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Should you build your site on WordPress or Squarespace? Use Thrivecart or Kartra Teachable or Kajabi coaching or courses, Instagram or Tiktok, blog or podcast?

As an entrepreneur, the decisions we have to make can seem endless and if you're not careful, they will keep you stuck in decision making mode where you can't move forward forever. This is episode 115 of the Tiny Course Empire podcast, and today I want to talk to you about how to decide because believe it or not, there are systems for making every decision easier. And I'm going to tell you about some of them today.

Welcome to the Tiny Course Empire podcast, a weekly show dedicated to helping you launch and grow your digital course business even if you don't have a big team or a six figure ads budget, we'll help you design smart systems, take consistent action, and achieve massive success on your own terms. Now here's your host, Cindy Bidar.

Hey, it's Cindy, and thanks for spending a few minutes of your day with me. You'll find the show notes and the recommended resources for this episode at [TinyCourseEmpire.com/115](https://TinyCourseEmpire.com/115).

While you're there, be sure to hit the subscribe button. New episodes drop every Monday morning. And next week we're going to talk about frameworks, what they are, how they can help you create a more cohesive brand, and how they make everything from course creation to marketing your business easier. But that's next week. This week is all about decision making.

Almost every week I get a question from Six-Figure Systems members and from subscribers that all basically ask the same thing. Help me decide between this option or that option. Maybe they can't decide which domain to buy, or which course platform is best, or even what business to start. In fact, you'll find many of the courses inside Six-Figure Systems include decision making matrices for this very reason. It's hard to know which way to go sometimes.

So today I want to give you 6 strategies you can use when you're making a decision, whether that's in business or in life because let's face it, we make plenty of decisions there as well, right? So we're going to start at the top where you're making those big, potentially life changing decisions that affect many different

areas. And we'll work our way down to those small nagging decisions that can seem really important and that can suck up a lot of your time, but really probably aren't that big of a deal at the end of the day.

The first decision making framework I want to offer you is something called lifestyle design. This framework is really best for building a life that is supported by your business rather than a life that fits in around your business activities, if that makes sense. Cal Newport talks about lifestyle centric career planning on his podcast and this works for small business owners too.

The way it works is this. First you decide what you want your life to look like, where you want to live, how much you want to work, how many hours, where you want to work, what your work day looks like, how much money do you want to earn, how much do you want to travel, what do you want to do in your free time, All of those kinds of questions you basically really think long and hard about what you want your day-to-day life to be like. Then you can fit your business decisions into those boxes.

So, for example, if you want to be a nomad or you want to live on a remote horse ranch somewhere, you're probably going to have to limit your live coaching calls, right? Those two things don't really go together.

Likewise, if you want to wear designer clothes and carry Louis Vuitton luggage on those first class trips to Europe, you're probably going to need to sell costlier items than printables on Etsy.

So understanding what you want your lifestyle to be like is a really good decision making tool when it comes to building your business. But it's important that when you're thinking about your lifestyle, you need to be realistic about it as well, right?

So I've always thought that it would be really cool to live off grid in Alaska somewhere, but the reality is I don't like the snow. I can't grow anything but tomatoes and I really, really value the option to adjust the temperature in my house from the app on my phone. Chopping firewood sounds like a whole lot of work and if I'm honest with myself, I would not enjoy that lifestyle. It sounds idyllic. It would not be for me.

So you have to be realistic about what you really want your lifestyle to look like. I'm going to let Cal Newport tell you more about this i will link to a podcast episode in the show notes where he talks about it. It's really, really worth considering when

you're making these big kinds of decisions, like what kind of business do you want? How do you want your business to run how much do you want to work those sorts of things?

The next decision making strategy I want to talk about is around your core values. Now, this strategy is really best for making big decisions as well so it's really not going to help you decide between WordPress and Squarespace, but it is really helpful when deciding, for example, who do you want to work with or how do you want to spend your time.

Examples of core values, and these are my own personal core values are things like adventure, independence, self-improvement, learning, wealth, these types of things. If you've never taken a core values assessment, I'm going to link to one that I particularly like in the show notes. I recommend that you go through that core values assessment and keep a list of your personal core values handy. Then when you're faced with a decision, you can look at it through that filter and see if the decision that you are making it doesn't become much more clear when looked at that way.

An example of how this effects decision making might be, for example, if one of your core values like mine is, is learning. I really enjoy learning new things. I enjoy having a business that stretches my capabilities, that forces me to stay on top of happenings in the online business world, that forces me to stay up to date with what's going on because I really enjoy learning. If you don't enjoy that, then you probably want a business that doesn't require that kind of ongoing education.

Or maybe one of your core values is compassion. So you may want to work with work as a life coach, for example, for people who really need some compassion in their life, maybe they are grieving, maybe they're struggling with something that sounds like something that you would really enjoy if one of your core values is compassion. So take that core values assessment, see where you land on that, see what your core values are, and then the next time you have a big decision to make, you can run it through that filter and see which one is the best option for you.

The third strategy I have for you, I'm calling goal posting. And basically what I mean by that is running your decisions through the lens of your goals where do you want to go? And does this decision take you closer to that goal or not? And this follows really closely behind both lifestyle design and core values, because when you know those two things, it's easier to set goals for yourself and when you know what your goals are, it's easier to make decisions.

So goal posting is really good for you if you are busy and you have a lot of opportunities in your business, a lot of opportunities for projects, a lot of opportunities for growth, for marketing, different things like that.

An example of how you would use this would be one of my goals as an example is to create a resource for new coaches and course creators so that I can help them build their business in the right way. And that's what my Six-Figure Systems program is all about.

So recently I was asked to speak at a summit and the summit is for virtual assistants. Now in the past I would have said yes to this. A speaking opportunity is a speaking opportunity it's a way to get in front of a new audience, but this particular audience is not in total alignment with my audience it's not in total alignment with my goals. So I turned it down.

You need to get clear on your goals, write them down and keep them handy, maybe even in the same document where you're keeping your core values. And then whenever you have an idea or an opportunity comes up that you're considering, ask yourself, will this bring me closer to my goal or will it take me further away or is it just a distraction? If it doesn't take you closer to your goal, then you can say no to it and be at peace with your decision.

The fourth strategy I have for you, I actually heard about first on a productivity podcast and it's called the ICE method. And every letter in the word ICE stands for something and this particular method, it, it appeals to me because it is mathematical in nature, as you will see.

And this one is best for making project decisions, like deciding between writing a book or starting a YouTube channel. It makes the most sense when you're weighing several potential paths, like you're trying to decide which way you want to go on a new business or on a new marketing initiative, and you can't decide which one to prioritize first.

So the way the ICE method works is you rate each of the elements in ICE on a scale of one to five based on how big the impact is, how much confidence you have in your ability to pull the project off, and how easy it will be to do so let me give you an example of this.

Let's say that you want to come up with a new marketing plan for your business and you have brainstormed some ideas and you are thinking I'm going to either

start a YouTube channel, I'm going to write a book, or I'm going to launch an affiliate program.

So you can look at each of these and you can say, OK, if I want to start a YouTube channel, how much impact is that potentially going to be and you rate that impact on a scale of one to five, with five being the most impact and one being the least impact. So you might say a YouTube channel, I'm going to give that a 3 it's going to have a middle of the road impact.

And then you say, OK, how confident am I that I can do this, that I can pull off this project and it's a whole new thing so maybe a YouTube channel I'm I'm going to give that a 2 in terms of confidence.

And then the last thing you ask yourself is how easy is this going to be to do? One is not easy at all, and five is the easiest thing you can imagine and starting a YouTube channel, it's a little complicated there's all kinds of new skills you need to learn, new equipment you need to master. So I'm going to give that one a 2 as well. \

So you've got a three for impact, a 2 for confidence, and a 2 for ease. And then you take those numbers and you multiply them together 3 times 2 is 6 times 2 is 12 so start a YouTube channel has a score of 12 according to this ice scoring model.

Then you do the same thing for your other choices. You say, OK, well I'm going to maybe I'll write a book. What impact would a book have? I'm going to give that one a 2. How confident am I that I can write a book? I'm pretty darn confident I can write a book I'm going to give that one a 5. How easy will it be to write a book? Yeah, not easy, not hard I'll give it a three.

So you can multiply those three things together 2 times 5 is 10 times 3 is 30. So start a YouTube channel got a score of 12 and Write a book Got a score of 30.

Now we look at start an affiliate program. How big of an impact could this have potentially a pretty big impact if I can attract the right affiliates so I'm going to give that one a 4. How confident am I that I can start an affiliate program pretty darn confident I'm going to give that one a four as well. How easy will it be to do? Super easy I'll give it a 5.

Then we multiply those things together 4 times 4 is 16 times 5 is 16 times 5 is 50 and 30 is 80 so 16 times 5 is 80 I had to do complicated math there in my head that was scary.

So start a YouTube channel, got a score of 12. Write a book, got a score of 30 and start an affiliate program got a score of 80. So looking at my choices here, I want to pick the one that has the highest score because that's going to give me the most impact with the least amount of effort. So based on this ice scoring model, I would choose to start an affiliate program first. Then maybe I would write a book and I would move start a YouTube channel to the bottom of my list.

So that's a simplification of how you can use this ice scoring model to make a decision in your business this, like I said, is particularly useful if you have several potential paths that you are trying to decide between.

The next strategy I want to talk about is the 80/20 strategy this is known as the Pareto principle and that states that for any given outcome, 80 % of your results come from 20 % of your efforts.

Thinking about your projects and your potential plans and your decision making, this is best for deciding really if it's time to just let something go. So what the Pareto principle means is that, say, for example, 80 % of your new customers most likely come from 20 % of your marketing efforts. And the reverse can also be true.

You can find yourself spending 80 % of your time on things that only result in 20 % of your income or your traffic or your new clients or whatever else you're measuring.

So being able to see that is the benefit of using the 80/20 rule so let's look at an example.

Let's say that you've built up a YouTube channel over the past three years, and you know that for every 10 new clients you book to your coaching program, one or two of them have found you on YouTube, but you're spending 30 hours a week on it. In other words, it's 80 % of your work time, 80 % of your efforts, and only 20 % of your results.

So if you are looking at what can you cut, what can you get rid of, I would be taking a hard look at that YouTube channel because what else could you be doing with that 30 hours of time that you are currently spending to book two clients? Maybe you could be doing more of what's bringing in the other eight clients That would be a better use of your time i think.

Then the last strategy I have for you is going to sound pretty flippant, but stick with me here it is just to flip a coin. And seriously, I want you to and want you to really

consider this because this one is really good for making inconsequential decisions that feel so, so important in the moment.

Should I build my side on WordPress or Squarespace? I don't know. Flip a coin. Should I choose convert kit or mailer light? They're both the same. Flip a coin. Should I use this logo or that logo? Flip a coin and move on.

Don't let these minor decisions suck up your brain power. None of them are written in stone they can all be easily changed later if you find out that you made the wrong choice or are you just not happy with that logo down the road? You can change it.

For now, flip a coin and get going. That is far more important than sitting and stewing in these decisions that are inconsequential for days or weeks or months at a time.

Now, I would love to hear from you. Click over to [TinyCourseEmpire.com/115](https://TinyCourseEmpire.com/115) and leave me a comment and let me know what decision making frameworks do you use? Are they different from the ones that I have outlined here? How have they helped you move forward more quickly and OK, let's call it decisively, have they helped you at all? Do you have other ones? I'd love to hear

And could you do me a favor? If you're enjoying the show, would you pop over to Apple Podcasts or wherever you happen to be listening and leave me a rating and review? That helps the algorithms know that you value this content so that they'll show it to more people and that is the best way to help us grow.

That's it for me this week. Have a terrific rest of your day and I'll talk to you all next week.