Ep #257: What Went Wrong? Using Data vs. Stories: Launch Secrets (Part 2)

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With Your Host

<u>Lindsay Dotzlaf</u>

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Hey, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills* episode 257.

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.

Hey coach, I am really excited to dive into this episode today. This is going to be part two of my launch series, and this is going to be all about data, launch data versus the stories that you tell yourself about the data, or actually, usually the stories you tell yourself without even looking at the data. Okay, so we're going to dig into what is really happening, like how to get to the bottom of it. And again, this builds on the last couple episodes. So you may have already heard me say this, but I'm going to say it again anyway.

Two things: if you haven't listened to the last two episodes, that's okay. They will give you more context for what I'm talking about today, but this can absolutely be a standalone episode, even if you just found me and you have never listened to anything I've said. You are totally fine. You're in the right place. But when you finish this, you might go back. And then the second thing is, even if you're a coach who doesn't sell specifically in launches, as in an open and close launch, that is okay. I'm going to actually address that also in this episode. So still listen. Don't think that it's not for you. And third, I know I said there were two, but I'm adding another. I know there are so many episodes out there, so many podcasts out there about launching and about these type of business sprints or whatever the other things that people are calling them. And I just hope that this is a little different than some of what you've heard in the past.

The last episode was all about the relationship you have with yourself and with your audience as you're going through a launch or a sales process. This episode is going to be all about the data versus stories and how you

can really, really dig in and figure out what is happening and how to solve it. Okay? So, let's go.

This, again, this is part two. There will be a part three next week. Technically, I guess it's a four-part series because the very first part was me digging into my failed launch, how I turned it around, how I solved it, and just giving you a real, like complete one00% behind the scenes look. And then last week was part one of the three-part series, kind of digging into that first episode. Today is part two, and then next week will be part three. All right?

So first, let's just talk about what I mean when I say story versus data and why this is hurting you when you are attempting to sell your coaching and things aren't going the way you want them to, or maybe they kind of are, but you want them to be even better. And you're just making up things and believing them instead of digging in to the data. And I'm not suggesting that you dig into the data all the time, obsess over it, etc.

That's not the goal here, but I'm going to give you some really good approaches to use, some actual strategies that you can use when you're looking at this for yourself in your own selling. I have a feeling this might be one of those episodes where you might want to come back or grab a notebook right now and take some notes, or if you're driving and you're listening, then maybe listen again later and grab a pen and pencil and take some notes because this is going to be pretty strategy heavy. All right?

So the first thing is, let's think about the common assumptions that I hear from so many of my clients. This is what I would call the stories. So when my clients are selling their coaching at any level and things aren't going the way they want them to go, often times things come up like, no one likes me or no one cares what I have to say. I don't know what I'm doing. I'm not smart enough to do this. There's something wrong with my approach or my personality. There's just something wrong with me, or I'm not credible enough. I don't know enough. I need to go learn more and spend the next year doing that before I can try to sell anything ever again.

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Or they tell stories about their offer, right? So like the price is wrong, the offer is too long or complicated. Again, nobody wants this offer. Maybe they want to work with me, but they don't want this thing. The timing is wrong. Just in general, offer sucks. I need to change it or keep trying different things after different things.

And when this really is a problem is when you're taking immediate action on it, right? These thoughts are totally normal. We all have them. If you listen to me talk about the behind the scenes of my launch, you heard me say some of these things that went through my mind. And I knew right away like, okay, none of these are true. Let's figure out what's actually going on. But we all have human brains and this is just what our brain does. It's an immediate response, right? No one likes me, no one wants this thing, whatever. Just where our brains go. And here's why we do this.

In some ways, the stories feel more comfortable and more controllable even when they feel bad because they just feel easily believable. Like when I say comfortable, it's like they just feel more easily believable or they're things we've already practiced over and over, so they're just easy to go there. Or they feel more controllable as in, okay, then I just need to fix myself and then I can keep going and it's going to work, or I just need to fix my offer and I can keep going and it's going to work.

Also, sometimes data can feel overwhelming or confusing, or you don't know where to look or you don't know what to believe from the data. Or looking at the data can cause us to actually believe a different story that we don't even want to think about. Right? We're afraid of what the data might show us or tell us. And then the last one is our stories usually confirm what we already believe about ourselves or that we're scared could be true about ourselves or our coaching or our offer, etc.

Now the problem, I mean, I'm sure you can already see why these things are a problem. Here are the reasons that it's a problem when you just go straight to these stories and you believe them and take action from them. One, they're just usually wrong. Or even if they are kind of right, they're not

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like the way you are thinking about them when this pattern is happening. You aren't thinking about them being right in a way that you can solve it. You're thinking about it being right in a way that it's just the truth of the universe. This is just how it is and so I might as well give up or whatever.

They also can keep you stuck in the same patterns. So if you are telling yourself, it's just the price, right? If that's your go-to, you always come back to, it's just the price. It's just going to have you changing the price over and over and over. That's not good in general. That will create confusion for the buyers, for people watching. Even if you do have people watching your marketing and are super interested, and now you're just making all these changes because you're not giving it time to work and now it's just going to confirm, right? Like now they're not going to buy because they're confused and then it's just going to keep fueling that same story over and over and over.

They also prevent you when you're just listening to these stories, they prevent you from solving the actual problem and like really digging in and saying, what is happening here and how can I really fix it? They also tend to make everything about you instead of serving your clients, or about your offer instead of serving your clients, or even sometimes about your clients, but not in a good way, right? On occasion, the examples I gave were like the thoughts I hear most often, which are coaches having thoughts about themselves or thoughts about their offer being wrong in some way. There is a third option, which I hear less often, but it's that coaches make their clients wrong and they get a little combative even in their marketing.

That doesn't happen quite as often as the other two, but it's certainly a thing that happens and it does happen maybe in congruence with some of the other things as well. I can sometimes read that when I'm reading someone's copy and they'll be just tiny sprinkles of like, oh, it feels like you're a little angry with the people you're talking to. Let's figure out what's up, what's going on there, right? So basically, they're just bad, right? It takes you completely out of problem solving in a way that will actually work and puts you into problem solving in a way that just isn't useful and is just

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going to keep you having the same patterns over and over and prevent you from solving the actual problem.

So a shift that I may suggest is instead of asking questions like, what is wrong with me or what's wrong with my offer? In a way, that's not useful. It can on occasion be useful. We'll talk about that in a minute. Instead, I want you to ask what hypothesis can I form when I look at what's really happening here? Where is the breakdown happening and what is that telling me? Right? Somewhere between you putting things out into the world and people interacting with them or not, all the way to all the things that happened between that and someone buying coaching from you, there's some breakdown somewhere in there and I promise you, if you decide to, you can find it, like the real breakdown, not the story.

So what I recommend is becoming a scientist of your own business. Now, if you've been a listener for a while, you probably know I can be a little nerdy sometimes. I do have a science background. I used to work in labs and was a psychology major and worked in psychology labs. I loved it so much and I love data. I love scientific research. There's just something almost like comforting about how methodical and precise it can be. And so I'm not going to suggest that you fully step into a research scientist in a lab. But I am going to share some things that I learned in my past life in that arena. I'm going to share them here so you can use them to solve problems in your own selling, marketing, launching, whatever you want to call it. Okay?

Here is the simple framework. Step one, you set aside the stories and assumptions. So you acknowledge them, you see them, right? You don't pretend like they're not there. Like, okay, write them down if you have to, but just shelve them for now. Also, you can go back and listen to the last episode, right? About how to take care of yourself, how to build that trust and that relationship with yourself. That will help with this part, right? With that story part. When you feel more confident, when you gain that trust in yourself and you feel differently about yourself and who you are in the coaching space, that's going to help with these stories.

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Then, when you set them aside, now it allows you to only focus on what actually happened, not what you're going to make it mean. Okay, step two. Figure out where people are dropping off in your process, or just where your process isn't working. Like where's the breakdown? This could look like kind of tracing the customer journey from awareness of you to purchase. This could look like identifying specific points in something that you're working on where something changes or drops off. And don't worry, I'll give you some specific examples in a minute. But it's basically identifying like, where has the thing gone wrong? Where have we gone off the rails?

Step three, form a hypothesis about the breakdown, about what's happening. Make sure it's based on your data, not your fears. Right? We've set those aside, remember? They might try to keep popping back up. They might be like, hey, don't forget about me. I'm important, right? If that keeps happening, you're just like, okay, thank you. I'll come back to you later. And maybe focus on the most obvious gap first, right? The most obvious answer. Like if this thing has gone wrong here, what's causing that? Or if this thing that I want to happen isn't happening, why? Or if in the customer journey, potential clients get to a certain point and then drop off, why do I think that is? Like what's causing that?

And then next, step four, test your hypothesis. I'm going to challenge you to believe that this is literally what running a business is, testing hypothesis after hypothesis after hypothesis and seeing what works. And then when you find something that works or that feels that is true, you build on it and build on it and build on it until maybe you're like, oh, now here's this other hypothesis over here. I was thinking about this when I was setting up my notes for this podcast recording where I was like, oh, this actually feels like why I love business so much because it reminds me, truly, of being in a lab and doing scientific research. It is the exact same thing. Just the results we're trying to create are maybe different.

Okay, so anyway, back to step four, test your hypothesis. Make maybe one change at a time and see what happens. There are some exceptions to that, but for the sake of a just this general podcast and me not knowing

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exactly what's going on in your specific business, I'm just going to recommend for the most part, making one change at a time and giving it time to see what happens.

Don't, for the love of God, change everything at once. Do not do that. First of all, it makes it very hard to know what actually worked. Like even if it works, it makes it really hard to know what worked so you can do it next time or so you can build on it. And if it doesn't work, it also makes it very hard to know why and like problem solve from there. When my clients come to me with this, right? When they're like, well, this wasn't working. So here's what I did. And they tell me 50 zillion changes. And I'm like, oh no. I don't say that out loud, but my coach mind is like, no, why? Why didn't you check with me first? Right? Or like why didn't you get coaching on this before making all the changes? I know though how tempting it can be to want to make all the changes all at once. Trust me.

Okay, so let's dig into some examples. So first, let me give you some examples. When I say data, what does that mean? Right? Let's be clear, depending on where you are in your business, your data is going to look very different from someone else's. Like the longer you've been running your business, probably the more data you have, right? Your sample is much larger. You probably have, if you think about your email list for example, you probably have more subscribers than someone who's just starting out or maybe doesn't even have an email list at all.

Email lists on the back end give you all kinds of data that you can look at. So the longer you've been doing that, the more and more and more data you have. So you'll start to know what's normal for you and what's not. With that caveat, right, that everyone's going to have different types of data, I'm going to tell you, just going to give you some examples. And I actually want to make one more thing clear. All the caveats for this one. Do not feel like you have to be tracking all of these all the time. Absolutely not. Do actually, don't do that. It's a terrible idea.

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The only reason, can you tell I'm like hesitant to even go through these? The only reason I'm even telling you this is so you can start to take your brain from did I make money or did clients say yes, which is for some of you, the only data you're using. And now I'm going to list some other data to help you see there are so many ways you can figure out is it working?

And when I say working, of course, the ultimate goal if you're running a business and if you're wanting to work with clients is that clients say yes and they can work with you and they have an amazing experience and all of that. But when you are launching something new or just launching something in general or you're new to coaching and you're learning how to sell it and learning how to market, there's just so many data points you can look at to say, is it working? Are we trending in the right direction?

Okay, so emails, right? If you have an email list, you can look at open rates, click rates, unsubscribes, replies, and subscribes, right? Social media, that one's obvious. You can look at, in general, just engagement. Are people engaging? Are they liking? Are they saving your posts? Are they sharing your posts? Do you are you growing your followers? Do you have a bunch of comments? Are people coming into your DMs, commenting on things that you're sharing, your stories or your posts? Are they clicking on the links in your bio? All of those are things you could be considering.

If you have a podcast or a YouTube channel or some form of, you know, something like that where you're putting your work into the world, you can look at things like downloads, maybe clicks on show notes, emails from listeners or subscribers, reviews, if that's a thing on whatever platform you're on. This is all data. You could look at your website. You could look at like visits to your website, the time people spend on your page. These aren't actually ones I really look at, but I know it's a thing you can look at, you know, where are people coming from?

You can look at your website data or analytics. You can also measure data in real life, conversations you're having, event feedback, speaking gig

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responses. If you go to networking events, are people intrigued by what you're saying? Do people want to talk to you? Are they asking you questions, right? When you are like, here's what I do and talking about what kind of coach you are, are people interested? All of this is data. And I'm sure there are even so many other things that I haven't mentioned, right? So maybe take a second and think about what are those for you.

Now again, let's be clear, you do not need to track everything. You have to kind of pick what makes sense to track for your goal, whatever your goal is. We'll talk about that in a minute, and for kind of your personality, right? If you're like an obsessive, you know that once you dig into the data, you're going to obsess over it and that's not a good thing, then maybe just pick one thing to casually follow, right? This is where you have to know yourself because there's also the opposite person who's like, I will never look at it ever. You can't make me. I hate it. It's scary. In that case, again, pick one. Start there.

Okay, so here are some examples. When I say be a scientist and think about where is the breakdown? I'm going to give you some specific examples. Some of these may or may not resonate with you, but again, I invite you to bring your strategies, to bring your, what's actually happening in your coaching world and apply them to the examples I'm going to give you, right? So let's just say you're marketing like a webinar or masterclass and you're doing it on social media and with emails.

Here's what I hear often from my clients when they're doing something like this, right? They'll tell me, okay, I ran a webinar and no one came and so I'm just going to never do that again and I hate webinars and I'm done. It's dramatic, but sometimes that's exactly what it sounds like. And I'm like, okay, okay, okay, hold on. Let's be a scientist, right? Let's get more information. That is not nearly enough information to make any kind of conclusion because here are some different things that could be happening.

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Scenario one would be they have tons of people register for the masterclass, and then no one shows up. We're going to make a hypothesis about why this happens. What I think when I hear that is the topic was great. If you had a bunch of people register, amazing, the topic was great. No one shows up, could mean a few things. It could mean it wasn't urgent enough. You didn't create, you didn't let them know why it was urgent, why it was important for them to come. Or you stressed too much that there would be replays. You said that over and over and over just to like, you know, let them off the hook kind of. Sometimes that's what my clients tell me. And so of course, they were like, oh, it's not that important. I can catch the replay later. Or you didn't send any reminders. Sometimes that's something I discover. And I'm like, okay, hold on. Right?

Can you see how if that's what happened, if I'm like digging in and I'm helping them look through each part of the process, and I find out 50 people registered and they marketed it for a whole week over email and over social media and then they didn't send one reminder email, not the week of, not the day of. No one could probably find the link. Everybody forgot about it. What if that was the only problem? And all you have to do in order to host another one and make it more successful is to solve that one thing. That's way different than nobody wants this. Everybody hates what I do. You know, I'm never doing a webinar again. They're terrible. Whatever.

Now, let's look at scenario two, right? Same situation. You market it. A bunch of people show up, all 50. That's rare. That would be actually insane if all 50 out of 50 registrants showed up, just so you know. That's never a thing. I always assume that maybe like 50%, depending on how big your list is, how cold your audience is, that percentage can go down. The colder the traffic is coming into it. Like if you're running ads, that's going to be a lot lower. But let's say, just for fun, all 50 people show up and not one person buys whatever it is you're selling at the end. Well, okay, let's be a scientist. I'm going to start asking questions, right? Tell me about what happened. And you're like, oh, everyone came. It was great. And then I'm like, okay, tell me about how you sold the thing. Often what I hear is like, well, I just

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kind of said at the end, and this is the work I do with my clients and let me know if you want to do that work and then I kind of got off because I was scared. Some form of that, right? So common, by the way. If this is you, don't worry. You're going to hear yourself I'm sure in some of these scenarios and I just really need you to know that they're all quite common.

Can you see how in that situation, all you have to do is solve that problem, right? The hypothesis is either, there could be a few actually. There could be, if I hear those exact words that I just said, my hypothesis would be they were just waiting for you to sell them something and you just didn't. That's all. So like, let's do it again and be more clear about what the offer is and why they should buy it and why that's actually part of the webinar, why they should join, right? But there could be another one where, you know, if I ask questions and you're like, all 50 people came, but then five, 10 minutes in, people start dropping off, and then along the way, like people keep dropping off, keep dropping off.

That's maybe a different problem, right? That's maybe like the content you're delivering didn't match what you told them, or there's something about your delivery that wasn't good. Your energy was really low. It wasn't engaging, something like that. Or even the opposite of the very first one, you just went straight to the selling, gave no value. That could be a thing. Or you tried to get too vulnerable, like you put people on the spot. They didn't like that. So there could be lots of ways to problem solve. But, you know, if I'm your coach and I'm asking you these questions, we're going to figure out. It's like, ooh, here's what I think sounds like the most likely. And you can do this with yourself too, right?

Okay, let's go to another example. Let's think about social media engagement. This is something that comes up all the time for my clients and they make it mean all the different things. I'm going to give you two scenarios. Scenario one, you post all the time, you have 0 engagement, no new follows, no likes, no comments. Maybe your mom hearts it every once in a while and that's about it. That's pretty dramatic, but that's a thing for some people. We're going to make a hypothesis, right? Like there's

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something about the content that isn't resonating with your audience or maybe you have like five followers and none of them are your ideal client. And so it's not resonating for good reason. Not because it maybe bad content, but because it's not for them.

Or you had social media before you started your business and now you run a business and you are posting a lot of business things, but everyone that maybe follows you or follows your account is, you know, friends and family from your pre business life. And it just hasn't, it takes a while to have the churn of like some of those people will leave. Some will stay. They'll love watching what you're doing. But what you're really looking to do if you're using it for your business is really you want your followers to be more of your ideal people, right? So then that's a specific problem to solve, any of those things.

Okay, let's look at a scenario two, which would be you have tons of engagement, so much engagement. You're like an influencer. You have lots of followers, you have all the likes, you have comments, you have just everything. And it's so fun. There's so much energy and not one person is buying. You have no clients. So we would ask some questions, but what we would look at is like, okay, what is preventing them from saying, oh, I want that. There could be multiple things. It could be you're not actually selling anything. Maybe you're really good at creating reels and videos and content or, you know, on other platforms like LinkedIn, right?

Maybe you're really good at building engaging newsletters or, you know, on a different platform, maybe you're really good at posting funny memes or, you know, something like that. But at no point are you saying and here's why you should work with me or giving them an opportunity to actually come interact with you to see if what you're offering is what they want. Or you're posting a lot of content that really has nothing to do with your coaching.

I've had clients like this before where I'll go look at their social media. They'll ask me to. I'll go look and I'm like, I don't even know what you, I

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mean, I know what you do because you I'm your coach and you told me, but looking at your account, I have absolutely no idea what you do except like post funny things or post a lot of maybe political content or, you know, something that's just like taking a lot of attention away from what you do. Maybe if I keep scrolling, like one0 posts in, I'll see, oh, like here, this mention something about an offer or something about the coaching work you do. Hopefully, you can hear as I talk through those examples, how they're all really different, right? And there's different ways to solve them depending on what is actually happening and what the actual data is telling you.

Now I'll give you a third example which is actually from my Reimagine launch where I launched Reimagine, I actually launched it twice and only a couple people signed up, a few people signed up. And I could have looked at the data. If I only looked at the sales data, I could have concluded, oh, this offer is bad, nobody wants this, nobody cares, right? It could have made it mean a bunch of different things. But in general, I could have just decided the offer is bad, like let's just cancel it.

But instead, when I looked at my email data, and I've had an email list now for years, so I kind of know what my average open rates are, what my average click rates are. And when I looked at this data, what I saw was that my open rates were very high and my click rates were very low. And so I was like, okay, that's interesting. And then I looked at the ones that did have higher click rates or that did have, you know, that had really high open rates. And I just made a hypothesis. I was like, what do I think is going on? And what I know is like, okay, people are very engaged with this offer, they're just not buying it. What does that mean?

Now what I decided to do, which this sometimes can work, sometimes not, depending on what data it is that you're measuring and how long you've been doing this. But what I decided to do, which I talk a ton about in the previous podcast, is send an email and just ask them. After the launch was over, right? I completed the launch and I just decided I don't know exactly what it is because the data was very interesting. It was like, ooh, this is a

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trend I don't usually see. Normally in a launch, what I'll see is high open rates at the beginning, maybe sometimes they stay high for a little bit, and then a significant drop off. And then maybe there'll be some spikes, but then a drop off. And I just know, and like at that point, usually then people are buying or opting out. And when I say opting out, I just mean they're deciding this offer is not for me.

So when they know that that's what the email is about, they either unsubscribe from that specific list because I usually give that option or they just stop reading the emails. That's pretty normal, but that happens for most people, right? That's like kind of what a normal, your average launch would look like. People are opting in or opting out. And you're hoping that enough people opt in and of course, people are going to opt out. That's always a thing.

But this was weird, right? It was like they were opting in to reading every email, but they weren't opting in to the offer. So I decided to just ask them. And then I got very specific answers and I solved it. And think about if I just stuck with my, if I hadn't dug into any of that data and I had only looked at the sales, I could have stayed with just like, okay, scrap it all, move on. Terrible offer. Nobody wants this. Everybody hates me or hates this offer or whatever.

So those were some examples. I want to give you just some important things to consider as you're thinking through this for yourself. I want you to consider you don't want to become a metrics robot, right? It does have very useful information, but you want to balance it with what you know and with your intuition, with your intelligence, with what your gut is telling you. With like, is it trending in the right direction? If so, maybe you don't necessarily need to dig into all the data. Also, I think timing matters. I'm not suggesting that you obsess over any data ever, especially daily or all the time. But also, if you never look at it, like don't go six months without taking it into consideration somehow, right?

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The next thing is I give you full permission to skip something that really activates you. So one thing my clients will often say, especially when they have a newer email list is sometimes they'll tell me, I don't even like going in to send an email because I have to see the unsubscribes and that just has me spiraling and then I can't send the email and I'm like freaking out about that. And I'm like looking at who's unsubscribing and making up stories about why. If that is you, just don't look at the unsubscribes for now at least. They really truly don't matter. Unless, the only time I'm actually looking at unsubscribes seriously.

You didn't hear me say that, right? When I said like, when I mentioned the open rates and the click rates, I said nothing about unsubscribes. I actually have no idea how many people unsubscribed. The only time I look at them is when something really weird is happening and we notice like a stark drop off in numbers because unsubscribes can be like, ooh, something weird has happened. Like something has actually gone wrong. And sometimes that's okay, right? Sometimes you might know you're saying something that's going to like be a little divisive on your list and that's fine. But when you don't mean to and you see it happening, it can be good to just be like, oh, I wonder what's happening here. But as you're like learning to grow your list, I actually think unsubscribes are pretty inconsequential and don't matter at all.

Especially if you think about in the beginning, and this was true for me, when I first had an email list, my like top subscriber and the person that opened all my emails was my mom. She's clearly not my ideal client. I would not let her hire me as her coach, and even if she wanted to, I would have helped her find another coach. And often, that is what your list looks like in the beginning. So if that's you and your like friends from high school and college and your family and whoever, they're all leaving your list, that's actually in the long run a really good thing. You don't want them on your list, really. Unless they're your ideal clients, right? That's different.

And when things are just going really well, sometimes if you don't like looking at the data, just skip it and enjoy. Like just be in the flow of the

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business and just enjoy it. Don't worry about the data. All right, so let's dig into the next part, which is we've identified, right? We put on our science hat and identified maybe, we've made some hypothesis, identified maybe what's going wrong. Now, this is the part where you finish your launch or your sales process with some small problem solving along the way and you wait for the major problem solving until after. What I mean by finish a launch or your sales process is go all the way through your planned timeline without making huge changes.

And when I say huge changes, I mean like changes to your offer, giving up entirely, you know, changing your price, like things like that that are quick reactions to what you are afraid is wrong versus looking at the actual data. What I don't mean is like, oh, let's add in an extra launch event or a Q&A or start offering some consults or sales calls if things aren't going how you want them to go. Like those are all great. Those are like problem solving along the way, making small tweaks, very different than like completely giving up or changing your offer.

Implement your full plan as you intended, right? Don't start drastically discounting or dropping the price or, you know, panicking after the first couple days when you're thinking it's not working. And stay engaged as engaged as possible with what's happening, watching, right? Is it working? What's not, what is resonating? What's not resonating? How can I lean on what is resonating even more? What questions do people have? Right? Like that's a way to stay actively engaged without making all the huge changes and or changing course midstream.

And here's why this is important. Usually when you're making those big mid launch changes, it's coming from emotion, not strategy, right? It's coming from fear, it's coming from like those stories you're telling yourself, not actual strategy and data. You also need complete data to make good decisions. Remember I told you I worked in labs. Like imagine if you're doing, even if you've never been in a scientific lab, that's okay. If you are doing some sort of experiment, let's say it's like a biology lab or a chemistry lab. And you're like mixing actual things and taking it all the way through to

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the end to see what happens, right? And you have chemicals and all the things.

You can't stop halfway through and assume you know what's happening. That would be the worst experiment ever. No one would ever publish this, right? Your peers would all hate it. No peer reviews on your study. This is the same thing. You have to go all the way through in order to have a complete data set so that you can make really good and clear decisions from it.

Also, if you're constantly making changes, like I said earlier, it's going to just confuse your audience and decrease the chance that they're going to buy, which will then just pile on to why it's not working and you're making up things instead of really why it's not working is just sometimes because you made a bunch of changes. You also can't know if it works if you never fully test it. If you never get to the end of the experiment, you'll never know what could have happened. If you've ever been in a chemistry lab, one thing you might know is that sometimes the reactions take a while, right? So you might mix up some stuff, you might be like waiting to see what happens and you're like, oh, nothing.

But you also know like, oh, I said I was going to wait 10 minutes or, you know, whatever. And maybe at nine minutes and 30 seconds, the whole thing explodes or like foams out of the the beaker or, you know, something big happens. That can also happen in launches. I promise you I've seen it before.

And now is the time I'm going to make a quick plug for if you are a coach that doesn't operate like this, like in launches and traditional launches, open and close, that you might consider picking specific time frames to measure so that you can do the things I'm talking about. If you're just like selling one-on-one coaching and you have kind of a sales process that you're just doing over and over and over, doesn't mean that you're not going to keep going maybe after the time frame, but just picking out a specific time frame to measure will be super useful. Maybe it's 30 days.

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Maybe it's 90 days depending on what you're doing. But you want to set clear goals in that time frame and make them something that isn't just like get clients, right? Depending on where you are in your business, maybe those goals look like growing your email list by X amount or increasing comments on social posts or growing your following or booking five discovery calls, right? Like something very specific that allows you to problem solve in a much better way than just did I sign clients?

Having specific goals lets you problem solve specific things, just like having a specific time frame will help you with your measurements, with your data, because you can stop and say like, okay, even if you're going to continue selling after this month, you're going to look at how what was I doing? Did it work? Did I hit the goals? If not, why not? Let's make some hypothesis and then you can shift. But if you just keep going, going, going forever, then you're just like shifting all willy nilly or never shifting. You just keep going. I sometimes hear this from coaches where it's like, I'm like, wait, you've been doing the same thing for how long without making changes? Of course, that feels terrible. Of course, you're bored if you're not creating results.

And I want to recognize also that I'm sure there could be some resistance coming up for you. It is so tempting to make changes when things aren't working immediately. And sometimes, again, some small tweaks can be great. It's those bigger changes is what you want to avoid. Also consider that when you're scared, when you're when there's so much fear and you're like, it's not working, it will make you want to try everything at once because it will be screaming in the back of your mind. This is a big problem. Solve it immediately. Throw everything at it, or the opposite. It'll make you like shut down.

And when you make a bunch of changes, of course, it's tempting to do that because it'll help you feel like you're doing something. Instead, here's what I recommend. As you're going along, take notes as you go. When you notice something didn't work, take a note of it. You don't have to change it, you don't have to start over, you don't have to like panic. But just take a note. For example, if you're in a launch, I have a client doing this right now

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where she's in a launch and she just told me the other day, she's like, okay, what I'm realizing is that I didn't start this soon enough and I wish I would have written my emails ahead of time because I don't like writing them in the moment when it feels like something's not working and then I get flustered and then it's a lot harder to write the emails. We can't rewind the launch. We can't go back. We can't pause it and write all the emails and then pick it back up. I mean, I guess you could. I wouldn't recommend it. There are other ways to problem solve in that time. But she also I was like, just put it on your list, right? Like write it down and forget about it. But we'll come back to it next time. But for now, just write it down and we're going to keep going.

Also, trust your original plan long enough to get real data. Again, with some small tweaks, that's fine. With some, like you can add things in, you can, you know, offer if people have questions, like okay, do a Q&A session, offer some consults. If messaging isn't resonating, think, how can I, what haven't I said? How can I tweak this slightly? If no one's opening your emails at all, great, change your, like literally if no one's opening them. First, you want to check if they're being delivered. But then also consider changing your subject, right? Sometimes just shifting that, like one small thing. Of course, that problem solving, you're going to do along the way. Just not the big stopping, shifting your offer, all of that.

Also remember, disappointing results are still such useful information. I promise you. And you're going to be disappointed either way. If you go all the way through the plan and it doesn't work, yes, you might be disappointed. You might be devastated. But also, if you quit halfway through, you're probably still going to be disappointed, right? You might still be devastated. It's not that different. And sometimes, I will acknowledge, sometimes the data can seem confusing. And here's what I'll offer in those cases without knowing exactly what it would be in your situation.

Data always gives you something, even if it's not immediately clear what that is. But you can always still take your best guess and kind of treat it like a puzzle to solve. Right? You don't have to have perfect clarity to take the

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next step. You can still come up with some hypothesis. You can make some guesses and just test out one at a time. Sometimes just doing that part and testing your guesses and being willing to stick with it, that can create the biggest breakthrough that you've ever had. I experienced that in some ways in my last Reimagine launch, the thing I'm talking about right now.

Okay, I know this is a long one, but I hope it was super helpful. Here are just some key takeaways. First, stories about why things aren't working are usually wrong and almost always not helpful. Data helps you form hypothesis about where the actual breakdown is happening. You can test specific theories, but you can't solve vague stories about yourself. Always finish what you start before making huge changes. And data is just research material, not something to obsess over, not something to like lose your humanness to, right? Because that will also, of course, affect the way you show up.

I hope this was helpful. In the next episode, I'm going to be, in the last parts of this launch series, I'm going to be talking about how to, like when you see, okay, the launch has ended, it didn't go as you wanted, you see some big changes, you're facing some big decisions. We're going to talk about how to face those and how to make them without freezing or without endless deliberation or without just doing something totally crazy, right? Like making sure it makes sense for you and for your business. And we will talk about moving from data to action, like what to do with it now that you've analyzed it and how to feel confident about it.

And if you love this, if you love the way that I talk about this and talk about the data and talk about how to set specific goals, how to figure out within those goals like where's the breakdown, you're going to really like my upcoming new offer, which is a membership that I cannot wait to tell you all about. There's no link to click yet. There's no anything. I just want you to know that this is part of what's coming.

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And if you're a more seasoned coach and this also felt very helpful, consider joining the next round of Reimagine. I assume when this podcast comes out, it's probably full, but we will have a wait list and you can get on it if you really like the way that I talk through this and you're like, I want some of that. I want your eyes on what I'm doing. All right, thank you so much for being here and I will see you again 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 lindsaydotzlafcoaching.com. That's Lindsay with an A, D-O-T-Z-L-A-F.com. See you next week.