

Ep #49: Turn Ideas Into Action



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Desi Creswell

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Hey designer, you're listening to episode 49, this is the one where I'm sharing how to take ideas and strategies you've learned at a conference, event, or training and turn them into action, and even better, results. It's time to go from just consuming to creating.

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 designer, welcome back to the podcast. I am sitting at my desk and I am freshly back from the annual event that The Life Coach School holds for all of its coaches, they call it Mastermind. And I had so much fun.

The Life Coach School and its founder, Brooke Castillo, is what brought me into coaching about 10 years ago. And it's how I found the very first life coach that I hired. It is where I certified originally as a life coach and also where I am master certified.

So it was really fun to be there, it happens once a year. And it was just so great to be in the energy of people who love the same things that I do, who want to have all the conversations about all the personal development, talk about business and see people that I don't get to see often in real life or haven't even met in real life until I meet them at an event like this. So that was really cool.

I met up with some friends from groups that I've been in or people I've trained with. And also had a really fun time in Dallas, that's where the event was held this year. And I wasn't really sure what to expect, I hadn't been to Dallas before. But I was really quite pleasantly surprised.

And I, of course, walked everywhere because even though it's not really a walking city I was still able to do it. That's my favorite way to see places. And I

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was able to find a yoga studio that I could go to in the morning before the conference started and then I booked an incredible spa treatment at the very end of the conference as a way to kind of take care of my introverted self and be ready to come back to my kids and then, of course Olive, our dog, because she gets probably even more excited to see me than anyone from my family.

There was also, of course, so much learning, lots of great speakers, other coaches I really admire and just learning from people that I'm having conversations with. Getting on the plane and realizing I'm sitting next to another coach and people I'm bumping into and sharing different ideas. It was so energizing and also so much input into my brain.

When you go to a large conference like this or even just a webinar it can be really easy to get overwhelmed by the amount of information and potential action steps and ways to do things, and even feel behind, right? Because you're getting all this information and you're like, "I'm not doing any of this."

So whether that's because you're now seeing all these possibilities that you weren't aware of two days ago and now you think you need to implement them all, or because you have a stack of ideas now just piling up from all of these presentations or events that you've attended, and you know what you've learned, there's some really great nuggets in there. And you also have this fear that it's going to go into the idea graveyard with everything else.

After being at a conference like this and reflecting on my experience, which isn't what I just described, I started thinking about you all and how I might be able to help you with this. You know when something is just so a part of how you do things you kind of forget that not everyone else operates that way? And that what's really obvious to you is not so obvious to other people? Sometimes I need to remind myself of that.

And that really got me thinking about why do I find it easier to take action on what I learn at a conference or training than other people that I interact with? And it's really because I have a process around it. A process I didn't even realize for going into the learning and getting what I need specifically and then

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walking away with a clear plan that I can execute on. And that's what I want to share with you today.

And just so you know, this has not always been the case for me. I used to be the queen of consumption without action. Signing up for things and then doing nothing with the information. I'd get all energized and I'd be like, yes, yes, yes, I'm going to do this and this. And then nothing would happen. So there's no shame in that, we just want to recognize if that's a pattern, so that we can change it.

We want to look at this specifically because without action, consumption of information and strategies can take up quite a bit of time. And if you're not doing anything with it, then it's not really an investment of time, you're just spending time and it's going to hold you back from achieving your goals in your interior design business. You want that investment of time or money that you spend for the conference to have an ROI. But without actively using what you learn, you might have some shifts or some ahas, but you're not going to get that full benefit.

I'll also just note that sometimes we do want to consume, just to consume, whether that's for distraction or entertainment. But my guess is if you're taking part in a learning or business development activity, it's not just for entertainment. We can save that for Friday night or the weekend and just have fun.

You might have fun along the way to learning something new that's going to improve your business and enjoy yourself, absolutely. But also, we want to keep in mind that the purpose of that learning is to help you and your business thrive. And that's going to require you to have a plan and take some action.

Before we dive into how to get the most out of these events, I want to take a moment to remind you that this Friday, September 29th, is the last day to sign up for my five week coaching intensive, To Do To Done. To Do To Done is sponsored by my friends at Mydoma and it is a perfect solution if you are identifying with what I'm sharing today, with those someday projects.

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Because what we're going to do in To Do To Done is we're going to take one of those someday projects, one of those strategies or things that you've been meaning to implement. Maybe something you learned at a conference like we're talking about today. If you only had the time to do it or you knew where to get started, then you'd get started. Or maybe if you didn't have so many pressing deadlines, then you'd take action. To Do To Done is the perfect place to take those ideas and turn them into action.

And the best part is, not only are you going to learn my process for planning out a project in a way that supports consistent action and implementation of your project, this implementation period is built right into the program. As part of To Do To Done, you're going to have weekly sessions with dedicated focused work time. And then it's going to be directly followed by an opportunity to raise your hand and get coached by me and get my personalized feedback.

So it's the best of both worlds. You've got the process, you've got the time dedication, and then you've got my support. And these focus sessions are something I brought into Out Of Overwhelm a couple of rounds ago, and clients are loving them. So I'm excited for more of you to experience that.

To Do To Done kicks off October 6th, and we're meeting weekly on Fridays 11am to 12pm Central. And there will be replays, I've been getting that question. So if you can't make all of the calls or any of the calls live, that's not a problem. I don't want you to let that be a reason not to join us. It's only \$447 to join, which is really an incredible value for all of the teaching, coaching support and community you'll have access to inside this program.

So Friday is the last day to sign up because I need to get you your materials to get started. So go to desiid.com/todo to sign up. It is not too late to join us, I have space for you and I want you to experience the benefit of intentional planning paired with consistent action and support. Again, it's desiid.com/todo and you can sign up and I'll make sure to get you everything you need to get started.

All right, let's get back to the topic here of taking what you learn at a conference or a multi-day training and turning it into action and results in your business.

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Now I'm going to just talk about attending a conference, but really what I'm going to share applies to any type of event or learning opportunity. So that can be a course, a webinar, a podcast, a meeting with someone who's farther along in your business. So if the conference isn't applying, apply what I'm sharing, the process I'm sharing and just apply it to whatever it is that you've been to recently that you want to implement.

As I'm coming back from my own conference with The Life Coach School, I am feeling totally energized. And I'm sure you've all been there too, where you've written down a gazillion notes and felt really energized. But then as soon as you're kind of back in that normal day to day routine, it's hard to access that energy and excitement, right?

And then that's where the notebooks full of scribbles or sheets of paper or digital downloads are all waiting for you to do something with them, but then that time never comes. And today, I really want this to be the start of stopping that pattern. Because really, it's frustrating to you, it takes up mental space, sometimes it takes up physical space in all the paper or notebooks and it does not move you closer to your goals.

And before we even talk about what to do with that information, I want to talk about how you set yourself up for success before you even start to consider all of those ideas. And the very first thing is to narrow your input. And when I say narrow your input, what I mean is to be clear on what you want to be learning about, what you want to take action on and what problems you're currently solving for in your business.

There is so much available to all of us to consume in the way of webinars, conferences, online challenges, podcasts, Instagram posts, newsletters, you're getting the idea. It is amazing that there are so many resources available to us now. I mean, I can remember trying to find hard copy books that could help me figure out how to start my interior design business when I did it.

And now that there is so much available, it can also be really overwhelming if you aren't clear on what input is going to help you solve that next level problem

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in your business. You could end up with a lot of information that isn't relevant or is just simply more information than you need.

I want you to picture yourself when it comes to input and picture yourself in a store full of merchandise. The merchandise is really just a bunch of ideas and information and you aren't sure what you need from the store or why you're there. You wander all around, maybe you pick some things up, put them down, cross the store because something else catches your eye. Maybe you buy something, maybe you don't.

It's been a half hour, you've seen some interesting things and now maybe you leave with something or without something in hand, and you realize there was really no clear purpose to going into that store. Versus if you walk into the same store, the idea store, knowing exactly what you're looking for. You're going to consider the options. You're going to know which section of the store to go to. You might briefly check to see if they have anything else you might want to consider and then you're on your way.

The first scenario wandering into where ever you go, however you get there. That's how we often set ourselves up when we attend a conference or sign up for a random training here and there. We're overloaded, versus when you go into a store with a clear purpose and you're easily able to get what you need.

Now, two things. First, I do love a chance to poke around and browse, especially if it's a cute little shopping district and I don't have my kids. But we don't want to spend all of our time, attention and financial resources just poking around in our business. And that's often what I see happen with the abundance of learning opportunities we're presented with.

If your first thought is, "I don't know what to focus on or what I should be learning," I get it. Sometimes you do have to do some of this browsing to narrow your input. And that's really where the importance of a business and life vision and the goals that come from that come into play because your browsing consumption has some direction then.

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You're scanning with a purpose. You have clarity on where you're headed, and where there are opportunities for growth or improvement. And that gives you focus so you can decide how you then utilize your learning time. Then you're not diluting your attention and your energy and your resources, while also feeling bad that you're doing all these other things that you hear you should be doing.

Let me give you a business example where I'll maybe talk to a designer whose primary focus or goal in her business is really amplifying her marketing towards ideal clients. They're trying to get to that next level of clientele or perhaps increase the number of inquiries. And then they spend a bunch of time consuming content or attending training on like five other things that have nothing to do with the marketing.

And then on top of it, often what I see is a lot of judgment and beating themselves up about how they should be doing these other things, even though they already decided that's not what they're focused on right now. There might be a couple of things that you're focused on in your business, and that's also fine, but you still want to be clear on what those things are and how you intend to use the information you're seeking and what you're trying to achieve or what result you're trying to achieve through that consumption.

So we want to first narrow the input. We want to first narrow that input so there just isn't as much coming in for you to have to filter through. Then, once you've narrowed the amount of input, you've probably decided what learning sources you want to focus on. And maybe it's a course you're taking or a conference you're attending.

The next step would be to decide ahead of time what you want to get out from attending the conference or training. Before I went to The Life Coach School Mastermind, the event I just returned from, I definitely gave this some thought. I'll give you some of my own examples just to get you thinking.

But one of the things that I really wanted to get out of going to this mastermind was connection. It can feel lonely running a business and I wanted to see friends and meet my podcast production team in person and feel connected to the coaching community.

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I also really wanted to give myself an opportunity to soak up the feeling of pride as I received my award for master coach training. I can remember receiving an award from ASID when I was in the early stages of my career and feeling so uncomfortable with that spotlight shining on me.

And I could remember being given the award and I just got on and off that stage as quickly as possible. And so I wanted this to be different. I was super proud of myself for my accomplishments and I wanted to allow myself to feel that experience and soak it up.

I also wanted to expand some ideas I have around business models as I've been thinking about new ways to serve the design industry with different types of resources and levels of support within those resources. It's really easy to get stuck into what you've always seen done. And so I wanted to start challenging the ideas I have about what my business "should" look like, should being in quotation marks.

And I also just wanted to reconnect to the power of life coaching. I see it in my own life, my clients' lives and there is something I can't describe about being in a room with mostly women entrepreneurs who are changing lives and generations through their own thought leadership using the power of coaching.

The reason why you want to define ahead of time what you want to get out of the event is so that it gives your brain direction to go looking for the information and start filtering out what you actually don't need to pay attention to. Of course, you're going to pick up on many things but you're still going to be focused on what's most important to you instead of getting overwhelmed in a sea of options and information.

This also allows you to release the pressure of thinking you need to implement everything you hear or use every last thing to get value out of being there. You're going to end up with way less notes to sort through and you're going to be able to listen more keenly for what you need specifically, versus being in that state of general listening.

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So decide ahead of time what you want to get out of the conference. It might be a specific piece of information. It might be a connection on a resource. It might be a vendor you want to meet in person, maybe have an understanding of how someone you admire does something in their business. And as you heard in my examples, what you want to get out of the event doesn't have to be solely to gain information. It can definitely be about community, relationships, and connection. But we just want to be clear on our purpose there.

Now that you've narrowed your input and decided what you want to get out of the event ahead of time, you're going to, of course, go to the event. And I highly suggest putting all of your notes from the event in one spot. I personally prefer digital, but I know a lot of you like to write things out in a physical notebook and either is fine.

Here's what I do. I have a folder in my Google Drive that's specifically for trainings and conferences I attend. And within that folder, then I have another specific folder for that event itself. Inside that folder there's going to be a Google document where I'll put the actual notes and then any additional resources that might have been provided. And then, of course, I have a file naming system that I adhere to, so that way it is really easy to sort files and find what I'm looking for.

It makes it so much easier post event to go back and look for what I need or even just in the future months or years out when I want to go refer to something. You can definitely do this with paper. I just suggest you have one notebook for this purpose or you can take sheets out of a notebook you use for an event and then put them in a central location. Or you can even scan and upload them to your online document storage. But keep them all in one place.

As I'm taking notes and I'm listening to what's happening in front of me, or I hear things I want to revisit, what I like to do is highlight those sections in the text. For the coaching event I was at, I used two different colors. And one was for questions I wanted to go back and ask myself and explore during my own coaching sessions. And then another color for other items I thought I would want to take action on so it would be easy to find them as I went back and reviewed my notes.

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Decide what's going to work for you. Maybe it's bolding something, maybe it's using a highlighter or using a different color, it's up to you. Just give yourself a visual cue that makes it easier to sort through the notes after the event is done.

And then, of course, after you're done taking those notes, soaking it all in, the next step is deciding when you're going to review these notes so that they don't go into the idea graveyard. If it's a multi-day conference you're at, you could do it at the end of every day. For me, I decided I would review my notes after the event, the week following the event. I felt like I needed to get a little bit of space, perspective, let those ideas marinate in my own brain before I really wanted to revisit them.

But I highly suggest you do this fairly soon after the event while the ideas and energy are still fresh in your mind. So you're going to decide when you're going to review things and then actually review your notes, which requires a level of self-trust and self-accountability, which is something that I teach my clients all the time, right? Because you're not going to feel like going back to these notes.

You're going to think that there's something more pressing. You've been away, so now your email inbox is full and you've got to address that. It's easy to just let these things slide, but you invested the time to go to the conference, let's make use of it. So as you review, you want to be scanning your notes for those highlighted sections, however you decided to do that.

And then you're going to look at three different categories as you review the notes. Now, later, or never. Are there things you want to take action on in the immediate future? Are there things you want to take action on in the near-ish future, or within the next year, or maybe you even want to just pocket that idea for a few years out and you can just have it? Or it's going to be a never idea. That was presented to me as an option. It doesn't resonate with me, it doesn't make sense for my business right now, I'm just going to totally set that aside.

Now, later and never helps you identify what you're going to take action on right now so you can then make a plan, which is exactly what I'm going to teach you to do in To Do To Done. Based on what you decided you want to get out of the

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conference and the goals you're currently working toward, you'll decide how you will implement what you've learned and when, and start setting a timeline.

This is really the difference between staying and inspiration and hope, and moving into action that will produce results. Anything you've marked as later will be there when you need it because you've stored it all in one central location, like I told you to do earlier in the episode.

Depending on the size and complexity of what you're implementing, you might have one to three things you're going to plan for as a now item. And this is where you decide your next steps, including planning, getting support and setting that timeline.

Again, we're going to be doing all of this in To Do To Done, plus you're going to have my coaching support. So if this is resonating and you're like, "Yes, I want to do this work, I want to take one of those ideas and turn it into action," you have to join us. And remember, enrollment closes this Friday. So get on it, signing up at desiid.com/todotodone. All right, I just had to send that little reminder in there.

Now, you don't have to take action immediately if you don't want to. However, you do want to decide when you're going to start taking action and what those next steps are going to be because the farther you get away from the event, the fuzzier it will feel and the newness and excitement will wane. And I will say, if you've got notebooks right now full of ideas, we can definitely go back through those and see what makes sense to pull from them.

So you don't have to wait to start using this process until you go to a new conference or something like that. We can absolutely go back and use the parts that are applicable to the ideas you already have and you want to start taking action on now. And I know this can be a challenge for many of my clients.

They get overwhelmed by initiatives and projects in their business or they have the best of intentions but get stuck not knowing where to start or feel like there's always something else they should be doing. Totally normal. Again, this is why I created To Do To Done, that five week coaching intensive I keep mentioning

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where I'm going to walk you step by step through the process of planning and execution.

That means all you have to do is grab one of those many notebooks you have ideas in that you know would improve your business. Whether that's profitability, your marketing, your systems, your team management. Whatever it is that you keep putting off, we can get done in that five week period of time and just move on. Start getting the benefit of taking something on your to-do list and getting it done.

I'll even be there to help you narrow down your ideas so you can decide what's important right now and what you can let go of. And once you learn how to take your ideas and turn them into action and results, you're going to have a repeatable process for planning and implementation that you can use again and again, no matter how your business is structured, what stage you're in and no matter how busy you think you are that you don't have time to do those needle moving activities.

What I want you to hear loud and clear is that when you pair knowledge with implementation and consistent action, you can achieve anything you want as the CEO of your business without the stress and overwhelm. This is stress-free planning. Head over to desiid.com/todo to join us. Enrollment closes this Friday, and we're going to kick off October 6th.

I want you to just imagine how accomplished and proud you're going to feel come November, knowing you took something from To Do To Done. It's only \$447 to join and that includes everything you need to start and finish a business-boosting project along with my support.

That is what I have for you today. I look forward to supporting you with this work inside To Do To Done. And in the next episode it's going to be pep talk style about waiting for perfect conditions in your business. And side note, if you're waiting for the perfect condition to take action on one of these ideas, there is no perfect condition.

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I had the idea for this topic and asked my Instagram community if they were interested in the topic and it was a landslide yes. So I can't wait to dive in. Until then I'm wishing you a beautiful week and I will talk to you on that next episode.

Have you ever wished I could be your coach? If so, keep listening. For a limited time when you leave a rating and review for the podcast you'll be entered to win a one on one coaching session with me. I can answer your questions and coach you on your unique challenges.

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Just click the link in the show notes to submit your review so I know how to get in touch. I can't wait to select a winner and it might be you. I'll talk to you next week.

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