

Ep #71: Transitions in Your Calendar: A Secret Time Thief



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Desi Creswell

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Hey designer, you're listening to episode 71. This is one where I'm going to be talking about something that takes up a significant amount of your time every week, and you're probably not even aware of it. And that thing is transitions. Keep listening and we'll talk all about it.

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. As always, I'm so glad to have you here. I can't believe it, but it's the end of February. We're just getting back from a trip. My husband and I had the opportunity to get away on our own for a little bit, which is pretty few and far between. But we were so grateful to my in-laws and my mom for helping us make that happen.

And, oh my gosh, it was so nice to not be responsible for anyone but ourselves for a little bit. And we mostly relaxed. We did do a quick stop at a resort in Mexico, which was kind of like a wellness resort. And it was neat because it kind of felt like I was at day camp, but for grownups. So every morning there was breath work and then yoga. And then during the day there would be different movement type activities and ceremonies. And we did watercolor painting, all these different things.

And it was actually all vegan food at the resort, which was really interesting. I do eat meat, but of course I eat a variety of other things as well. And it was just really neat to see the creative things that the resort came up with. One morning I had what was kind of like lox and bagels, but the lox instead of salmon, it was this pickled papaya. I also had some really incredible smoothies. We were only there for a couple of days and then we went somewhere where we've been before that we really, really love. And we just kind of planted ourselves there for a little bit to relax.

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And one of the things that I've been working on behind the scenes and worked on a little bit on the airplane was working through finalizing details for a brand new program that I'm going to be bringing to clients who are in a more advanced stage of business where they've done that initial work of getting out of overwhelm and they're ready to grow and build their business with a bigger vision, keeping sustainability and balance in mind.

So if you've worked with me in Out Of Overwhelm in the past, or maybe Out Of Overwhelm hasn't been a fit for you, but you want to be supported by me in bringing a bigger business vision to life in a really holistic way, know that that's coming soon. If you aren't already on my email list, let's make that happen. That is the first place that I send out all of my announcements about what is happening in the business and how I can support you. So I'll put the link in the show notes to sign up for that newsletter.

Before we dive into the topic of navigating transitions throughout your day, I want to give a quick shout out to a listener who left this amazing review that just made me smile. Their screen name is WeatherStar and they titled their review must follow and listen. They said, "I'm so thankful to have found Desi's podcast. She's knowledgeable and experienced in both interior design and mindset, which is such a unique skill set to have and share with others.

Her genuineness is evident and is a breath of fresh air amongst everything else we face day to day. What she shares is bite-sized and actionable, which is another reason why I'm always excited to hear and learn from her each week. I also find myself relistening to previous podcasts when I need to dive deeper on a certain topic. Thank you for sharing and pouring into us." Thank you, WeatherStar, for leaving that amazing review.

It's always so wonderful to hear the impact that the podcast is having on you. Of course, I'm in my office talking into my microphone, so I love, love, love connecting through those reviews and hearing what you're loving. And as a reminder, I still have the giveaway going on where you can rate and review the podcast in whatever app that you use. And then you just submit a quick form that'll be linked in the show notes so that you can be entered to win a private coaching session with me.

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Leaving a rating and review for the podcast is one of the top ways you can help me spread the word about the show and get this content into the hands of more designers. And as a thank you, because I know that even though it doesn't take a ton of time, it does take some time, I want to offer the opportunity to support you through coaching. So be sure to leave that rating and review and submit the form so I know how to get in touch.

Today, what I want to bring to your attention with this episode is to highlight something that you're doing throughout your day that can add up to a lot of time, but that you might not have even had awareness of, and that is transition time. Transition, meaning you're switching from one thing to the next. So maybe you're switching locations, you're switching your activity type, or maybe even your role that you're performing.

So for locations, it might be that you're in one location, maybe a site visit, and then you have to move to a new location and then you're back at the office. Or maybe you were doing one particular type of task, maybe CAD drawings. And now you're doing something different, like writing specifications or placing orders. A transition needed to happen between those two activities.

Roles can be another big point of transition. Maybe you were in what I call worker bee mode, which is being the one who has to implement the work. And now it's time to shift into a manager or CEO role where you're leading and meeting with a team member. Transition in roles can also show up when you're transitioning from your personal life to professional life or vice versa. Like you're being the CEO, you're running the business, and then it's time to stop work and become the server of snacks because the kids are home and they need you.

So these layers of transition can all interact, of course, but the important thing to note is that they are happening. This came up today when I was working with my Out Of Overwhelm clients. We're a couple of months into the program, and the clients are working on really dialing in their tracking and planning. And of course, I've taught them how to evaluate their planning and tracking so that they're continually learning what's working for them and what needs to shift.

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And one of my clients brought up how much they've realized that they need transition time through the day and how that had not ever been something that they had accounted for or even had in their awareness as a thing. And so I thought this would be a great topic to bring to the podcast because often when we talk about planning or managing our time, we're talking about scheduling those to-dos, the deliverables, the communication, the meetings, all the things that we have got to get done throughout the day to keep the business and projects moving forward.

And those are absolutely important to account for in your calendaring, definitely. We want to know those big chunks, and we have to be aware of the need for transition time between those activity blocks or we're going to end up over scheduled. That is because transitions take time, there's no avoiding that. And I'm going to talk about how to make transitions easier and reduce them and make them less time consuming, but the reality is transition time exists.

Since we know that it exists, we want to account for it instead of hide from it or pretend it's not there. I actually think this is one of the reasons why people get really frustrated or defeated with traditional time blocking. And that's because the appointments and to-dos that they're putting on their calendar in that time blocking method, whether that's paper or digital or anything in between, is that everything ends up stacked so tightly like dominoes one after another, after another, after another.

And all of the time that's accounted for during the day is accounted for with actual tasks and they're missing the transition time. So, of course, when our calendar is stacked like dominoes, this doesn't leave any room for things to adapt or change based on new information or decisions about priorities, that's important to note. And in the context of today's podcast episode, most importantly, it doesn't account for transitions.

Even if you have four 15 minute transition times throughout the day, that is an entire hour. You could have something planned for an hour that is not going to happen because you didn't plan for transitions. I want you to think about your day, most often we're not doing one task and immediately diving into the next

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task. That is the transition. We might need to close files and open new ones between tasks.

Even as I was getting ready to record this, I had to transition from putting my outline together to opening up the podcast recording software, testing the microphone, making sure that was all set. That was a transition. I couldn't go directly from one thing to the next. Or maybe you're a human and you need it to go to the bathroom or get something to drink or stretch your legs because they fell asleep, that's a transition.

Maybe you just need a bit of shifting in your thinking, a refresh of your brain or to move your body. Or maybe you need to make some notes or synthesize some notes from a meeting or the task you were just working on, where you're inputting new details for tomorrow's task or assigning them to a team member. Or maybe you even need to go from sitting at a computer to standing at a table. Those are all transitions.

So you get the idea, it's just part of the day. And when we aren't aware of this or try to ignore it, we really run into planning issues where we're always setting ourselves up to be behind. That is a really yucky place to be when you're trying to give yourself the gift of planning to set yourself up for success, if you don't incorporate this aspect of transitions.

So now that I've made you more aware of transition times, what are you going to do to make them easier and less time consuming? Well, the very first thing you want to do is try to minimize transitions. The less transitions you have in your day, the less time you spend transitioning, right? That's pretty natural.

One of the ways that I teach my clients to do this is through focused periods of time where they are putting away, as I say, anything that dings or pings, closing out of distracting tabs on their browser, and really having a clear purpose for the time and creating a result within that time for themselves.

And so this means that you're not distracting yourself or allowing others to distract you because distractions, whether that is somebody calling you and you picking up, or you checking email or your assistant having a question during that time, you're creating transitions where they just don't need to exist if you put

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some proper boundaries and planning in place to set yourself up to have that focus time.

The other way that you can minimize transitions is to group like with like, so similar activities with similar activities. And this is one of the top five time-saving tips I can give you. And if you want the other four, go ahead and download the Interior Designers Get It Done daily planner. I'll have the link in the show notes, but if you go to www.desicreswell.com/planner, you'll be able to download your free planner there. And that is going to talk about grouping like with like. It is such a time-saver because of the minimized transitions.

This can look like batching by activity type. So I might do a bunch of similar activities all at once. So there's less of that switching and transitioning. It could be that you're grouping your planning around the type of role that you play. So if there is something where you are going to be more in the weeds, you're doing more of that work grouped together, like with like, versus more of that management, leadership, CEO work, that would be grouped together.

You could even do it with locations where you're stacking certain locations together to help minimize the transitions. You can definitely get creative with this and work on minimizing the transitions to begin with.

Now that you know, though, that transitions exist and we're going to have some that just are inevitable, we want to know what transitions are harder or easier, why they might be hard, and then make a plan to support yourself to make it easier. Like I said, we can't totally avoid transitions, so it's really helpful to know what transitions are harder than others.

For one of my clients I was coaching, the transition from being at showrooms in the morning and then going to her office in the afternoon was a really difficult transition in terms of her energy. So what she did to account for this was she flip-flopped the way she would schedule those times, where when she knew she had showrooms that she needed to visit, she would do the in-office work in the morning and then the showrooms in the afternoon. So that way she could be done with her day after the showrooms as a way of minimizing that transition in energy levels and activity types and location.

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Sometimes clients will have theme days or certain days where they don't schedule client appointments because one of the transitions they've identified as difficult is that being on with clients, to being settled in the office is challenging for them. Sometimes they need to shake off that extra adrenaline or excitement from the meeting. And so if they can avoid having those jumps from being on to needing to be very settled at the desk, then that's something that could be supportive.

You could also start to explore are there certain days of the week or times of the day, or even with certain tasks where the transitions feel more difficult? This could be tasks maybe that aren't your favorite, or when you're transitioning to starting something new versus diving into something that's already in motion. Just take note of it and start to get curious about which transitions feel like there's more friction and where you can more easily glide into something new.

Once we identify what those transition points are, we can then brainstorm solutions to support ourselves through the transitions. It could be in how you schedule your time, like I mentioned before. Sometimes it's even just the way that we talk to ourselves. So you could have a certain phrase or a reminder that you say to yourself like, it's okay that it feels hard to start, but I know I'll feel better when I do.

The other thing you can do is make sure you're giving yourself ample transition time, and at the very least realistic transition time so that you're not rushing, especially when you're going between locations. It might be something a little bit more lighthearted like playing music or just getting up and walking around. There are lots of ways you can make these transitions smoother, and as a leader of your business, you get to experiment with what works for you.

So designer CEO, this is what I really want you to focus on this week. Notice the time that transitions take. Look into how you could minimize your transitions. And then explore how you want to support yourself through those moments of change that are inevitable throughout the day. This is going to help your day feel so much more spacious. Your planning is going to be more realistic and you get ahead of some of that internal friction we all experience when it comes to transitions.

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That is what I have for you today. As always, I would love to hear from you, whether that's leaving a review, replying to one of my emails or sending me a DM and telling me how you're using what you learned in the podcast. Or even just sharing an idea for an episode. I really do enjoy connecting with you beyond this weekly chat we have. I'll be back next week with a brand new episode. And 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 a one on one coaching session with me. I can answer your questions and coach you on your unique challenges.

All you have to do is scroll down to the bottom of your podcast app, tap the five stars and leave a review. Tell me your favorite episode, why you look forward to 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.