

Ep #146: Are You Worried about New Coaches Entering the Industry?



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Lindsay Dotzlaf

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Hey, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills* episode 146.

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, I am so glad you're here today. I am back. This is live. Well, it's not live, it's recorded. But it's not a repeat. How about that? If you've been listening, if you've been following along, I've been sick the last couple of weeks. I don't know, well, I do know. I have a sinus infection and an ear infection and it just doesn't want to go away. It is just hanging on for dear life, apparently.

And I am feeling so much better. I'm still a little stuffy, so you might be able to hear it. But I'm back. I'm not hoarse. I have a voice. It was rough there for a few days. And I appreciate all of your kind, loving messages. And for those of you that checked on me, you're amazing. Thank you so much.

So throughout this episode you might hear, one, I'm a little stuffy. I apologize. But at least I'm here and I'm recording, which feels so fun to me. And it is currently thundering and storming outside as I record this, hopefully you won't be able to hear it too much in the background. But if you do, I apologize. It's the weather, nothing I can do about it and I have to get this recorded today.

I want to talk about something today that I haven't addressed on the podcast before. And, first of all, you can still send in questions. A question that I got actually prompted this episode. I was already thinking of recording it, but one question that I've received, which I'll read to you in a second, prompted me to record an episode about this for you.

And if you don't know what I'm talking about, you can submit questions. Every 50 episodes I do a Q&A. I'll answer any questions you have. I love doing these episodes, they are so fun. I've had so many questions coming

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in, I love it. I just read them for the first time. I just thought, oh, I'll pop on and see what people are sending in. And there are a lot of them, so that's so fun.

They are still open. So you can go to the show notes, you can follow me on Instagram and send me a DM there. And I am just compiling all of them. But, like I said, I was already going to record this and then one question that I got, which I will read right now really made me decide, let's just record this now. I think it's an important episode.

So the question was, "With so many new coaches entering the industry every day, what is one thing you can do to gain and maintain clients?" Now, I want to be clear, usually on this podcast I don't talk about necessarily like the business-building piece of your coaching, right? I focus a lot, just like the name implies, on your actual coaching and your coaching skills.

But for the Q&A episodes I allow you to ask any questions that have to do anything with coaching, coaching businesses, my coaching business, the way I think about things, any of it. So to me this question is actually two kinds of different things.

So this person obviously has the thought that there are too many new coaches entering the industry every day and that somehow is affecting her business. So I'm going to separate that from what is one thing you can do to gain and maintain clients? I'm going to answer the second part on the Q&A episode.

But I do want to address this thought because I know so many coaches have it. With so many new coaches entering the industry every day, I want to address this. I'm going to talk about kind of the way I think about it, give you maybe a way to think about it that might be very useful. And I'm going to talk about, in this episode, all the different ways you can work as a coach, maybe not as an entrepreneur, or maybe that's what you choose.

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But I'm going to go through all the different options and kind of the pros and cons of all of them and just touch a little bit on it. Because I think that it is a really interesting conversation. All right?

So the first thing is I want you to think about this. Think about if you live in the United States, and if you don't you can use your country as a reference. But let's just say if you live in the United States or if you're familiar with the United States, think about how many colleges – I didn't look up the stats, maybe I should have. But just think about how many colleges and universities and schools there are in this country.

And let's say you're going to college to be a teacher. How many teachers are graduating every year from college? How many new teachers are entering the workforce? So many. A lot, right? And yet, no one is ever saying because there are so many teachers coming into the teaching industry every year, what do I need to do to be a teacher or to stand out?

Now, you could ask yourself, how do I stand out to get hired as a teacher or to get my dream job or whatever. But that's a very different question than framing it because there are so many new teachers entering the industry. And I was thinking about this as I was planning to record this and went through just in my mind a couple of different, because you can make arguments for different industries, right?

Like, okay, well, teachers, at least in the US, my belief is teachers are dramatically underpaid. So maybe there are lots of openings because not as many people are wanting to be teachers now. I don't know if that's true or not, but it could be. Let's say it is.

Okay, what about accountants? I don't think accountants, who a lot of the time work for themselves or work for an accounting firm, similar to coaching, right? A lot of coaches either work for themselves or they work for another coaching business or within another business. Accountants aren't probably asking how many accountants are coming into the industry

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this month, this week, today, this year, whatever, and how does that affect my business, right?

They're like, I want to be an accountant, here's what I'm doing. I'm going to learn how to do that. I'm going to graduate and I'm going to just go into the world and be an accountant. And then they're only focused on getting the job they want or starting the company they want and continuing to build the skills to be an amazing accountant and working with all of the clients that they want to work with and doing the work in the world that they want to do.

The same would be true for anything, right? We could fill that in with anything. Plumbers, lawyers, lawn care providers, daycares, literally anything. We could just fill that in and say, would a person entering that industry ask this question?

And I have a hunch why this comes up for so many coaches, which I'll share. But I first just think it's really important to just take a second and consider that. Because I used to have this thought too. This is definitely a normal thought to have. I used to share this thought, there are so many new coaches.

Now I know, there are so many new coaches and coaching is such a baby industry, in my opinion, that I love that there are so many new coaches. It's incredible. There are certainly not enough coaches to help all of the people that need coaching and that want coaching.

One thing I also think is interesting to consider in this conversation is that there are so many people that don't even know what coaching is, what life coaching is, what business coaching is, what any kind of coaching is because it's such a new industry.

So I think the more interesting conversation is how do we inform the masses about coaching? To me that's an even better question to ask than with so many new coaches entering the industry every day. And if that's an important question, how do we inform the masses? My thought is wouldn't

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it be good news the more coaches there are to tell people about coaching, right?

Because I can't tell you how many people in my life, one, don't know what coaching is, have never heard of it, or react in a very strange way when I say I'm a life coach. They're like, oh, what's that? What do you do? Two, they know about coaching because of me, right, because they know I'm a coach and they think it's interesting what I do. They've never hired me because I'm not the coach for them, but maybe they've hired other coaches. So just because I'm a coach, there are other coaches who now have clients. So you could take that into consideration.

And just in general, I just don't think it's a useful thought. Because when you start thinking there are so many new coaches entering the industry and this is a problem, just notice what that does for you. How do you feel when you say that to yourself, right? How do you approach your business or yourself as a coach when you tell yourself that there are new coaches entering the industry and it's a problem?

So let's dig a little bit into with all these amazing coaches entering the industry, all the different ways that you can work as a coach. I do think and, obviously, I have not attended all coaching schools, all coaching certifications. But because of the work I do, I have worked with many coaches throughout the industry that have all different types of certifications and trainings and all the different things.

And one thing that I noticed from talking to a lot of coaches is that a lot of the schools and a lot of the places you get trained as a coach really do focus on you kind of coaching as an entrepreneur. They put a lot of effort into that. There's a lot of selling and marketing even that goes behind, you know, this is an amazing industry to be in, you can work for yourself and positioning it in that way.

But I want to offer that coaching is so much bigger than that. You do not have to work for yourself as a coach. You do not have to be an

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entrepreneur. There are other options. And I think it's really important to know that when you decide you want to be a coach who is an entrepreneur, who owns their own business, not only are you signing up to learn how to coach and to be a coach, but you're signing up to learn, if you don't already know, how to run a business, which isn't the easiest task in the world.

And I just want to offer that for those of you, I know that there are so many new coaches that get into coaching because they saw an ad or they saw something that they were like, "Oh, this is fun. I love this." Or maybe they participated in coaching for themselves. They worked with a coach or a coaching program or whatever for their own coaching and decided I can do this.

And they only think about – A lot of you, some of you I know because you've told me, really only considered the coaching parts that you have to learn. Which I love that, right? That's literally what I teach. I love that, come to me, I will help you. But there is a whole other side of it if you want to work for yourself, and that is being an entrepreneur.

So let's dig in a little bit to some of the other options besides that and then what the differences are between the three. In my mind, there are three ways to be a coach. And there might be other ways I'm not thinking of, but to me these would be the three main ways.

You can be an employee. And this is another thought that I have that really combats the idea that there are so many coaches coming into the industry. There are now also so many other industries that are embracing coaching, that are hiring coaches, that are having contract coaches, that are bringing coaches into other companies that have nothing to do with coaching, right?

Coaches coming in and coaching in companies that are all different industries, that is happening more and more and more. Just like a lot of companies have industrial organizational psychologists or some form of psychologists that work in their company. So many companies now, especially newer companies, are having coaches that work for them.

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So that is one option, right? You can be an employee. The pluses and minuses of that, obviously, some of the pluses are regular work, you're not an entrepreneur, you do not have to find your own clients, your clients are provided to you. You get paid regularly from the start, right? There's no like you don't get paid until you find the clients and all of that piece that goes into entrepreneurship. You just get paid immediately, just like any other employee.

You work regular hours. You get tons of practice coaching. You get a lot of feedback. Usually, in those scenarios you get a lot of feedback in your coaching, which I know because I've coached sometimes coaches who are employees or contractors and I know that can be sometimes a painful process, you do get a lot of feedback, typically.

But it is also very useful, right? There's no faster way to grow than just coaching, coaching, coaching, and consistently getting feedback, doing evaluations, giving yourself your own feedback. That is the fastest way to grow as a coach and to be better at your skills.

You also, at least in the United States, as an employee you get benefits, right? You get employee benefits. You usually get health insurance, maybe retirement plans, whatever the things are that that company offers to their employees. You get those things, which you don't get when you're working for yourself.

Now, some of the drawbacks. You don't get to set your own hours. There is probably a cap on your salary, it's probably just a pretty standard salary, right? It might be a little flexible, but there's not going to be the variability that there is when you work for yourself, right? Like when you work for yourself, the sky is kind of the limit. As an employee it's like here's the salary give or take X amount of dollars, right?

You don't have a lot of say over your hours. You don't get to make your own schedule. You might only be coaching on very specific things. So when you're going into a company and you're hired by a company, they might

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want you to have specific trainings. They might want you to be certified in specific places or have very specific skill sets when it comes to coaching and then you might only be coaching in those areas. And you don't get to choose your clients, typically.

Of course, all of these things, if you're listening and you're like, no, I work for a company and I get to do some of these things. These are very generalized, but I'm just telling you them to kind of get your brain jogging, right? To just kind of be thinking about these things if you're a new coach, or if you've been in the industry for a while and you've never considered there are so many options in the coaching industry.

Okay, so the second option, which to me is an amazing option, is kind of in the middle. This is a great option, especially if you know you want to be an entrepreneur and you can't necessarily take all the time in the world to learn to grow your business in the beginning.

So maybe you are like, okay, I know I want to work for myself but I don't have the flexibility. I don't have the money saved. I don't have, you know, I don't have the circumstances that allow me to just not have a job and go all in on being an entrepreneur. Being a contract coach is an amazing option.

And what that means is you are an entrepreneur, you own your own business, but you're coaching inside of other either companies, other coaching programs, other people's businesses, right? So it might be in companies, just like employees do, but maybe they're hiring contract coaches instead of having full-time employee coaches in their company.

Or there are many programs, many coaches, like me for example, who hire contract coaches to coach when I can't be there. So in The Coach Lab I have a handful of contractors who come in and fill in and coach for me when I'm sick or I'm on vacation and I can't be there, right? Especially any coach that has something that's like a lifetime program, something where the schedule remains the same no matter what, all those coaches mostly

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have to have some kind of backup or they're just canceling calls. Or they're overworking, which I also don't recommend.

So that's another option, right? The benefits of this, you do get some of the benefits like employees, and then you don't get some of the others. So you will get clients right away if you're working for someone, right? Like if you're trying to build your business and you want to work for someone else to kind of fill that gap while you're building your business, you will have clients right away and you'll be making money. They're not your own clients, but you'll be coaching right away, right, depending on what the position is.

You might have some flexibility over your hours. You may or may not. The contractor, this varies wildly, right? Employee and entrepreneur, those are pretty set, like this just is what it is. The contractor position, I think, can vary a lot from place to place. So you may have some flexibility or you may not over your hours.

You may have a set pay or you may not. It may be kind of like my coaches, they don't have a set pay because I only ask them to fill in when I can't be there. So they don't have a set schedule or know ahead of time how much they're going to work.

You might have a cap on how much you can make or you may not. I know that there are some programs that run that's like you can kind of pick up coaching shifts. And some are more like mine, where it's like you're just coaching maybe once every couple months or whatever.

Some of the drawbacks, unlike being an employee you do not get health benefits or retirement plans or any of those things as a contractor, right? Because you do work for yourself, so you only get the things that you're providing for yourself. You're just offering your services inside of someone else's business.

Again, you might not necessarily get to pick your clients. You're just coaching whoever's there for you to coach during the hours that you are working for that business. You might not get to choose what you coach on.

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So if someone comes into The Coach Lab and they're coaching for me, they're only coaching on things that we cover in The Coach Lab, right?

It's not like they don't come in and just like, okay, it's open coaching and you can just coach on anything that anyone brings. No one comes to Coach Lab calls and brings like marriage issues, or relationship issues, or money issues, or any of those things that just have to do more with life coaching or your personal life.

But, again, and I want to reiterate this because I think it's really important. There are so many coaches and companies that hire contract coaches. So if you're an entrepreneur and you're really feeling the squeeze of trying to build your business without feeling kind of desperate for clients or desperate to have money coming in, this is a really good option to look into.

And you can find this option, and the same as being an employee, in so many different ways. Just ask yourself, how would I find any other job? Look in all of those places, right? All the job search engines, all of the websites and the listings and all of those things. And also you can contact any schools that you're certified through. Or sometimes if you're inside The Coach Lab, sometimes there are coaching positions there. My colleagues will send me job descriptions and I'll post them in The Coach Lab.

And just going to coaches websites, maybe. So if you know of coaches who you would love to work for, you could send them an email. Or you could go to their website and say, okay, are there any job listings? Coaches that are making, you know, have big businesses, that are working with lots of clients, oftentimes will be hiring other coaches and it might be posted on their website.

And then the third option, obviously, is just going all in on your own business, being an entrepreneur. And while this option is amazing, it's obviously my favorite, it is what I did, although actually I do spend some hours contract coaching in other people's businesses. Not very many now. But being an entrepreneur is so fun. You have ultimate flexibility in every

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way. With your schedule, with your clients, with your money, with what you coach on, who you coach, how you coach, all of that is flexible.

Now, while I see that as an amazing thing, it can also be the thing that really gets in a lot of coaches' heads, right, because it's like the sky is the limit. And I know what a lot of you do is, since the sky is the limit, every certification you see, every new training, every new anything, you think, oh, I need this too, I need this too, I need this too to be a great coach.

So just be aware of that. If that's you just come and join The Coach Lab, we'll get you sorted so that you won't do that anymore. Or that you'll choose, I've said this before, but that you will just learn to choose more wisely and choose from abundance versus scarcity of I need this next thing, I need this next thing in order to be a great coach.

Just like being any kind of entrepreneur, there are other bonuses to it too, right? You have, one of my favorite things is just I get to set my own schedule. I get to be with my kids in the morning. I'm here when they get home in the afternoon. I take a couple extra days off during the weeks in the summer. I take some time off during the holidays. I don't have to ask anyone what time I can have off, right, which feels amazing. I love that piece.

And the drawbacks of it are you have to learn to run a business. There's no getting around that if you are an entrepreneur and you're a coach. Now, you can have a very simple business, but you have to learn to run a business. You have to learn how to sell your coaching services. You have to learn how to market. You have to learn lots of skills that you may not have considered when you were like, I could totally be a coach, right?

So many people tell me this, or even tell me like that's how they got into coaching. Like, oh, I could totally do this. I love this, I'm super into it. I think I could, I'm willing to learn. What you may not have considered is all of the pieces of entrepreneurship.

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Now, this is not a bad thing. It's just something to take into consideration, right? Especially when you see all of the different schools and trainings and whoever saying coaching is an amazing industry to get into and you can make all of this money and you can do blah, blah, blah, right? All the things they say, which are great.

Just know that what comes with it is learning to be an entrepreneur, which can take time and patience and commitment, and dedication and resilience, and the willingness to fail over and over and over, and just all the hard things that balance out the amazing things.

One thing I say, I'm sure if you are a regular listener you've heard me say this before because I say it all the time. If being an entrepreneur was easy, everyone would be doing it, right? Why wouldn't they? Why wouldn't you want all of that flexibility and all of that freedom? Why wouldn't you want that? Everyone would be doing that if it was just super easy.

A lot of coaches that I've seen get into the industry, they get very frustrated quickly because they're not making the money they want. And I think really this comes down to just thinking ahead of time, okay, what does being an entrepreneur entail? How long am I willing to do this without knowing exactly how much money I'll have coming in?

Like make a plan, go into it armed with all the details. Do I have the ability to be a full-time coach right now? Or do I need to be a part-time coach and keep my job or get a different job that's maybe a part-time job? Get a job that I don't necessarily love, that I don't see as my career but something that will supplement me while I'm learning to grow my business.

Now, not everyone has to do this. Obviously, some people have either quickly grown their business, which usually stems from them having background in either already growing businesses or just being a very connected person or a very influential person somehow in their community, or just having skills that they're bringing to the table already.

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I've been very open about this, I did not have a job when I started my coaching business, but I was running another business. So I had money coming in from that business and I already knew how to run a business, at least the basics. I'm still learning a ton, don't get me wrong. But I knew the basics and the kind of energy it took to run a business.

I think a lot of people who have never done it just really underestimate what it takes and the dedication and grit, I guess, I don't usually love that word. But there is a piece of it in the beginning when you're a newer coach that feels a little bit like just being able to show up and be consistent, as consistent as you can, and sticking to your schedule and doing all the things that you need to do to run a business consistently before you have maybe even any money coming in, which can be tough.

I feel you on that because I did it. Again, I did have money coming in from another business. And I also had, have still, a husband who is also bringing in money, right? So things might be totally different for you if those aren't your circumstances. And that's not a bad thing. I've seen so many coaches beat themselves up over this and just like, I couldn't do it, I became a coach and then like two months in I was running out of money because I didn't sign any clients.

And to me, I'm like that sounds like a normal timeframe. I would not count on any money coming in for months. I would definitely plan when you become an entrepreneur that you're either going to need a loan, a business loan, or money coming in from somewhere else. So either from someone else in your household or money that you will have saved maybe, or money that you have coming in from somewhere else.

If someone is listening, and you are like, yeah, I know this and it still feels bad and why didn't I think of this? I just want to say this quickly, I know because I've seen all the ads and all the things that there are a lot of schools and places out there telling you that it's just easy. And I'm just here to say sometimes it's not. It can be simple, and for some of you it might be easy, but I don't think that's the norm.

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For most of you it's going to require some work, whether you are a new coach or sometimes I know of coaches who've been in the industry for a while but they had some personal things and kind of stepped back in their business for a little bit and are just coming back into the coaching industry. I don't ever think that there is shame in contracting with other coaches or with other companies, or getting a job to support yourself while you're growing your business, or keeping your job and working part-time while you're growing your business, right?

You get to decide what your level of comfortability is around that and take care of yourself. It's so important. I see a lot of coaches that come to me, like by the time they come to me they're just in a lot of distress over this. And I just want to offer that you just don't have to be in distress, right? Make the decisions that make sense for you and don't judge yourself against whatever anyone else is doing ever. Because you don't have all the details, I promise.

Even me, actually, as I'm recording this in my certification we just had our last call today, or yesterday. And one of the things that somebody asked me, we do this thing at the end where I let them kind of ask me anything, we celebrate and they say all the things that they want to remember about themselves, all the growth they've had that they're taking away with them. And then I kind of open it up for questions.

And one thing someone said to me is, one of my clients said, "I know I've heard you say that you've had fails, but we don't see them. Can you share that with us or tell us what they are?" And I was like, for sure. And I started to tell them about how I've been working on Facebook ads and trying to figure out how to sell The Coach Lab to cold traffic. Selling to cold traffic, apparently, there's a learning curve to it and it's just very different than selling to warm traffic.

And so I told them, I've just done several launches and I've done master classes every month for the last, I don't know, three or four months. And I have brought in specifically through that channel, through those launches

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to cold traffic, have brought in just a couple clients each time, which is certainly not the plan. The goal is much higher than that, but I'm just learning and that's okay.

And I felt so frustrated in the beginning. And now I'm in a space where it's just like we're all just learning. This is a learning curve, we're doing it together. And I share that with you just so you know these things are normal and you have to be able, as an entrepreneur you have to be able to weather them because it is unfortunately part of it.

I don't know any coach or just any entrepreneur that I've worked with, coaches that are my colleagues, entrepreneurs that I know in my life, I don't know any entrepreneur that hasn't had huge fails and things that they're like, that did not go as planned. That is part of what you're signing up for.

Okay, that was a little ranty. I hope that it was helpful though. I know so many of you needed to hear this and I hope that this was really helpful. If you want to hear my answer to the rest of the question, make sure you tune in in a couple of weeks, episode 150 and I'll answer what's one thing you can do to gain and maintain clients? I will answer that. But I really just wanted to dive into the thought there are so many new coaches coming into the industry every day.

My thought about that is that it has nothing to do with my business. Actually, for me, because I coach coaches, I'm like, okay, this is great. But before I coached coaches my thought always was, this has nothing to do with my business. Someone else being a coach has nothing to do with my business. They get to be a coach and I get to be a coach, and we both get to kill it as coaches. It's going to be great.

So take that with you. Just cross this off if this is something that enters your mind sometimes, that you stress about, that you think about. Just use all the examples I said in the beginning to prove why this is not a problem.

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All right, thank you for listening, and I will see you, talk to you next week.
Goodbye.

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