

## Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Lindsay Dotzlaf**

## Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)

Hey, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills* episode 258.

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 so happy you are here today as always. And today is part 3 of our 3-part series on the biggest lessons from my recent launch and the pivot. And today we're going to talk about all of the decision-making pieces, kind of how to make the decisions and move forward once you have decided that something has gone wrong and you want to make a pivot.

So if you haven't listened, it's okay. You can listen to this as a standalone episode, but I do encourage you to go back and listen to the previous episodes where I go through each step of this process because this is the final piece in the launch series.

Before we dive in, I want to acknowledge something that I don't think many of you think about often enough: newer coaches, sometimes even seasoned coaches. And this is not a judgment. I want to be clear. It's just an acknowledgment from coaching so many coaches that I just hear this over and over, and I just feel like it's really important to say, running a business is a constant cycle of making educated guesses, testing those guesses, implementing your new strategy, deciding what works and what doesn't, evaluating, and then doing it all over again.

And no matter where you are in your business, this is true. You might have more information as you grow your business and you have more data, right? More data to say is this working, is it not? Are people liking this? Are they not? But no matter the stage of your business, this is always the process. And it seems to me like a lot of you are very confused by that often. You think you're just going to pick something and once you find the thing that works, it's just going to work forever. And that's just not true,

## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

unfortunately. That would make it so much easier. It's just not about finding one right answer and then you're done.

What I would suggest is that you find a way to get comfortable in the ongoing process of strategic guessing and adjusting and evaluating and doing it all over again. And that's exactly what decision-making is in business. You're never going to have perfect information. You're always working with incomplete data, right? Especially because you're making decisions looking forward, you don't know exactly the outcome. So you're always guessing, and hopefully, those guesses are educated guesses, right?

So you're always working with incomplete data. You're making your best guess. You're testing it, and then you're making the next decision based on what you learn. And the faster you can do that process, the faster you're going to learn, the faster you're going to create the results you want to create.

So today, I'm going to talk about how to actually make those decisions and move forward, even when you feel like you don't have all the answers, because you probably don't. Because the coaches who honestly succeed aren't the ones who wait for certainty. Unfortunately, that's really not how it works. They're the ones who get good at this cycle, right? Of decide, test, learn, evaluate, adjust, repeat. The previous episodes covered building honest relationships with yourself and your audience and becoming a scientist with your business data.

So if you didn't listen to those, the last two episodes, go back and listen. Or maybe the last three because the very first one was me talking about a failed launch that I had and really giving you a behind-the-scenes look on what I did to go from a failed launch to just filling all the spots and moving on in the best way.

## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

And today we're going to talk about from those last two episodes, what I did with all that data. How I actually made the decisions and kept moving forward. Let's dig in.

First, let's talk about the strategic questions that will actually help you move forward. Here's where so many coaches get stuck. When they are trying to make decisions, they're asking, you might be asking fear-based questions that kind of keep you frozen or paralyzed or taking a lot of time to move forward. Often, it's because you're waiting for certainty that unfortunately is just not there. It's never going to come. And you're confusing more information with better decisions. Like if you just had one more piece of data or if you just decided this one thing, like your price is wrong, or if you had one more opinion from someone else or one more sign from the universe, then you could decide and make a clear decision.

But again, that's just not how it works. So I want to give you some examples of some fear-based questions versus strategic questions. So fear-based questions sound like, and these probably sound familiar, I know they do to me, "What if it fails?" "What will people think?" "Am I even smart enough to do this?" "What if I make the wrong choice?"

Notice how none of these questions actually help you move forward. Right, they just kind of spiral you. They can spiral you into deeper uncertainty. Now, you can start to take guesses, like start to answer them, and that is more helpful than just staying stuck in the questions. What if it fails? Okay, what if it fails? What are you going to do? Or am I smart enough to do this? Are you? You can answer those.

But I want to offer something different. What about strategic questions? They're completely different. They focus on reality and constraints. They also focus on your values and specific outcomes and help you access what you can actually control versus what you can't.

So let me give you some examples of some specific strategic questions that I asked myself while undergoing the Reimagine pivot, when I decided

## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

to completely change the pricing and the positioning after not just one, but two failed launches. Here are some of the things that I asked myself: What does the overhead of this offer actually require? Or what does my business require from this?

And my answer for that question was strategically, overhead is quite low because it's mostly my time. I'm the one delivering most of the Re-imagine content, almost always. So besides all the costs of running my normal business, there are not a lot of costs associated otherwise. Mostly by that, I mean there's no live event. That's a huge cost when it comes to something like this. If you have a live event with your offer, that can add quite a bit of cost in general.

The next question is, what matters more? The money I make or the impact I have? And honestly, to me, both matter. This is not about not making money. I have a business to run, but in this specific situation, if I could make the money that I need to make in order to run my business, would I rather serve a lot more coaches who really want this support? My next question was, what price would be a no-brainer for coaches ready for this support? So when I thought about my ideal clients and what they would invest, five thousand dollars felt like a clear answer. It felt like a steal. Of course they would be in immediately, was my thought.

And then I thought about, okay, well if that's the price, five thousand dollars, does that times 12 spots, does that bring in the revenue that I need to run my business? And even if I offer payments or whatever, like if there are these other options, does that still work for me?

And just notice what these questions did, right? These aren't the right questions. They're just very different than the fear-based questions. They help me see options instead of just yes or no or instead of spiraling me more into fear or into am I enough? They really connected to my values of simplicity and impact, and they gave me something concrete to evaluate.

## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

So let's think about for a second, creating your own strategic questions for your business. How do you create strategic questions for your specific decisions? Let's think about constraints. What are the actual requirements? What are my real limitations? So for example, how much time or money do I actually need to make this work? Now, that's different than what do I want, right? You can ask that too and that's amazing. But I think it's so good to just know what do I need? What does my business require?

Also, dive into your values. What matters most to you in this situation? Would you rather serve fewer people at a higher investment or more people at a lower investment? And you can bring whatever your values are. You can find questions that will bring those into play when you're making these decisions.

Then you can ask about reality. What do you think would make this work for everyone involved? What would my ideal clients need in order to say hell yes to this? And then think about specifics. What exact outcome are you trying to create? What does success look like in 3 months from now, maybe 1 month from now, 6 months from now, 12 months from now, whatever the timeline is?

The key here is that strategic questions move you towards action and clarity, but those fear-based questions kind of keep you stuck in the same place, asking the same questions that you're worried about over and over and over.

And next, I'm going to tell you about something that I don't think many coaches talk about, or if they do, I haven't heard it. And that's a backup plan strategy. And I know that in coaching, sometimes there can be this idea of, "Oh, I can't even think about a backup plan because obviously, my biggest goal here is just to believe it's going to work." And I think that is a powerful tool. If you can believe it's going to work, amazing.

What I have found over the years of running my business is that I personally do much better when I have at least the outline of a backup

## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

plan. I'll tell you what I mean specifically by this, but I think I want to say before I do that, that this is the part where you just have to kind of know yourself, right? This is the part where you're like, "Am I the coach who can just go 100% towards my dreams and believe in them no matter what, even when it's not working, and I'm going to feel great about it, truly great in a way that I keep moving forward? Or am I the person that just needs to plan a little bit just in case?" And over the years, I've learned I'm the person who needs to just plan a little bit. Not to have a fully developed plan or to spend much time on it, but to just have a couple things sitting on the shelf just in case this thing I'm about to do doesn't work.

Because if you think back to what I said in the beginning, right, where it's like so much of what we're doing is guessing. And hopefully, your guess is as educated as possible or as rooted in reality and your specific results as possible. But sometimes that's just not the case, and that's okay.

Most coaches think, in my experience, "I need to make the right decisions." But what I would put forward to you is that a better approach is, "I need to make a decision that I feel good about and know what I'll do if it doesn't work."

Here's why backup plans matter, at least for me. They help me move out of the mindset of, "This has to work or else," which for me creates tons of pressure. Right? If it's the only option and it must work, now there's a lot of pressure on it to perform. It also kind of shows me I'm committed to problem-solving, not to one specific outcome. Right? I'm more committed to the problem-solving than to one specific outcome. And honestly, it makes me so much braver with whatever decision I make.

And all of these are true for you too. When you know you have other options, you won't be as frozen by the fear of making the one wrong move because you can commit fully to option A, knowing that in the background, you have options B and C and they're sitting there waiting for you if you need them. They may not be fully planned out, but they're just kind of sitting on the shelf. They're there.



## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

So here's how I approach my backup plan. And I want to be really clear about this. I do not spend much time thinking about it. But I do spend a short amount of time like, okay, I just made this whole plan. It feels amazing. In this moment, I feel really excited about it. But what if it doesn't work? What am I going to do? Because just in case I get into the plan and it starts not working, of course the first question that's going to come to my mind is, "Oh my gosh, what if this doesn't work?" The backup plan is there and just kind of gives me some answers to that. Very specifically, what I do is I come up with 2 to 3 options, and then I put them on what I call the shelf.

If you worked with me, you know I'm talking about where I'm like, "Put the thing on the shelf, right? Think about it, make your decisions, whatever you need to do, and then put it on the shelf. You can always come back to it later." Then you just know the options are there when you need them. You don't have to obsess over them. You don't have to actually think about them at all. You don't have to perfect them. You just know they are sitting on the shelf just in case you need them.

I don't know why it makes me think of this example because I rarely talk about kids on this podcast, but as a mom, when you have younger kids and you have a diaper bag or a bag or a purse with a bunch of backup stuff in it, it's like you don't want to have 12 diapers, right? But you never know, like just in case. Maybe 12 is an exaggeration, but hopefully you probably have 2 or 3 in there, depending on how long you're gone from your house. You don't want to have to use them. You're not even thinking about it. You're not thinking every second, "Oh no, what if I need the extra diaper?" But they're just there. So when the emergency happens, you have the diaper.

I could tell so many stories about my kids that make me laugh thinking of this specific example, but I'm not going to because now they are much older and they would be mortified. Let's just say one of the stories has to do with my daughter in a wrap, like on my chest. She's in a wrap. She's maybe 4 months old. We're in Target, and she has an explosive situation, and it's all over the front of me, up my neck, all the things. Just imagine the worst. And I had no backup diaper. No joke. And just imagine what you do in that



## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

situation. Wouldn't it have been great if I had a backup diaper, right? That's what this is like. And you don't judge yourself for it. It's just like, this is here, just in case. Why wouldn't I bring one? A backup plan can be great sometimes.

So here are some quick examples of backup plans I considered when I decided to pivot and I decided to change the price and the positioning. Here are my thoughts: what will I do if this doesn't work? If still no one wants it? So first of all, before I give you the options, what I will say is that I felt like I had enough information at this point that I felt very confident in my decision to pivot. I also felt very confident if this doesn't work at all, right, like if no one takes me up on this, then something else, I need a new solution. Like I was wrong about my guess about what was going on. Luckily, in this case, it turned out I was right, and it worked.

But there's always the option that I'm not right and that maybe there's something wrong with the offer. It's not right for my audience. It's unclear about what people are getting or what results they'll create. There are lots of options besides just my solutions, but I was just going all in on them. But I did have these other options. So option 1 was just to sell some one-on-one coaching spots. I very rarely sell one-on-one coaching, but usually when I do, they sell very quickly because it's not a thing I do often.

Option 2, I would run a group offer that I've had success with before. So for example, Business Pods, if you remember me mentioning those, or if you were involved in those, they were so amazing. So basically, a proven program or offer that I know will work. I'll go back to one of those. I didn't love that option, honestly, because the upcoming membership is going to have a lot of the features that business pods had. So that felt like a conflict kind of. And then option 3 was launch a new offer I've been considering for a while, but I haven't had time to really launch. And it was one of those, okay, I don't know if that's the best option, but could I just do a quick turnaround?

## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

And what made me choose these options, they were either all things I've done before or knew I could deliver. Each would create the revenue that I would need, even if it wasn't my perfect business ideal scenario. I knew I would love delivering them. So there was no problem there. It's not like I was painting a picture where it was like, oh, there are these backup options that I hate. I loved all of them. They all would be delightful. And having them ready meant I wasn't betting everything on the outcome of my launch, right? Of the pivot. If the pivot didn't work, I could move quickly into any of these options.

So let's think about creating your own backup options. Here's how to think about it. Keep them simple. That's the biggest thing. 2 to 3 options max. And if you can, make them things you know you can deliver. And if revenue is the goal, make sure they're revenue-generating. And you don't need detailed plans. You just need a rough direction. Just enough to put it in a little box and put it on the shelf.

So if a launch doesn't work, maybe think of a smaller offer, a different format, a direct outreach, some kind of different marketing. If a new offer totally flops and you feel like you've given it your all, try to go back to a proven offer, something that's worked over and over. Maybe try different positioning. Or pause and regroup. That's always an option if it's available to you.

If a pivot fails or if something new fails, just return to a previous model or try a hybrid approach. How can you take what was working before and combine it with what you want to do now and make a hybrid that your clients will understand? And maybe consider testing with a smaller group first.

And I want to be really clear. This isn't planning for failure. That's not how I think about it at all. It's not like, ooh, I know this isn't going to work so I'm going to have a backup offer and then I'm going to go to that. It's very strategic thinking that helps you be bold with your decision. Right? Whatever you decide to do, knowing that you have these other diapers in

## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

the diaper bag, right? Knowing that you have options will allow you to be braver with what you're going to do.

And how do you know when you have enough information to actually make the decision? So you've asked the strategic questions, you see your clear next move. You have 2 to 3 backup options sketched out just in case, if that's for you. You don't need to be 10 steps ahead. You just need to know the next right move for you. Just the next move. And you have a sense of what you're going to do if it doesn't work. This will help you shift from, I need more information to, I have enough to take the next step, right? Just the next move.

Now, let's talk about how to move once you have that clarity because my recommendation is that you move a little fast, which might sound counterintuitive to what you usually hear me say. But I do think there's something important here where it's like you can't linger in the drama of it all. Because here's the thing, overthinking rarely improves the decision once you've already made it or you're already have clarity. Momentum is what will help you create that confidence. The act of moving forward makes you feel more confident, not the other way around. Fast action will give you real market feedback faster, and staying in decision mode for too long will truly drain your energy. I know so many coaches who are like, "Oh, I feel like I'm burnt out." And I'm like, "From what?" You're not really doing a lot, I'm going to say in quotes, as in on the outside, I don't see a lot going on. Why are you burnt out? Why are you exhausted? Usually it's from that mental energy and overthinking.

So for clarity, I'm going to give you kind of a timeline of my pivot because I think it's useful to see how fast I turned it around and how fast things can move when you are ready. And this might require you to go back and listen to some of the past couple episodes because then you'll have all the information about what I'm about to say, but either way, I think you'll understand. So basically, I had a 48-hour pivot and turnaround. So I had a failed launch and then I had another failed launch. And then I was really trying to figure out, okay, what's going on here? It doesn't make sense. So

## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

on Tuesday, I sent an email, basically asking for feedback, right? For people that had clicked and gone into the sales page and whatever. Tell me everything. Why didn't you join? What's holding you back? And I got tons of feedback.

So that was on Tuesday. Also on Tuesday, I processed all of my disappointment. I cried a lot, which I know you don't want to hear that, most of you. Or maybe you do because you also have experienced this and you just want to know what's normal. But I did, I cried a lot. I was so disappointed. I spent so much time and effort on this launch, multiple times, over months and months to be clear. I mean, I had other things going on at the time. It wasn't like I was just doing that, but just know, months and months, right? Some of you are spending a week on a launch and it's failing and you're like, "I quit." Don't do that. You have to be willing to dig in and say, "Okay, how am I going to turn this around?"

So I processed all the things. I cried, I got a massage. I was having so much back pain, which is what I often experience when I am quite stressed or having a lot of negative emotion. I had a coaching session and I dealt with all my thoughts like everyone hates me, nobody wants this, whatever, all the things I said earlier that's like, these aren't the most useful. They're not useful, but if they're there, you have to process through them. And they can be useful, to be clear, in some ways. They're just not useful when you stay stuck in them cycle after cycle after cycle, over and over and over. So that all happened on Tuesday, and then Wednesday, I made the decision to pivot. I was like, "Okay, here's what we're doing. This feels very clear. Let's do it." Then I spent Wednesday evening and Thursday writing the pivot emails, and by Friday, I launched the new offer. And I started getting applications immediately. I had immediate turnaround, which started to show me, "Okay, I'm on the right track."

But I will say I think what made this possible is I did all of the work. I did the emotional processing. I made sure the data was clear. I looked at it over and over and over. I asked myself those strategic questions to help me see the path forward. I didn't stay stuck in the fear-based questions. I had

## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

backup options if it didn't work, and I was willing, truly willing, to test and adjust and test and adjust.

And I want to be very clear that this doesn't mean I was being reckless. I think some business coaches would have you believe that you're being reckless when you make shifts like this, especially when they're quick. And I will say I have those thoughts sometimes when I hear my clients saying, "I made this change and this change and this change." It's like change after change after change. When I hear that, my thought is like, "Oh, your clients aren't even keeping up. They don't even know what you're offering right now." But when you're willing to really stick with it and stay in it, it's not reckless. You have all of the information. You've done all of the work, right? You process the emotions, you analyze the data, you ask strategic questions, and have some backup options just sitting on the shelf. It's not about making random changes quickly or just throwing spaghetti at the wall. It's about once you have the clarity that you think you might have, you just have to trust it and move forward.

And after you make that decision, let's talk about what happens. How do you take action? So first of all, I just want to say you have to give it time to show results. Don't panic after day one. I know that I've said a couple times now, "Oh and then I got immediate applications." That might not be true for you. But also, don't let it go too long without making any shifts. Right? If the data is showing consistently over and over and over, something isn't going right, examine it. Look at the metrics. Look at the metrics you used to make the decision in the first place. Question them. What's next? And be willing to pivot again if you need to without making it mean all the things you can make it mean about yourself. Your first decision does not have to be your forever decision. And if it's not working, you have to go back to the framework that you used. You have to use those backup options if needed, without judgment, while also processing all the disappointment and all the things that are coming up.

In my case, I went from just a handful, a couple clients to full, totally full, which is so fun. I'm so excited for this next group of Re-imagine. But that

## **Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)**

speed and that turnaround time really allowed me to capture the momentum from all the feedback that I received. And if it hadn't worked, yeah, you guessed it, I would have tapped into some of those backup options. Right? This is my business and I'm running it. There's no option to quit. So I have to figure out how's it going to work? What's this going to look like? I have to keep the water on or whatever. Not really, but think about that concept in your business.

So here's what I want you to take away from all of this. Decision-making is a skill that improves with practice. I promise you. The more you make the decisions, the more you trust yourself, and the more you move forward quickly, the easier that will be the next time. Running a business is just a series of decisions and adjustments. The goal isn't perfect decisions. It's being willing to decide and learn from what happens and just keep moving forward. Every decision teaches you something for the next decision.

So let me just leave you with a couple quick questions to think about. What decisions are you avoiding right now? If you think about your business, what decision are you avoiding that might just propel you forward if you made it? Even if it fails, right? That's still propelling you forward. Now you have more information and you can make the next decision. What are the fear-based questions you're asking yourself about the decision? And how could you reframe them into strategic questions like I was talking about earlier? What would your backup plan be? Right? Can you come up with 2 to 3 options like, "Okay, if this thing doesn't work, here's what I'm going to do." And then put it on the shelf so it allows you to move forward more quickly.

And finally, what's one step, just one, not 12, not 17, not 37. What's one step you can take right now, this week to move forward? Or today? What could you do today to move forward in your business if you're feeling a little stuck?

And here's my final thought for you. The coaches who build successful businesses aren't the ones who make perfect decisions. They are the ones,

## Ep #258: How to Pivot & Make Quick Decisions: Launch Secrets (Part 3)

I promise you, that are willing to decide, take action, evaluate, learn, and adjust. Decision-making is a skill that gets easier with practice. And if you want ongoing support applying this framework to your own business and your own decisions, my new membership is coming up very soon. I'm very excited about it. And I'll be talking about all of this within the membership.

If you want this deep dive level of support, you want my eyes on your business, asking you these specific questions about your business, it could be that Re-imagine is the right thing for you. The waitlist is now open. We are officially full. We have been for a while, and we'll put the link for the waitlist in the show notes. Because I already know this next round is going to be incredible, and I'm sad you missed out on it, but you can join in on the next round if you want. But either way, I really, really, really hope this series, this 3-part or 4-part series helped you just understand a little bit about selling coaching and about how to move forward with more confidence in your own business and decision-making.

Thank you so much for listening and I will 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](http://lindsaydotzlafoaching.com). That's Lindsay with an A, D-O-T-Z-L-A-F.com. See you next week.