

PLEASE NOTE: This is a machine transcription. Some punctuation and spelling weirdness are to be expected.

Coming up in October, I am celebrating my thirteenth anniversary of starting my business. Now most of you know that I started out as a content and a copywriter. I did some tech support work, I managed webinars for people, I did customer support, and I even did some technical coaching for another business coach. I've learned a lot of lessons in those thirteen years, but some of the biggest were the things that I thought I knew that I turned out to be all wrong about. This is episode one twenty six of the Tiny Course Empire podcast, and today I want to talk to you about 15 things that I wish I had known sooner. If I had, it would have made my entire business journey a whole lot smoother

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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/126 While you're there, be sure to download my Clear Framework. This is the blueprint that will take you from no business to six or even 7 figures as a digital course creator, do not let the simplicity of this plan fool you. This

is a powerful action guide, and all you have to do is follow the steps. If you're new to the show, be sure to hit the subscribe button new episodes drop every Monday morning, and next week we're talking about why I put content creation ahead of everything else, and five reasons why I think you should too.

But that's next week. This week is all about the things I wish I had learned sooner because they would have made my business journey a lot less bumpy. I'm hoping to help you avoid those big mistakes, so let's dive in. All right thing number one that I thought I had to have nailed down and perfected before I could do anything else was my website and my logo. Oh my goodness, how many hours, days, weeks I don't even know did I spend doing nonsense things, trying to perfect my website, trying to create the perfect logo, and it was all wasted time.

And I will tell you why, because I see all kinds of beautiful websites out there and I know the creators of those websites aren't making any money. And I see all kinds of ugly websites that I know where I know the creators are really cashing in so do not spend more than a few hours on your website seriously, website technology has gotten so easy today. It's it's changed dramatically since I first came online for sure. Today it is easy for you to go over to Squarespace, sign up for an account, choose a template, and you can have your website up in a matter of minutes.

If you're feeling a little bit more technical and justice, so you know Squarespace is not sponsoring this show, but if you're feeling a little bit more technical, then you can install Wordpress instead. Choose a theme, create a simple logo using Canva or some other tool and get your website up. Seriously, do not spend more than an afternoon or at most a weekend on this if you are brand new, hit publish. You can always change it up later it does not have to be perfect right from the start. Which brings me to 2 and that is we all kind of stink in the beginning. The stuff we make, it's not great. We know it's not great, but we're making it anyway.

I look back at the words that I wrote, the podcasts that I recorded, the courses that I created five years ago or even last year or three months ago, and they're cringe worthy. I I'm not proud of the work that I put out all those years or months ago, but I had to do that work. I had to do that work in order to get better. We cannot improve what we are creating unless we are creating it there is no amount of reading or studying or watching videos or listening to podcasts or watching YouTube or working with a coach. None of that will help you improve unless you are actually doing the work.

So don't hesitate to put work out there that you think is maybe not up to your standard, because the very fact that you recognize that it's not quite up to your standards means that you can improve it, right? So put your work out there we all kind of stink in the beginning. Be OK with that. Let it go, hit the publish button and move on to the next thing. That's how we get better. Thing number three that I wish I had known sooner is that you should charge more. You, meaning all of us, should charge more. What we are creating has value and we should be charging accordingly. Women, especially historically under earn.

They are not charging what they are worth they are not paid what they're worth so charge more than you think you should be charging right from the beginning. If you don't, what's going to happen is you end up working too hard for the amount of money that you are earning you end up working lots and lots of hours to earn a very small amount of money, and that ends up in burnout or frustration or giving up on the whole business idea just because it's not working and what's really not working is you're not charging enough. So charge more than you think you should.

And on that note, let go of charging by the hour. Your value is not in the amount of time that you spend it is in the expertise that you bring to the table and I'm going to tell you a secret you can know if you've fallen into this trap of time equals money. If you have ever said to anyone, why did I pay my doctor so much money he only spent 10 minutes with me? Or why did I pay the plumber so much money it only took him 5 minutes to fix that leak? Remember that you're not paying your doctor for the 10 minutes of his time.

You're paying him for the 8 years that he went to school and the 20 years that he's been practicing and all of the expertise that he brings to the table. And the fact that he can listen to you for 10 minutes and diagnose your health issue and give you an, a way to fix it or cure it or heal yourself, right? He can recommend things. That's what you're paying for, not for 10 minutes of his time.

And people are not paying you for your time either. They're paying you for your expertise they're paying you for what you know. So let go of exchanging time for money and start charging for the value that you provide instead. And Speaking of value number five is your value does not depend on someone else's ability to pay i want to tell you a story. I learned this lesson the probably the first month or two I was actually in business for myself.

I had a client come to me she wanted me to do some writing for her and it was a big project and I made an assumption about her that I should not have made. I assumed that she didn't have a lot of money. So I took my normal rate, what I would have charged, and I discounted it by about 75 % probably i was brand new what did I know, right? So I discounted my normal rate by about 75 %. I probably ended up spending, oh, I don't even know how many weeks on this project that I got paid very little money for and only to find out later that she was quite a successful business owner.

She was doing quite well for herself. She could have afforded my normal rates and probably would have paid them. So the value of your work the lesson that I learned is that the value of my work is not dependent on someone else's ability to pay. My rates are my rates, and if someone can't afford those rates, that is, it is not my job to then discount my rates to meet them where they're at. That's not how. That's not why I'm in business. So your rates or your rates, don't discount your value or your rates based on what you think someone else can afford to pay.

Because number one, you're probably wrong. You don't know their finances, you don't know their situation, and number two your value is your value and it doesn't matter whether or not someone else can afford that. All right, let's move away from money and talk about information, talk about that expertise, talk about those things that we know it is OK for you to say sometimes, even when you're a coach, even when you're coaching, you know, business owners, or you're coaching about health or you're coaching about raising kids whatever it is, it is OK to say. I don't know the answer to that, but I'll find out.

I used to think that I had to have the answer to everything, that if someone came to me, if one of my 6 figure systems members came to me and asked me a question, that I needed to have the answer well, nobody can have the answer to absolutely everything. I would have to spend every moment learning new things in order to have the answer to every question that anyone has ever asked me. So you don't need to know the answer to every question that anyone could potentially ask you either it is OK to say I don't know, but I can help you find out.

Along those same lines, the number seven thing that I wish I had known sooner is that common knowledge probably isn't so common. I used to tell myself that I couldn't create a podcast about this topic or that topic, or that I couldn't write A blog post about such and such a thing, or that I couldn't create a course about this thing or that thing because everybody knew it already. But you know what it turns out everybody doesn't know it. Everybody doesn't have my experience everybody

hasn't lived my life. Everybody hasn't read the books and studied the material that I have studied everybody hasn't done the work that I have done.

So everybody doesn't know the things that come naturally and easily to me, and everybody doesn't know the things that come naturally and easily to you either. So common knowledge isn't so common don't be afraid to teach that common knowledge, to talk about that what you think is common knowledge because my guess is that the majority of your audience will be amazed and thankful that you talk about those things because other people probably aren't because they make the mistake that of thinking that it's just common and everybody knows and, and it's not true everybody doesn't know.

So talk about the common knowledge number eight is probably the biggest lesson if I could, if I could really give you one big takeaway from all of my years in business, from this podcast especially, but from everything I have learned, if I could give you one big piece of advice that you would follow, it would be this consistent action is the most important thing that you can do it that is what creates a profitable business. There is no other way. There is no way around it.

If you show up every day and you do the work, you will find success. It's nearly guaranteed. What happens though is we get a bit complacent or we allow life to distract us or, you know, we, we get bored and we wander off and do something else. Or we show up for a couple of weeks and then, you know, we got to go on vacation or the kids are going back to school or it's the holidays, we don't have time or whatever there's a number of reasons that we stop working on our business, but the truth is if you are not consistent, then the results that you get will not be consistent either.

So showing up consistently, treating your business like a business is the way to find success it is the only way to get the results that you want. And that's really the biggest takeaway that I've had in my 13 years in business the people who are successful show up and do the work and the people who are struggling a lot of times don't. So consistent action creates a profitable business. Treat your business like a business and you will get the results that you want number nine small wins are the foundation for huge successes.

It's so easy for us to look at someone else's business. It is so easy for you. Maybe you're just starting out maybe you're brand new maybe you've created one course and didn't sell very many of them maybe you're just thinking about starting a business and you might look at my business and think I have to do that that's

where I have to be that's where I have to aim, you know, set my sights on that I have to have the podcast and I have to have the membership site and I have to have all of the courses and I have to be emailing every day and I I have to have a list.

And that's not really how anybody starts. We all start from scratch we all start from nothing. And it's those little tiny wins that build up over time that create the results that you see that other people have. So celebrate those tiny wins celebrate that first sale, celebrate that first comment on a brand new blog celebrate those first subscribers on a brand new YouTube channel. Because those things build up over time and create your ultimate success. Don't discount them don't say, oh, this isn't enough or I'm never going to get there, or why can't I have? You know what this other person has over here? We all started from nothing we all started from scratch.

You will start from scratch too, and that's OK Celebrate the little wins and if the little wins don't seem to be showing up, then number ten is for you number ten is. Every failed launch is an opportunity to learn about your business and to do better next time. We will all have failed launches I've had them. Everyone I know has had them. You will have them too. So if you launch a product and you don't make any sales or you don't make as many sales as you had hoped to make, don't take that as evidence that your business model is flawed or that you will never be successful or that this online business thing doesn't work or it's just not for you.

It is none of those things, but it is an opportunity for you to examine what happened, what went right, what went wrong, and what you can improve for next time. Learn to look at your business with a scientific mindset because that is the way that you can improve and do better next time. Which brings me to number 11 nothing is carved in stone remember way back at number one we talked about logos and websites and how I got all hung up on my website and having it perfect and the the little borders of exactly where they were supposed to go and the colors exactly the way they were supposed to be.

And none of that mattered because nothing we do is carved in stone. We create products out of pixels on a screen and those can be easily, easily changed. So whatever it is that you are doing, even if it's not perfect, even if you think it could be better, even if you envisioned it to be grander than it ends up, hit publish. You can always go back and change it later. Don't wait for perfection because perfection will never come. It will never be good enough. It will never live up to the standards that you have set yourself set for yourself.

I'm telling you this from experience, but you can let it go. You can hit publish and then think about coming back later and updating it if it needs it. My guess is it probably doesn't. It's probably good enough, but nothing is carved in stone you can always change it later number twelve is about just getting out there and that is advice to use the simplest tools that you can. Don't make my mistake of thinking that you have to have all of the fancy tools, that you have to have the membership set up, that you have to have the big fancy shopping cart, that you have to have the big fancy funnel in the email platform all set up before you can publish your first sales page.

Use the tools that will get the job done. Focus on creating better products instead of a more complex infrastructure. Focus on the customer, the client, the student facing part of your business, not the back end. Use the simplest tools and the simplest processes that will get the job done and look to improving them later when it becomes necessary number thirteen publish more free content we're going to be talking about content over the next several weeks. It is such an important part of your online business. But what I want you to do right now, if you haven't already done so, is start a blog, launch a podcast, start a YouTube channel.

Whatever content platform is right for you, wherever your audience is hanging out, you should be there you should be creating content on a regular basis. Remember what we said about consistency? Create content on a regular basis these are assets that will serve you well over time. And it is never too early to start creating content number fourteen if there is one skill that I want you to work on, that I want you to really study and really put your effort into, it's probably not what you think it is it's not about email marketing it's not about writing sales pages it is not about creating content.

It is about being more confident in your own abilities. That is the number one skill all small business owners need. It grows over time, that is true but you can help it along so create that confidence in yourself. It is an important skill to develop. And finally number fifteen is. Pay attention to what you say to yourself. I have talked to so many small business owners who will tell me things like I'm terrible with technology, or I hate technology, or I'm not a designer or I'm not a writer, or I can't create a course i don't know how to do this.

All of those things, they get in your head and you will start to convince yourself that those things are facts and they're not. So be careful what you say to yourself about your own abilities and look at how you can flip that script so instead of saying I'm terrible with technology, say I am learning about technology. We all have to learn.

So instead of saying I'm terrible, I'm a terrible designer, say I am learning to design nice looking printables or I am learning to design good looking slide decks for my business. Don't land in that place of I can't do it. Because then you are. Then you have no, you have no out you have no strategy for getting out of it there's no path to become better.

You've declared it to be true, so be careful with what you say to yourself. It really does matter and it really does tie back into that confidence piece as well. Watch what you say to yourself. Build your confidence. It is the number one skill that you can have as a small business owner. I have to say, I kind of knew all of these things when I was brand new to business. I knew that I shouldn't be spending weeks building a website, that I was just procrastinating.

I knew that I was letting perfectionism get in my way i knew that I was overcomplicating things. Maybe you know that too. What I want you to take away from this episode of the podcast is that it is OK to be a beginner it is OK to be new at this. Everybody's new at it when we get started, and it's OK to make mistakes it's OK to make mistakes in public it's OK to publish things that aren't up to our standards it is OK to launch a course that doesn't sell.

It is OK to build an ugly website. All of those things are OK. They can all be fixed in the future but if you don't ever get started, if you let these or other things hold you back, then you're just going to stay stuck and I don't want you to stay stuck. So these are the 15 things that really kept me stuck, that really gave me a hard time in my business maybe your things are different, but I'd love to hear about them. Would you do me a favor and click over to tiny course empire dot com forward slash one two six and leave me a comment? Tell me which of these things you've caught yourself stumbling over as you build your business or maybe what's holding you back, like I said, is something completely different but either way, let's talk about it and let's make a plan together to get past it.

And if you have a friend or colleague who could use business building advice, would you share the link with them? It's a great way to grow our audience and I'd appreciate your support. All the episodes can be found at TinyCourseEmpire.com.

That's it for me this week i will be back next week with five reasons you should be putting content first if you want to grow your business, have a terrific rest of your day and I will talk to you again next week.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

**I'll teach you the simple
systems that lead to
BIG RESULTS
even if you're brand new
to online business.**

START TODAY

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