

Ep #44: How to Evaluate Your Own Coaching



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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Hey, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills episode 44*.

To really compete in the coaching industry, you have to be great at coaching. That's why every week, I will be answering your questions, sharing my stories, and offering tips and advice so you can be the best at what you do. Let's get to work.

Hello friend, how are you today? I'm so happy you're here in my space. I want to just take a second and say that. I'm just so grateful that you're here. I have to say though that the last couple episodes I have recorded, I just get this urge to giggle in the beginning. And I realized just now, in this moment, right now, why that is.

And it's because when I sit down to record a podcast, it's always just me by myself in my closet. And I sit on a meditation pillow and I just feel so cozy. I usually have on, like right now I have on joggers and a T-shirt. And I'm just laid back, cozy.

And when I start and I say hi, I really kind of picture I'm calling you in. Like I'm gathering you here in my circle. And I'm interacting with you in this moment. And it kind of feels like a campfire. That's almost what I picture. I think because I just have on like a T-shirt and a sweatshirt, and I just feel cozy. I'm sitting on a pillow and I'm like, "Come on, come on in. Let me tell you something."

So just so you know, that's what I picture. This is where my mind goes. And then I talk to you like you're just sitting right here with me. And wouldn't that be fun if you were just sitting right here with me and I was just telling you these things and we were having a conversation about it? I think that would be fun.

So I hope that you also feel like you're sitting here next to me letting all of this goodness that I'm sharing sink in, learning something. Today, I want to talk to you about something that I bet you're not doing in your coaching

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business. Unless, of course, you're working with me. And then you probably are because I bet you're a star student.

And this thing is so important, and I'm going to tell you why. I want you to take a second and think how much time you spend thinking about your business. Thinking about what's working in your business, and what isn't working, and how your marketing is working, and if it's working, and if you're posting enough, and if your ads are working, if you're signing clients, and if you're closing sales calls, and if your funnels are converting and all of that. Evaluating all of the things.

I know I do, right? I think about these things all of the time. Well, maybe not all of the things I just mentioned, but most of the things I just mentioned are things that I'm doing on a regular basis that I am thinking about. I'm thinking about my team, always evaluating how is it going?

And there are so many things in our businesses to measure. And we can see metrics for them. And we can evaluate them so that we decide, is it working or is it not working? Where do I need to make changes? Where do I need to improve?

How much time do you spend evaluating your actual coaching? Think about it for a second. If you feel a little called out or if you're like, "Oh, no, none." Or. "I try not to think about it." Or even if you're like, "No, I don't really need to, I'm a really good coach." That's great, and there's always space for this in my opinion. Improving your coaching is an ever-evolving job.

And of course that's my opinion, right? This is my passion, it is what I teach, it is what I talk about all the time. But even if you love all of those other things, that's amazing, right? I'm not saying don't do them, for sure think about your marketing, for sure think about how you're enrolling people, for sure think about the money you're making. All of that, make your business work. But also evaluate your coaching.

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One thing that I do within my mastermind is I allow, or at least right now at the time while I'm recording this, I allow the participants to submit one coaching session to be evaluated by me. And that's great, right? And it always goes really well. And they're always surprised. It always surprises me how scared some people are to do that.

And then it always surprises them, I think, how useful the evaluation is and how not scary it is. And how nice I am about it. And how I give very specific feedback to the very specific thing that they submit.

But what I think is even more valuable than that is I teach them a framework to evaluate their own coaching to continuously learn to be better. And that's something that anyone that works with me can take with them forever. It's one thing for me to evaluate one coaching session and give you feedback. That is great. There's so much value to that. Like for sure, come join me, come do it.

But even more valuable than that is how can you have a system to always evaluate your own coaching so that you just have it anytime you need it. I've talked about evaluations before on the podcast in the episodes about hitting big goals. And the process I used to evaluate coaching is no different than what I described there.

So if I'm evaluating, let's say, a client session of my own, or in this case it would be like a mastermind session. My process for the evaluation is first I think about what went really well. What part of the coaching was great? Where did I feel really confident?

Next, I think about what could have been better? Like just where in that session, where on that call could I have been a better coach? Is there anything that stands out to me?

And then the last thing is I look at each thing that I list on the what could have been better, and I decide how to improve it and what to improve for next time. Like specifically what am I going to do to be different next time?

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One thing I noticed that happens often with my clients is they go straight to all or nothing. Either the session is amazing or was terrible. That's it, no in between. And this is why we always start with what went well. What did work? What did you do a great job at?

Because I promise you, promise, promise, promise, there are always pieces of it that went well. And you have to your mind to there first. You find those things before you dig into what do you want to improve?

That keeps you out of like, "This is all terrible. This feels really awful." There are always pieces that went well, you want to find those first and celebrate them, and be so excited for them. And just like anything else, there's never just one measurement for good coaching or bad coaching.

There are so many things we can look at, so many different measurements. And that's where you want to take your brain first, is just which parts did you really nail? Then you can take your brain to, "And where do I want to improve?" And this is the important part, after you figure out what you want to improve, you figure out how to improve those things.

Like what am I going to do? I see the parts where I need growth, I see the pieces that need improvement. Now what? Now how am I going to improve them? This is so much more productive than just having thoughts about your coaching. About it not being great or judging yourself and hoping that you improve over time.

If you're doing that, but then not evaluating at all and just keeping going and just like, "Okay, well, that was awful, keep going." It's not just going to magically feel better.

Or even if you don't go to the place where like this is bad but you know there are some things I would love to improve on, without focusing on them, again, they're not just going to magically improve, right? Without looking and saying, "Oh, here's the thing that I want to work on, and being more strategic about it and picking it out and saying, "How am I going to work on this? What is the answer?"

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This is something I work on in my mastermind, so when we talk about it here are some of the reasons that I usually hear about why coaches don't want to evaluate their own coaching or aren't evaluating their coaching. The first one that I hear all the time, all the time, it's too time consuming. I just don't have time for that.

This is 100% not true. And usually if you're thinking it's too time consuming, it's because you think you have to record your coaching, re-listen to it multiple times. And then you have to really dig in there and do it after every single session.

And I say no. Sometimes that might be appropriate, yes. But of course you're not going to do that after every client session, after every coaching session. So what I usually recommend to my clients is that they take a few minutes right after a session and jot down just a quick evaluation right then.

Just what did I do really well? What did I not? Even just start there. You can always come back and do what's the learning? What will I do next time? But if you just jot down some notes of at least what went really well and what didn't in a session, you can come back and look at it later. If you get that piece out when it's fresh in your mind you can always come back later and say like, "Okay, now how do I solve for this?"

That way you don't have to record and spend all the time re-watching, and just that is too much time. Nobody has time for that, you have other things to do. And you definitely don't have to do it after every single session.

So, again, what I usually tell my clients is either commit to doing it once or twice a week. Maybe mix it up with different client sessions or find a couple of clients that you think are the most difficult to coach in your mind, and just do it there.

Or even another option is do one a week but let it encompass all of your coaching for that week. All of the sessions that you had, do a general like, "What worked? What didn't work? What am I going to do differently?" So those are some tips for it not to take so much time.

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The second reason that I hear, evaluating feels uncomfortable. Now, this is only true if you're making the evaluation mean something about you. Mean that you're a terrible coach, or mean something about you as a human, or me and you're not supposed to be doing this, you're not cut out for this, whatever your thoughts are.

Those aren't useful, right? Those are just like, "I evaluated, now let me judge myself." We don't need to do that. You can take the judgment off the top. It's like – Oh my gosh, why did this just come into my mind? But my husband loves to make soup, which I also love for him to make soup. But sometimes he'll do it and then especially if it's a broth or if there's meat in it, then he'll like skim the fat off the top.

That's what I always picture when it's like we have the things, we have the drama, we have what it is we're actually looking at and evaluating. And then we have all the judgments that we add on top. Okay, in this situation, or really any situation, there is no need to do that. Let's just remove the judgment and just look at it. There's always room to improve, always.

And my thought, that you are welcome to borrow, this is still what I tell myself. Even today, when this is the work that I do always, there's always something I can improve on. Always. And there's always something I'm great at. Both are true, both are true for you too. Go find the things.

Finding the areas for improvement will make me a better coach, which is always my goal. The same is true for you. Finding the areas where you want to improve, what does it do? It allows you to actually improve. If you focus on them, you can change it.

And then truly deciding ahead of time that you won't judge yourself is always useful. Just like, "This is what we're going to do, brain, I need you to be on board. We're going to evaluate this coaching session from a neutral place. We're not going to judge, there's no judging. This is just like, what worked? What didn't work? What am I going to work on?"

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The third reason that I hear coaches say that they aren't evaluating their coaching is because if they just keep coaching, they'll get better over time. Now listen, this one is true. I'm just going to say it, it's true for sure. The more you coach, just like anything else, the more you practice the better you'll be.

But if you spend a little bit of time, even just a little, evaluating, your coaching will improve so much faster. Like exponentially faster. And it will save you from so much drama because you won't be thinking about why aren't my clients getting results? Why does that feel so bad? Do I even know what I'm doing? It'll save you from those thoughts instead of like, "Well, if I just keep going, I'll get better." And again, it is true. For sure keep going.

The fourth reason is I don't know how, but the great news here is that I have already told you. At the beginning of this podcast episode I told you how, all you have to do is ask yourself, what went well? What didn't go well? And what do you want to try next time? And you can ask those questions in whatever ways work for you.

So maybe that wording doesn't do it for you. Right? Maybe instead you ask yourself, what really seemed to resonate with my client in this session? Or where did I feel very confident in my coaching? And maybe for what didn't work you ask, where did my client seem confused? Where didn't I feel confident? When did I not know what to say? Or where did I feel uncomfortable, or uncertain, or just lost?

I remember that when I was first learning to coach. Sometimes I would just feel completely lost. It would be like I'm standing in the middle of the road, on a highway in the middle of nowhere. How did I get here? Like, can you resonate with that feeling? I for sure used to experience that.

Now, if you've been coaching for a while, you probably don't experience that anymore, at least I hope not. But it also shows up in much smaller ways, just like the little tiny pieces of doubt. The little tiny like, "Are my

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clients in my mastermind getting results? Is everyone in my program, like is it working? Have we checked in? Are they getting results? Is every client getting results?" It just shows up in a very different way once you've been coaching for a while.

But, like I said, make the evaluation your own. Use your own words, figure out what works for you. And the last reason that I hear a lot, of course, is I'm not sure what to do after I find the areas that can use some work. Now, here's what I'm going to say, this is exactly what we work on in my mastermind.

So I'm not going to tell you all of the how, you're going to have to come there to get it. But the simple answer of this is, if you knew how, what would you do? If you can really see what piece you need to work on, you can figure out how to work on it. If you want help with that, again, this is a piece of what I do.

This isn't like what we do for the whole six months. But this is definitely what we work on in part of the mastermind, figuring out specifically for each client and the mastermind, what is their work? How are they going to work on it? How are they going to improve?

And just really taking all the judgment out of it and saying of course we're all working on our coaching skills, I'm still working on my coaching skills, right? We're in it together, let's raise the bar. Let's be the best coaches, let's be the coaches that all of the clients want to work with, because we're so good.

And the one thing I want to end with is that evaluating your coaching is something that's appropriate for any stage of your business. So in the beginning, of course, it's useful and you're probably doing this anyway. Whether you went to a training or certification or you wherever you learned how to coach, there's always a stage of figuring out how to do it. But truly, this is something that's important to check in with at any time throughout your business.

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I work with a lot of clients that are making quite a bit of money already and they still use this. They're still coming to me, they're still coming to the mastermind, either to use it as a refresher or to check in and just like, "I'm having some thoughts about my coaching, please help me." Or to just really up-level their skills. Or when you've transitioned into a different type of coaching.

So maybe you're going from one on one to group coaching, which is very different. Holding the space for one client is so different than holding the space for 10 clients or for 20 clients. Same is true for transitioning into even a program, holding the space for one client is very different than holding the space for 100 clients, or however many people you have in your program that you might be coaching all at once, even if you're only coaching one person but you know that there are a bunch of people listening.

I have so much experience doing all of these things, and they're all very different. With one-on-one coaching it can be a little slower, you can really take your time and think deeply about this one client and what they're saying. In a mastermind, it's a little bit different because there are 10 people, 20 people, however many people listening to you coach.

And as the coach you do want to be asking yourself, "How do I coach this in a way that everyone finds it useful? Or that at least the people that need this coaching, get this coaching?" Same for a program, right?

So no matter where you are in your business, evaluating your coaching is so useful, I promise. Take the time to do it, evaluate your coaching, your clients will thank you and it will pay off. That feeling when you get off of a session, when you finish with a client, or finish with a mastermind and you think like, "I really nailed that, I feel so good." That is how I want you to feel after every session. It makes your business so much more fun, right?

And of course it makes you more confident to go into the world and tell everyone what you do, how you do it, how many clients you're helping, and

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just really amp up the passion about it because you know you're killing it. That's what I want for you.

So if you would love to do this work with me, Coaching Masters is open for enrollment right now the application is on my website. Of course this is if you are listening to this in real time. If you're not and it's sometime in the future, you can always go to my website and just check, it's lindsaydotzlafcoaching.com. There are some fun changes coming so stay tuned for that. I hope this was super helpful, I will see you next week. Bye.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *Mastering Coaching Skills*. If you want to learn more about my work, come visit me at lindsaydotzlafcoaching.com. That's Lindsay with an A, D-O-T-Z-L-A-F.com. see you next week.