

Ep #60: One at a Time



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With Your Host

Desi Creswell

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Hey designer, you're listening to episode 60. This is the one where I'm talking about the concept One at a Time and how you can use this approach as we head into the final, often busy, weeks of the year. And also how you can apply it to the goals you're setting for your interior design business in 2024.

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'm so glad to have you here, as always. I'm recording this on a Monday. Lately, I've been recording a lot on Mondays, as I'm thinking about that. We had a great weekend, I hope you did, too.

My husband and I actually got to go to the Timberwolves basketball game, that's our NBA basketball team here in Minnesota. That's something we typically do about once per season. And I wouldn't say I'm a big sports person, but I do think that watching NBA basketball live is really fun and inspiring. The players are just so athletic. I mean, the number of times they run up and down the court and the shots they make and how they can jump, it's just crazy.

And, of course, the size too. Like my husband is very tall, but he looks short next to these guys who are out on the court. So we had a great time. And then, of course, I just get a kick out of the halftime show as well. There was a man who was doing these acrobatics with his little chihuahua and I totally enjoyed that. And of course, people watching, which is always a favorite of mine as well.

All right, so enough about that. Today what we're going to talk about is a concept of One at a Time. Now, this isn't one thing at a time, and it's not going to be an episode about how you shouldn't multitask. Although you shouldn't multitask and there is no such thing as effective multitasking, just to be clear. Doing more than

Ep #60: One at a Time

one thing at a time is always going to cost you time versus save you time, no matter how many times you try and make it work.

What we're talking about today is One at a Time and it's a business philosophy that I want to share with you first of all, and then encourage you to adopt it, if it resonates. It's been coming up a lot recently with my clients, both in thinking about how to manage their time with the year coming to a close, and also in beginning to set and plan for their 2024 goals. So I thought it would be helpful to share a little bit on the concept of One at a Time here on the podcast so that you could all benefit from this approach as well.

Before we dive into the topic, I do want to let you know that if you want my help in slowing down, à la One at a Time, to actually speed up your results in 2024, we should talk. I want to hear about your goals or help you define those goals if they're feeling a bit fuzzy, and then make a plan to achieve them. I do have a few spots left to work together in Out Of Overwhelm starting January 2024.

And if you've been thinking about joining, it's sounding amazing, but you're kind of on the fence, let's talk about it. There's going to be a link to book a call in the show notes, and you can still get in on this fantastic high-touch intimate group program, along with the option to add on private coaching support as well if you'd like.

As I was saying, I've been sharing this concept of One at a Time a lot recently with my clients. And most often it's been coming up around marketing, business systems and processes and then prioritization. I have two separate clients I've been working with on setting their marketing goals and creating a plan for the end of the year and into 2024, and one of these clients has been in business for a very long time, has a very established firm. And one is in the earlier stages of growing her design business and she's just at that stage where she's ready to up-level her clientele and up her revenue for 2024.

And so what I want you to hear is this concept of One at a Time can be really applied to whatever stage of business you're at. And I'm going to give some various examples of ways you could apply it to different aspects of your business. I'm going to share a marketing example first because many of you that

Ep #60: One at a Time

I speak with and many of you that I've worked with, currently or in the past, tell me that marketing is something that tends to get avoided.

This might be because your confidence feels a little or maybe a lot shaky when it's time to put yourself out there, so it's just easier to avoid it and work on other things. Or maybe you're just really in the mode of prioritizing client work and you haven't been putting space on your calendar to market and so it's gotten squeezed out. Or maybe you've listened to a bunch of podcasts and are now totally overwhelmed with all the ways you could market and don't know what to do first. Focusing on One at a Time helps you navigate all of these obstacles.

With one of the clients that I was sharing this concept with, her best source of marketing has always been referrals. So what she needed to do, her One at a Time was one conversation at a time. That's how she brings in her ideal clients, is through conversations. For this client, her ideal projects really are created one conversation at a time.

One conversation with a past client to bring them in for repeat business. One conversation with a builder to spark a conversation about another client who might need their help. It's just One at a Time. And this is simple. This is approachable. It was one conversation a week that she focused on having. And it was way less overwhelming to think about a huge marketing push. When she followed the approach of One at a Time, she was able to get into action and now has her pipeline almost full for 2024.

For another client, she had a whole list of really great marketing ideas that she wanted to pursue, but the fact that she had so many ideas was keeping her spinning and stuck. And so she applied the concept of One at a Time to pick the one that felt like it would give her some traction, gain some momentum, and then set off the other ideas to layer in at a different time. This got her moving.

For another client, she had a lot of fear around posting her gorgeous work on social media. And so, for her, One at a Time meant posting one story at a time. That's all she had to think about. She didn't think about a full social media calendar or her editorial schedule. All it was, was One at a Time for her posts.

Ep #60: One at a Time

And this approach helped her build momentum and now she's sharing so much more than she used to.

Whether it's marketing or other areas of your business or goal setting, there's always so much that could be done, so many creative ideas that you have. And at the same time, you're going to get the most traction with One at a Time. Let's talk about how this can be applied to other areas of your business.

For example, if you're feeling overwhelmed by setting up systems, it's One at a Time. In Out Of Overwhelm I teach a concept called prospect to profit that helps you organize and break out your internal and external systems. And this makes it very manageable and approachable to look at how you take a client from start to finish. And within these categories you can guide your ideal client along, and using this concept we focus on One at a Time.

What is one email template you can write? What is one step in your presentation process you can document? Or maybe you're struggling with time management and prioritization, again, it's just One at a Time. Maybe you have a pile of invoices that's been stacking up, or so many emails that feel urgent and require your attention. It's still One at a Time. You send one invoice at a time, one email at a time. It's all completed One at a Time.

This concept really applies across the board, no matter what tasks you're doing or what stage of business you're in. And as we're thinking about wrapping up at the end of the year, I want you to consider what your One at a Time looks like for you in the final two weeks of 2023. Decide now what you will and what you will not complete in your business by the end of 2023 based on current reality, that's the important piece there.

Let me call that out, based on current reality, not what you optimistically thought you'd be able to get done three months ago or even if you have ideas of what you thought the year would look like at the beginning of the year. We're going to make a realistic plan with the concept of One at a Time at the forefront. Make that plan, break it down and then apply the concept of One at a Time.

This is how you are going to make so much progress and do it with so much more ease. Even though your brain wants to convince you that great things are

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

Ep #60: One at a Time

accomplished and ultimate productivity is achieved in these giant lumps, your best, most effective and efficient results come when you approach things One at a Time. You don't have to sign all of the clients, you focus on bringing in one new ideal client at a time. You don't have to overhaul the entire back end of your business, you focus on one friction point at a time.

What I want you to consider is no one runs an entire marathon in one second, not even the elite runners. They run it one step and one mile at a time. If these runners got so in their head about the entire 26.2 miles they had to run, they might not want to run that race. But when you think about it as one step at a time, just like I'm encouraging you to do in your business, it becomes so much more approachable and you'll actually be willing to lace up those running shoes and step onto the course.

As we wrap up today's episode, I want you to think about what is one area of business that feels too big to tackle right now? And how could you apply One at a Time to this area and start taking action?

In the next episode, I have two very special guests, Caleb Anderson and DeAndre DeVane from Well-Designed. Caleb is also one of the creative forces behind the well-known interior design firm Drake/Anderson. They are going to be here with me next week, we've got a fantastic conversation for you. I cannot wait for you to listen to that interview.

If you aren't already subscribed to the podcast, now is a great time to do that. All you have to do is hit that little plus sign at the top right corner and then hit follow so you never miss an episode, including this interview that I have coming next week. Until then I'm wishing you a beautiful week as always, and I'll talk to you next week when I'm back with Caleb and DeAndre.

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

Ep #60: One at a Time

listening every week, or why another designer needs to check out the show. It won't take long, and as a thank you for leaving a rating and review you'll have the opportunity to win a private coaching session with me.

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