

Ep #55: Time Management Mistakes: Are You Setting Yourself up for Failure?



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With Your Host

Desi Creswell

[The Interior Design Business CEO](#) with Desi Creswell

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Hey designer, you're listening to episode 55. This is the one where I'm sharing three time management mistakes you need to be aware of and what to do to solve for them so that you can be more productive, profitable and get back in the driver's seat of your day and ultimately your 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, designer. Welcome back to the podcast. I hope you're all doing well. I am recording this on a Monday morning and we had such a fun weekend again. It was way more packed than typically we schedule our weekends. We try and keep them a little low-key, but we had a lot going on.

One of the things I got to do this weekend was to go see David Sedaris live. If you're not familiar with David Sedaris, you need to go look him up immediately. He is one of my favorite writers. And when I read pretty much anything he's written, I end up laughing out loud. That's how my husband always knows if that's what I'm reading, is I'm just sitting there kind of giggling to myself. So that probably gives you a little bit of an idea of what my sense of humor is like. And hopefully you can go look him up and get a few laughs for yourself.

Today, what I want to talk about are the three time management mistakes that you're currently making, and make you aware of them and also help you understand what to do instead. Of course, there are way more than three time management mistakes that I see interior designers making. I can't cover them all today, or it would be a very long episode. But these are the three that I really wanted to share.

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And I know that managing your time is not always the flashiest or most exciting thing, especially on the surface. You're like, yeah, I don't want to manage my time. But let me tell you, everything comes back to a well managed, intentional schedule and calendar and plan. I hear from so many of you that you want your business to operate as a well-oiled machine, and that starts with you managing yourself, meaning managing your time.

Time management is one of the four foundational pillars of running a profitable and efficient interior design business that you truly love to run, with clients you adore, clients that love you back, happy employees and a happy you during the day to day, inside and outside of work.

Enrollment for Out Of Overwhelm, my signature group coaching program that addresses both the mindset and strategy of a streamlined calendar and a streamlined business opens for enrollment next week, Monday, November 13th. And to celebrate the launch and give back to the design community, I am hosting a brand new free masterclass on Friday, November 17th where I'm going to be sharing the four foundational pillars you must establish and maintain to create a thriving interior design business that you truly want to be running.

The one you want to run. Not anyone else, but the one you really feel at home in. I mentioned that time management is one of these pillars and I'm going to be sharing the three others live on this call. So you will know exactly which pillar you need to focus on and what your next step should be.

This is completely free, my gift to you. And I highly encourage you to not only sign up, but show up live so that way you can get your questions answered from me on the call. The link is in the show notes to sign up. And after I'm done with the masterclass, I'm also going to be sharing how we can implement and build upon those foundational pillars with the support of coaching with me and the support of a community of like-minded peers inside Out Of Overwhelm.

At the time of this masterclass, Out Of Overwhelm will be open for enrollment. There are some incredible bonuses that you are going to get when you sign up within that first week. You're also going to have the opportunity to get your

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question answered about Out Of Overwhelm on this call, and then decide if it's a great fit for you.

So sign up for the masterclass. It is your complete roadmap to running a profitable, efficient interior design business that you love to run. And I'm going to be sharing those four pillars that you really need to focus on in order to create the business that you want.

One of these pillars is definitely time management. And that's what we're going to be talking about today, those top three time management mistakes you're making in your interior design business and what to do instead. And let me tell you, it is not that you're using the wrong app or the planner, or that the unexpected happens.

There's no perfect planner. There is no perfect day. Interruptions happen, the unexpected happens. And one of the things that I teach my clients is that we build in room for all of that to happen. Planners and apps and lists, however you do it, are tools that you use. And I provide you with tools, like the Interior Designers Get It Done Daily Planner inside of Out Of Overwhelm to help support and facilitate that in-control calendar.

And at the same time, there's so much more to time management than just using a particular notebook or app, but I'm going to get more into that as we go on. So with that, I'm going to go through the top three time management mistakes and then share the solution to each of them.

We really want to train our brains to identify problems quickly, but then most importantly, to move out of the problem and start thinking in solutions. And this is something I'm always working on with clients because problem solving is a continual skill as a CEO of your interior design business. And we're going to practice it here together today with these three time management mistakes.

The first mistake we have to talk about is believing that you aren't in control of your time. This is a big one. If you believe that you're not in control of your time, that everyone else controls your time except for you – your clients, your

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employees, your kids, family members, everyone else – you’re going to perpetuate that for yourself. You’re going to let others continue to make decisions about how you spend your time and when you spend your time doing what.

This is a really disempowered place to both live and work. So if you’re believing you don’t have control, you’re not even going to try and establish boundaries and expectations around your schedule. Think about that, if you don’t think that you have any authority over how you spend your time, how much more you’re going to abdicate responsibility for the way that it’s used.

Or possibly you will establish boundaries and expectations, But then at the slightest bit of pushback or the unexpected happening, often what I see then is you’ll throw your hands up in the air and say, “See, I’m not in control.” Instead of saying, “Well, all right, this thing happened. Now what am I going to do about it?”

And the solution to this mistake number one of believing you aren’t in control of your time is to adopt the belief that you are the only one who controls your time. And that’s not to say that other people don’t need your support, need you for certain things, that you want to be present for certain things. But you are the one who’s always in control.

This really is the truth because every minute of the day is a choice and you get to be an active participant in those choices. And right now you’re making a lot of choices, but you’re not aware of those choices. They’re not conscious decisions that you’re making. And so we want to believe that we’re in control of our time, so that way we start making those choices on purpose.

When you believe that you are in control of your time, you can then make decisions with so much clarity and intention and feel empowered in how you go about your day, no matter what those choices are. I want you to look for ways that you’re always making choices right now to start showing your brain that you are the one in control. You are the one who decides how you utilize your time and your resources, whether that is your energy or attention.

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And once we start to have this evidence, these seeds of evidence that you start to build by having the awareness, we can then start to really build the belief that you are in control of your time. And this is going to radically shift the way that you manage your time and your workflows in your business.

Let's talk about mistake number two, and that is committing to something without doing the math. What I mean by committing without doing the math is looking at the reality of how much time you've decided to devote to your business, or possibly even for some of you just how much time there is in a day, and looking at the actual math of it. If I say yes to this, that's going to require this of me and I have this amount of time. What am I going to do with those facts?

This is where you say yes to commitments, projects or clients automatically, or maybe throw out a date because it sounds reasonable or maybe like you should be able to do it, or it's just kind of your knee-jerk reaction of when I can do something. Oh yeah, I can do that in two weeks. Sure, tomorrow is fine.

You might also commit without doing the math when it's someone that you really like or you want them to like you and you don't want them to be disappointed. And then what happens, when it comes time to do the thing that you committed to or said yes to, you realize it's way more work than you realized or that you need more time than you thought. Or you remember, you also have a lot of other commitments that require your time and you find yourself over extended.

I would bet every single person listening to this podcast could relate to that mistake. The solution to committing without doing the math, mistake number two, is to have a commitment protocol. A commitment protocol is what you're going to do when you get a request or opportunity that gives you space, meaning time, a pause to consider your current and coming commitments, and then also factor in how would this new thing fit into what's already on your plate?

I highly recommend always having some kind of pause as the first part of this protocol. This will give you time and this time could be just possibly a moment in conversation where you don't feel like you need to respond immediately. You can always say, "Give me a second to think about that." Or it might be a full-on

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pause where you can assess things calmly and strategically when you have removed yourself from the situation. It might be you actually going back to your office and sitting down and looking at the calendar and doing that math.

When you do the math you get a really clear understanding of what is all involved in the commitment: The deliverables, the in-person time, the deadlines, how that spaces out over the course of the months. And you can be really clear on how all of those line up, and then how those other things are going to line up with what you've already got going on. And you might find it fits, and you might find it doesn't. And then that's where you have, again, the opportunity to choose.

This is something we go over extensively in *Out Of Overwhelm* because so many of my clients are just ignoring the math or the reality of the day and what they can possibly do in their business. And we have to know what the math is so that we can effectively manage our calendar, manage projects, manage who we hire, how much we hire, for what positions we hire. It really impacts everything.

So I encourage you to think about what that commitment protocol is. And then break down whatever that commitment is or opportunity that you've been given, and look at the nitty-gritty of what is that going to take in order to follow through on that commitment or opportunity. And I know that this can take some time, but let me tell you it will save you so much time in the long run.

And it will save yourself from over committing. Often when we start to really break it down of what is this going to require of me, we see, oh, maybe I can't commit to this next week, maybe it needs to be next month. Or maybe I need to delegate more if I want to take this on. This is a worthwhile investment in your future sanity and the streamlined nature of the business that you want to run.

This is something that I'm always doing in my own business too, where I have lots of ideas and I know that I don't have the capacity to implement them all. And yes, I could extend work hours, I could be doing all sorts of things. But there's also a capacity that I want to maintain right now. And so I don't want to overextend myself.

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And I definitely had to do that in thinking about the Out Of Overwhelm launch where I'm going to have to save some of the really fun ideas that I came up with for this launch. I had to look at, all right, these are my ideas, this is what it's going to take to execute. Okay, those are not going to all fit. Which of these are my favorite for right now and which of these am I going to do another time?

So I get it, sometimes the math can be kind of painful to look at because essentially you have to learn how to say no to yourself sometimes. And sometimes it can be hard to have that reckoning with yourself. But trust me, it is always worth it.

And now let's talk about mistake number three. Mistake number three is scheduling yourself down to the minute. Another way to put this is not planning for reality, because reality doesn't fit in a perfectly color-coded calendar that you can tick off minute by minute as you go throughout the day. So this one really piggybacks off mistake number two. And when you schedule yourself down to the minute, you are setting yourself up for failure, chaos and stress, I mean, there is no other way to put it.

No matter how desperately you want to squeeze every last minute out of the day, it does not work. You need to remember that you're human. This is the solution to mistake number three of scheduling yourself down to the minute, remember you are human. You have human needs. You need to go eat. You need to go to the bathroom. You need to stand up every once in a while or take a positive distraction break to refresh your mind.

And those are just basic human needs, right? There's things that you want to engage in throughout the day, Maybe you want to take a break to go volunteer at your kids school when the opportunity arises. Maybe you want to take a walk around the block, get some fresh air. Remember your humaneness in managing your time.

We also have to remember that you don't have unlimited completely consistent energy. Some days you're going to be really on it and a more tightly packed

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calendar is going to be fine, but some days not so much. And so I want you to remember you can't expect your productivity and production to run like a robot.

We also want to remember to plan for the fact that we live and work in a world with other humans that sometimes drop the ball or the unexpected happens. And you need to have space in your calendar to account for that so that it doesn't throw your whole world upside down. And all of this really requires you to have margin in your day or week, very consistently.

And essentially, this is time where you leave a blank space. Time that is not planned in your calendar to absorb real life and real projects happening. And this is something, again, that I teach in Out Of Overwhelm, it is a game changer.

Okay, those are the three mistakes I wanted to share with you today. Of course, we dive into all of the time management tools and strategies, both from a mindset and tactical approach in Out Of Overwhelm, but I wanted to give you three mistakes to start creating solutions for today.

And those mistakes are, mistake number one, believing you aren't in control of your time. Mistake number two, committing without doing the math. And mistake number three, scheduling yourself down to the minute. Listen to this episode multiple times if you really need to shift your mindset and approach towards the time management solutions I've provided.

And as I mentioned in the free masterclass, The Complete Roadmap to a Profitable, Efficient Business You Love To Run, time management is one of the four pillars I'm going to be teaching on. But there are also three more you're going to want to know about. This masterclass is happening November 17th. It is totally free, definitely go sign up. The link is going to be in the show notes. Join me live so you can get your questions answered, not just about the topic, but about Out Of Overwhelm as well.

And then let's get to work on solving your time management issues for good. Out Of Overwhelm is opening for enrollment next Monday, November 13th. And if you receive my Monday Mindset newsletter, you will get an email Monday

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morning with a link to enroll. In that email there will be the link, you're going to fill out a very quick form that tells me about you, your business and your goals just to make sure it is the perfect fit. And then we can also schedule a consultation if you want to talk to me live before making a decision.

You're going to want to plan on enrolling Monday morning. This program is incredibly high-touch and intimate, meaning there are only 15 spots available. And only six spots available if you want to add on private coaching to the signature group experience. So if you've been wanting to work with me in 2024, make sure that you set a little reminder on your calendar for Monday morning when I send out the email to join us in the January 2024 Out Of Overwhelm cohort. Be on the lookout for that.

That's what I have for you today. I will be back next week with a brand new episode, as always. And until then, I'm wishing you a beautiful week. I'll talk to you soon.

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.

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,

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I would love for you to check out my signature group coaching program, Out of Overwhelm.