

Ep #63: 2 'Whys' That Fuel a Thriving Interior Design Business



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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Hey designer, you're listening to episode 63. In this one I'm going to be sharing how having two whys in your interior design business can bring life back into the business or reignite that spark of motivation and vision as we head into the new year.

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. It is the new year. Happy New Year. I am actually recording this about a month ahead of time, but when you're listening to this it will be January 3rd if you're listening the day it comes out. So Happy New Year.

We've got a fun week here. As always there's lots going on when you've got little kids. I think I've shared on here before, I'm one of the girl scout co-leaders for my daughter's troop, and recently I had learned about a kids yoga studio in our area. And I'm so excited because we organized one of the meetings for a kids yoga instructor to come to my house, and the girls are going to be working on their best self patch and we're going to be talking about emotions and taking care of yourself mentally and physically. So I'm super excited that that is tomorrow.

And then the kids have their holiday concert at school on Thursday, which is always so delightful. I mean, the performance they put on is just incredible, and then of course the sound of all those kids singing together is just so sweet. Then we're going to be celebrating the holidays early with my mom and in-laws before we head out on our trip. And that's what we've got going on here, kind of a busy week but all really fun things. I hope you all had an amazing holiday season and are looking forward to the new year.

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Today I want to talk about having a strong why in your business as we start to think about vision for 2024. And not just one why in your business, but why you need two whys to help you feel inspired to think bigger in your vision for your interior design business, and also to stay motivated as the fresh new feel of January wears off, because we know it will. Or even that fresh feel that wears off after you've been in business for a long time.

I want you to light that match, get the spark back and bring new life into your business, and it's going to start with having two whys. Before we dive into that topic, I want to let you know about two ways you can work with me in early 2024.

The first is working together in a private coaching partnership. This is a fully customized one-on-one coaching relationship where we'll work together to create your life and business vision and then create a plan to achieve that vision, and of course coach on all of the mindset and strategic road blocks that come up along the way so that you're consistently moving forward.

The second way we can work together in early 2024 is a two-part goal-setting workshop I'm hosting at the end of January/beginning of February. It's a two-part session, that's why there's the January/February. And it's called Create Your 2024 Roadmap. The past couple of years I have waited until I was settled into the new year to create my yearly plan, and I love that approach. I don't consider waiting until the end of January lost time at all, it's just a modified start date to the new year. And I want to invite you to come along with me for this process.

In Create Your 2024 Roadmap I am going to help you set your goal for the year and create a plan based on the quarters to help you achieve that big picture goal for the new year. It's only \$87, and that includes the guided planning session where you'll map out your year and then a live coaching call with me where you can ask me your questions, get coached on all the things that you think are going to get in the way of you achieving your goal, and then also be supported in a community of like-minded design peers.

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The link for both, private coaching and Create Your 2024 Roadmap goal-setting workshop will be in the show notes. So you can click either one of those, take a look and see what feels right for you right now.

All right, let's dive into the topic of defining two whys in your business. First, let's talk about what a why is, so that we can be on the same page. For me, a why is a filter or a reference point for all of the decisions, actions and investments you make in your business. It is the purpose behind the business, why it exists. And what we're going to talk about is two different why's.

Often when a designer comes to me and they're feeling pulled in a million directions, they're anxious or maybe unfulfilled, one of the reasons this can be is because they don't have a clear why. Or they've started a business and they've built momentum with this business, but the way that they've built it isn't really aligned with the why they had when they started their business in the first place.

This disconnect can create a lot of stress and feeling unfulfilled. If this designer comes to me, if this is the case and they're really burned out, often they're going to be asking themselves questions like, why am I even doing this? Or what's this all for? And they haven't taken the time to clarify the answers to those questions for themselves and so they kind of keep looping in this.

And, of course, when we ask ourselves a negatively framed question like this, "Why am I even doing this" we're going to come up with some really negatively framed answers. And so without answering these questions, it's really easy to get down and frustrated when the day to day obstacles or the month to month obstacles of running an interior design business and facilitating design projects present themselves.

Typically, when I've heard about defining your why in business, it's talked about as a singular why. And while I think that's a great place to start, I actually think it's important and more useful, and also more clarifying and motivating, to have two why's.

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The first type of why is why does your business exist for my clients? And then the second why is why does my business exist for me? So we're separating out those two pieces of the why. And I'm going to share some examples from my own whys and also give you some ideas on what whys could sound like for your interior design business.

Let's talk about the first why. Why does your business exist for your clients? For me, I find it incredibly motivating to continue to grow my business, try new things and put myself out there and stretch myself because of what my business does for my clients, because of the impact and ripple effect in the life of the designers I support.

Some of the clients I've helped were considering shutting up shop or working for someone else because they felt so burned out and discouraged. And when I help my client get their spark back, their business exists for them instead of being shut down. I think of some of the incredibly talented designers I've worked with and how they might have quit on their dream. So my business exists so that my clients can achieve their dreams.

I also think about the ripple effect of a designer I help and how the work we do together allows them to be more present, to be taking care of themselves, to be making more money. And think about what that can do for them and those that they are in relationship with or care for.

Another phrase I often like to think of is I want you, as the designer, to be able to live the lifestyle that you sell to your clients. If I can help you achieve that, that's incredible. And what I mean by that is I want you to be well-compensated so you can have the custom pillows and drapery in your own home. And that's just a tiny example of the ripple effect of the additional income and spaciousness in the schedule that a designer creates while working with me, but I want you to be able to have those nice things.

And I know so many of us say the cobbler has no shoes, I want you to have the shoes. And I want you to have the profit to use on a vacation or a lake house. And I want you to have the time to spend with the people that you love. Those

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are all things that the clients I work with want for themselves, and I'm able to help them create it.

And then I also think of the impact on the industry as I help more and more designers shift their mindset on the value of their time and services. When I help the individual, they are helping the industry shift to a more sustainable work/life balance. My clients love design, and so when my business exists for them, they're able to engage in their work in a really meaningful way that also allows for a very meaningful and robust life outside of their work.

For you as a designer, why does your business exist for your clients? Of course, it's to create beautiful spaces, but what's a layer deeper? What does having a functional, beautiful and comfortable home create for your clients? It might be spaces to create memories. Sanctuaries away from high pressure jobs. What is it for your clients? I want you to answer that for yourself.

Another why could be ease. Perhaps it energizes you to think about how you are operating in your zone of genius as the designer and creating space for your clients to do the same, whatever profession they're in, because they aren't in charge of the design. What kind of change or impact does that have on your client's world, their families and their communities?

For commercial designers, consider the impact in a community that comes from a public space. When I was in commercial design I was working crazy long hours and getting paid hardly anything. And I was actually working on a University for Women located in Saudi Arabia. And so even though the conditions that I was working under were not great, I still think about the legacy of that project.

Creating a space for those who historically did not have access to that level of education, that is a powerful reason for me to be doing design. I want you to connect to that why for your clients and use that to fuel you in your business.

Next, I want you to consider the second type of why. Why does this business exist for you? You as the business owner. What you do for clients is incredibly

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valuable, and at the same time, the business exists for you to fulfill your desires, your specific needs and your goals. For me and my coaching business, my why is very anchored in creativity, connection, flexibility and intellectual stimulation.

Even though I no longer practice design, my coaching practice is very much an extension of my creative thinking, from being in session and problem solving with a client to creating new programs and workshops, that really dovetails well with the intellectual stimulation why. My brain loves something to learn. It loves to synthesize information. It loves to develop connections. And I get to do so much of that on a daily basis.

Flexibility is another huge why I want to be able to have what I described before of having that impact, having an outlet for my creativity, being a part of the design community. And I also want to be able to volunteer at school, take the dog for a walk in the middle of the day and be available when my kids get sick. And that's really important to me, so I'm always keeping flexibility in mind when I design services, set up my scheduling framework and plan out my projects in my business.

I'm guessing for a lot of you, these whys of creativity and flexibility are important to you too. Another way you could look at why does this business exist for me in your design business could be that your business is an opportunity for travel, or being part of the design community, or sharing what you can do as an entrepreneur with your kids.

And then, of course, there's always a financial component to why the business exists for you as well. You have personal financial goals, and that might be contributing to household expenses or it might be a bonus fund. I remember one of my clients, she was so excited because she was able to take her kids and her husband on this incredible trip to Disney. And she was able to pay for it all with money from her business. That was really motivating.

And also with a financial why, another layer of this is generosity. When your financial needs are met, you can be so much more generous with others.

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Whether that's a family member that needs support or being out in your community.

So what is it for you? Why does your business exist for you? Before you set your goals this year, I really recommend defining your two whys in your business to ensure that the goals you set support your whys. Your whys are another filter in your business. It's easier to make decisions about how you're using your time, energy and resources when you're clear on your whys. It helps guide the types of services you offer and how you're going to offer them.

Being clear on these two whys also guides when you have to have difficult conversations and how you show up and how you handle those. And then your whys, like I said, are going to help keep you motivated. In any business there's going to be the challenges, there's going to be the hiccups. And when you're clear on your two whys, it helps bring you out of that day to day, sometimes chaotic feeling, sometimes frustration, sometimes defeat. And it brings you back to the bigger picture.

Again, those two whys are why does my business exist for my clients? And why does my business exist for me? Take some time to explore this and then see what comes up. I'd love to hear from you, if you want to send me a message on Instagram or reply to one of my emails I send out.

That's what I have for you today. Next Wednesday we're going to be talking about big picture planning in your business. I, of course, can't wait to dive into that topic, it's one of my favorite things. And as a reminder, you can go even deeper on planning your year with me in Create Your 2024 Roadmap. The sign up is in the show notes. And again, it's only \$87 and we'll be meeting at the end of January and the beginning of February.

Until then, I'm wishing you a beautiful week. I'll talk to you in the 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

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