that out as another resource for helping you define your vision.

Okay, so that was step one, let's talk about step two. And that is really deciding that your work life vision is possible for you. And I mean for you specifically, not someone else who has different circumstances or another designer who seems to have it all together and, of course, they could do it but not you. Make sure you're believing that this is possible for you.

In order to take action on your vision, you are going to want to believe that you can do this. And even if it's just a tiny crack of belief at this point, I want you to

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tap into that. Because if you don't believe that it's possible for you, you're definitely not going to start taking action, you're going to think, "Why bother going after this?"

So start to build evidence of what you do want and why it is possible for you. You can ask yourself these questions, why is this possible for me? How could it be even easier to achieve this vision than I'm thinking it is? How could I achieve this vision even sooner than I think I can? Start building that evidence for yourself of the possibility and seeing yourself as the person who achieves this vision, and it's actually going to propel you forward in the actual creation of it.

I'll give you some evidence you can lean on here. And when I first started working with my very first life coach, the vision that I created is the vision I'm living out today. It's being a coach for interior designers just like you. It is bringing this mindset work paired with strategy to the interior design industry. It is being able to take vacation with my family. It is being able to meet my kids off the bus and take walks during the day, right? So I used this process that I'm teaching you to create the life that I'm living today, and it is so possible for you.

So that's step number two. Step three is all about compelling yourself and starting to take action. I want you to ask yourself, why is this vision so important to me? Why will I continue to work toward it, no matter what? Obstacles are for sure going to arise. Your brain is going to tell you it's going to be hard or not possible. Your peers might even say it's not possible, right? There's this overwhelming belief that interior design is a hard industry to be in and that it's just inevitable that you're going to be overworked.

So, when those thought obstacles or actual obstacles, like a setback in your business happens, we need to be compelled as to why we're going to keep taking action on this vision no matter what. You can ask yourself, what will starting to take action now make possible?

Tap into that future version of yourself who has really brought this vision to fruition and ask yourself what is so incredible about this? The way you feel, the way you show up in your business, who you get to be in the world? What is your

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reason for taking consistent steps towards your vision, even when it feels hard or impossible?

It doesn't have to take a long time to achieve your vision and it also doesn't have to happen all in one day. Take action on one thing that moves you towards your vision. This could be something specific, like you want to be home by five one day per week. Or maybe you're setting up two meetings per month with referral sources. Whatever it is you choose to do, keep it small and simple. Pick something easy, see it to completion, and then layer in more.

Perfectionistic and all or nothing thinking is likely to pop up. So there's no right thing you should do first. You don't have to do it bigger and better and all at once. Just do one thing at a time and then let yourself be successful with that and add in more as you go. That is what is going to create momentum. And lastly, celebrate it all. The big wins, the small wins. The small wins are really what create the big win of achieving your business and life vision.

So these wins could be things like you said no with confidence, or you kept all of your hours on an invoice, or even that you went for a walk around the block at lunchtime. Celebrate yourself. Celebrate the person you are becoming. And celebrate the vision you are in the process of achieving.

So let's recap, setting a vision will help you create a business you love to run and a life you love to live. You're going to get started by first defining your vision specifically, what do you really want in your life and business? Start to make decisions that align with that vision. Second, you're going to decide that this is possible for you and start building evidence of that possibility. And step number three is you're going to compel yourself to start taking action and just get started.

Keep your vision front and center, make it compelling, and take small, consistent steps and layer in changes so that your progress is doable and consistent. When you do this you're going to feel calm and in control of your life instead of being at the effect of all those external circumstances. You're going to feel empowered in your decisions and desires about what you really want, and you're going to feel balanced in a way that supports you uniquely.

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The best part about this business and life vision process is that you have a repeatable process so that you can pivot. We're really talking about a work life blend here. And the blend might look different based on the season of life you're in, or even just the actual season, such as summer versus winter.

With balance, the scales can really easily be tipped, and you can be thrown off. And so when we work with a business and life vision or a work life blend, you don't have to worry about that because you're just always stirring the blend, thinking about what ingredients to add, what to take away, and working towards a level of consistency that feels good for you.

All right, designers, I'm so excited for you to step into your role as the CEO of your business by establishing your life and business vision. In the next episode I'm going to be sharing a foundational tool with you that will help you stay out of overwhelm, whether that's as you implement what you've learned today or simply in managing your time and projects day to day. I can't wait to dive into that topic. And until then, I'm wishing you a beautiful week, I'll talk to you in the next episode.

To celebrate the launch of the show, I'm going to be giving away gift cards to Jayson Home, one of my favorite home decor sources. I'm going to be giving away \$50 gift cards to five lucky listeners who follow, rate, and review the show.

Now, it doesn't have to be a five star review, although I sure hope you love the show. I want your honest feedback so I can create an amazing show that provides tons of value. Visit desicreswell.com/podcastlaunch to learn more about the contest and how to enter. I'll be announcing the winners on the show in an upcoming episode.

Thanks for joining me for this week's episode of *The Interior Design Business CEO*. If you want more tips, tools and strategies visit www.desicreswell.com. And if you're ready to take what you've learned on the podcast to the next level, I would love for you to check out my signature group coaching program, Out of Overwhelm.