

Ep #145: The Phases of Business and How to Get Unstuck



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Amanda Karlstad

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You are listening to *The Life Coach Business Podcast* with Amanda Karlstad episode number 145.

Welcome to *The Life Coach Business Podcast*, a show for coaches who are ready to up-level their business and take their impact, leadership, and results to a whole new level. If you're ready to start taking powerful action and become the leader your business needs in order to grow and thrive, this show is for you. I'm your host, Amanda Karlstad, certified life and business coach, and entrepreneurial leadership expert. Now, let's get down to business.

Hello and welcome everyone. So glad to have you with me today. I hope you're doing well wherever you are tuning in from. I am really excited for today's show. Today, I want to talk to you all about what it takes to build your business to a high level. I understand that the term high level is a relative term. But when I say that term, what I mean in the context of our conversation is building your business to that multiple six figures or seven figures in revenue.

I want to give you some insight as to what you'll experience as you move through the different phases of growth, through the different stages of learning that's going to be required. And what it is that is really going to be required of you as you move through each of these different levels.

I really excited to talk to you all about this today because I think this is going to be a super useful episode to you, really a super useful training to help you identify where it is that you're currently at today in the different stages that I'm going to teach you, and what that next stage will typically look like for you. So I'm excited because I think that as I walk you through what I'm about to walk you through is going to really help you gain an even deeper level of clarity as to why you might be experiencing certain things in your business, why you might be feeling a certain way.

I know that in my own experience and with the experience of so many of my clients, when you know what stage of business that you're in, when you

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know what's required of you in those stages along with being able to see what's coming. So being able to see what that next stage is, or those next stages are, and also understanding what's required can be extremely helpful.

So as a coach, one of the reasons that I have found this to be so, so valuable is that when you're starting out, and we're going to dive into this more in a minute. But when you're starting out, the truth of the matter is that you don't really know what you don't know. When you're in a place where you don't know what you don't know, it's really easy to get stuck in that level and to not really know how to move things forward and not really know how to build momentum in the business, not knowing how to really take yourself to the next level.

So today's episode is really going to be an important episode for all of you that are serious about growing your business to that multiple six, seven figure mark. I would highly recommend that you take notes and that you really take a look at where you're at as I walk you through these different stages.

All right, so as I was putting together some trainings for my clients in my two programs, and just to make sure that I'm clear, for those of you who may be new to my work, I do offer two programs that are designed to help coaches grow and scale their businesses.

So I have a business accelerator program, which is called the mastermind. This is my foundational program that's designed to help coaches grow to their first six figures and beyond and do it in the most accelerated way. So this is for coaches who have had some level of success in their business.

So what that means is typically they're working with clients on a one on one basis, and they've successfully sold their coaching program, even if it's not really the program or maybe even the program model that they want to continue to grow. But despite that, they're working with paid clients, even if

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it's not quite yet at the level that they want. But ultimately, they know that they're ready to go to the next level.

So, when clients come to me for this program, they're highly aware that they need a much higher level of support. They understand that they need expert guidance. They need mentorship. They understand that not only is their mindset super, super important, and they know that it's the most important element, but they also know that in order to take their business to the next level that they need a real business strategy. So that is my foundational program.

Now, I also offer my High Level Mastermind program. So this is my highest level mastermind. This is my program for coaches who have already hit or are trending towards six figures in their business. So, again, in many cases, coaches come to me when they're at this point in their business. We're going to talk about this in today's episode, what happens at this stage.

Generally, what they're doing is many of them, again, they're working with clients on a one on one basis. They might even have a group program that they're offering where they're serving their clients, but they also realize that they need to change things up. So they realize they may need to change up their program. They may need a different business model.

They realize that they need a much better marketing system in their business. They understand that in order to be able to really get to that multiple six figure/seven figure mark, that it's going to require them stepping into their next level. That it's going to require a different approach, and they're excited about what's coming. They're excited about really being able to launch that group program or even refining their current offer.

They also really understand and appreciate the importance of real business strategy. They're extremely coachable in terms of their mindset and also on those tangible pieces of their business. So I will say the work that I do with all of my clients in both of these containers is extremely high level. It's not only strategic, but it's also very focused on who my clients are becoming,

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on helping them to become the business owner, become the leader that their business truly needs of them in order to grow the business.

So for all of you listening who are ready to go to that six, multiple six, or even seven figures in this next year, I want to let you know that both programs are currently open for enrollment. I want to invite you to apply. Not only do I have a limited number of spots in these programs because I offer such a high level of support, but I also want to make sure that it's a good fit.

So I want to encourage you to apply. You can go to the show notes of this episode. You can also go to my website at amandakarlstadtcoaching.com, you will find the application there. It's just a quick application so we can get a really good sense of where you're at in your business. From there, you're gonna have the opportunity to book in a call with us so we can have a conversation and really see if you're a fit. If so, put together a strategy for you to hit your goals in this next year.

So all that to say, I share that with you because as I was creating some content, some trainings for my higher level group and some deeper trainings that I will be delivering to my clients, I decided that I wanted to also bring you all this episode.

So I want this episode to serve as a training for you, as a resource that you can come back to over and over again as you need to. So that you can truly assess where it is that you're at, and have a better understanding as to why you're experiencing what you're experiencing right now in your business. With that, I want you to ultimately be able to see where you might be getting stuck and what you can do to get unstuck.

All right, so the first thing that I will say is that if you are in a place in your business where you're not currently generating either high six or seven figures in your business, what I'm about to deliver here is going to be really important. One of the reasons that I have observed in working with hundreds of coaches and helping them grow to that six, multiple six, and

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even seven figure mark is because of exactly what we're talking about here.

So the coaches that develop their ability and are able to move through these different stages that we're about to talk about are the coaches that are reaching those higher levels of revenue. So whether that be \$500,000 or trending towards a million dollars because they're focused on and solving the problems and advancing through these different stages that we're about to talk about, that is the reason they're able to create those levels of results in their business.

One of the things that I think a lot of coaches get confused about and end up spending a lot of time spinning in, especially when they're starting out, is in this first stage of learning. This first stage of learning, I want to really relate it to a framework, a hierarchy that was created by Abraham Maslow.

Essentially it lays out the four stages that everyone goes through in order to reach different levels of competence in any number of areas. So I'm going to use this hierarchy really as kind of a baseline because I think it really is spot on when it comes to the different phases that I personally have experienced in growing my business, and that I see my clients also go through as they're growing and scaling their businesses.

So the first level that you will all experience in this process is what's known as unconscious competence. What happens is in this level, no matter what it is that you're learning. So whether it's learning to grow a coaching business or learning to, I don't know, plant a garden, whatever it is that you are learning that you are new to, you will be in a place, you'll be in a phase where really the theme of that phase is you don't know what you don't know.

Because we're talking about it in terms of growing your coaching business here, I want to give you a little bit more context around these different phases and how this will show up for you in your entrepreneurial journey of growing your business.

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So typically what happens is in this first stage, this is the stage where you're first starting out where you probably have the idea of starting your coaching business, where you have probably made a decision that you're going to start your coaching business. In that phase, you've also started thinking about who it is that you want to coach. You are thinking about the type of coaching that you want to focus on. You're probably thinking about how you want to work with clients.

Emotionally, you're probably really excited in this phase. You're probably filled with a lot of excitement about what you think about your business, and you're probably taking some initial first steps to bring on your first clients. You're probably having lots of organic conversations about what it is that you're doing. You're probably full of a lot of ideas in this stage in terms of your program and in terms of, again, how you want to help your clients.

So I always think about this phase as like the honeymoon phase of the business where you are maybe coming out of a certification program or in a certification program, and you're deep in the work and you're really excited about everything that you're learning. You've probably been really personally transformed as well through that process and having been coached yourself. So there's a lot of excitement about the business. There's a lot of excitement about what it is that you're doing. You probably have some ideas and some thoughts about how you want to grow your business, but it's probably not fully clear on how to actually do that.

Now, what also happens in this phase is that you also have a high level of, I'm just gonna say unawareness. So you also are very unaware of a lot of things. So to give you some examples of that, you may be unaware of the importance of really knowing how to build a business. You may be unaware internally about how you're thinking when you are working in your business, when you're working on the business. There isn't a very high level of awareness probably as to how your own internal thought processes are really impacting the business.

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So from a mindset perspective, it's almost like you're in a place where its ignorance is bliss. We've all heard the term, right? Ignorance is bliss. Where not having this awareness to what it is that you don't know. It really creates a place where it's really easy to be full of excitement and to be full of inspiration and to be really excited about all of the things.

So what tends to happen in this stage is that for most coaches, there's an idea that most things in the business are going to be much easier than they actually are. So in many ways, this phase isn't as uncomfortable as the next I will say two phases because you're also probably not fully in action. You probably aren't fully implementing a lot of things in your business. You're taking some steps, but you're not really doing some of those more advanced strategies in the business. So because of that you're not faced with probably as much resistance.

So a big part of you, what I find, is that when you're in this phase, from a belief standpoint, that you know you can do it. So you have a belief in yourself. But at the same time you're also not fully certain that you can do it. You're not fully certain that it's actually going to work out. You're not fully certain that you can grow your business to the level that you want.

So, because of this overarching belief system that many coaches experience, it also causes a lot of hesitation in this phase. It causes you to fall into a place where, I would say, you spend much of your time over thinking. So this is one of the major, major downsides that I see when you're in this place. When you are in a place where you're overthinking. You're overthinking things like your niche, your program, your strategy, even the thoughts that you're having. You're going round and round and trying to get to the bottom of all of your belief systems.

What really ends up happening is that I see so much time that is spent overthinking and time spent essentially just in your head that really slows you down from taking the powerful action that you really need to be taking to move things forward in the business.

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So for all of you listening, I want to encourage you one way that you know that you're in this phase is when you're constantly overthinking things. It's when you're constantly consuming instead of taking action. Another way that you know you might be in this phase is when you find yourself constantly in a state of fear.

For a lot of coaches, I find that this fear really comes down to a fear of the unknown. It comes down to a fear of not really knowing what's next. The reason this is so strong in this phase is because you don't yet have the full belief that you can build what it is that you want to build, or whether you're capable of building the business to the level that you want.

When you think about your business at a high level, whether it's taking it to that multiple six or seven figures a lot of times for so many coaches, it feels so out of reach. So with that there's such a lack of belief within yourself that you can even build your business to that level. It's because you don't yet have evidence, and the doubt is extremely strong. It's really easy to be overtaken by fear.

So for a lot of coaches in this phase, I will say I see a lot of them stay very stuck and be in a place of where they are spinning. They are very cautious in this phase. So because of that they do a lot of research. They do a ton of consuming. They don't allow themselves to go all in on the business. They're afraid to invest, and they're afraid to really step out of their comfort zone. Because of this, it's really, really easy to get stuck in this phase. I've seen it happen time and time again where coaches are stuck in this phase for a long time.

So if you're finding yourself in this phase, I want to encourage you to number one, get uncomfortable and embrace the unknown. Know that when you're in this phase, you have to jump and really trust that the net will appear, as they say. So if you're in this phase, and you want to move out of this phase, I will tell you it's really important that you work on your belief. That you really step forward in faith. That you take risks in this phase, and

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really open yourself up to taking powerful steps forward and really get yourself into action so that you can create momentum in the business.

All right, so the next phase, the phase after unconscious competence, is called conscious incompetence. So what's happening in this conscious incompetence phase is that you're probably developing your skills in different areas, and you're working to get better in different areas in your business.

So for some of you that might be in your own coaching, or for others of you, it might be something that you're working on in the business or it could be both. But at the end of the day, what's happening is that you have a level of awareness, at least to some degree, that you need to improve in certain areas in the business. You're likely working on those areas, and you're working to get better in those areas.

So to give you some examples, you probably have a high level of awareness when you're in this level that let's say your copy needs to improve. So you've probably reached a point in your business where you understand the importance of being able to effectively articulate what it is that you do. So what problem you solve, who you solve that problem for, things of that nature.

When you're in this stage, you also struggle generally to be able to clearly and effectively articulate that. So you probably have a little bit of confusion around this, around being able to clearly state who it is that you help, how you help them, and the problem that you solve. You've probably also come into a level of understanding that you also need to evolve certain things in the business.

You've probably come to a point where you understand that in order to take your business to the next level that you need a better strategy, that you need a much more effective strategy than you're probably doing. You start to experience that you likely see that what got you to where you are is not going to get you to that next place. So this stage is really about developing

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a higher level of awareness and solving some of those foundational problems in the business.

So, from a belief perspective, what's happening in this phase is that there tends to be a higher level of belief when you're in this phase that you might see others doing what it is that you want to do. Because of that, you have developed a belief that because others are doing it that you can do it too. So from a belief standpoint, there tends to be a higher degree of belief when you're in this stage, even though you don't have full belief yet in yourself. But you can definitely see evidence, and you definitely can see this happening with others.

Now, one of the most important things that I will say you must do in this stage, I believe, from again, working with hundreds and hundreds of coaches and going through my own journey myself is that you have to be getting coached in this phase. It is so important to seek out guidance and mentorship so that they can help you clarify the things that you need help clarifying in in the business, to really help you evolve and move forward and provide you with real strategies, to help you develop that stronger belief that you really need.

It's really important that when you're in this phase to really get to this next phase that we're about to talk about is that you are also taking action. That you are in high action mode. That you are testing things. That you are implementing things. That you're also really working on your own self-concept and your own self-identity towards becoming the version of you that is capable of creating the level of success that you want. So this is a really important stage.

I have to tell you all this is a stage that I see a lot of my clients come to me in where they have an awareness that they need help, where they're aware that they need a much higher level of coaching than they've probably experienced. That they need a much higher level of mentorship. That it's going to take more than what they have been doing, and that they need an

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expert that's guiding them to really help clarify all of the things that they need help clarifying. So that is stage two.

The third stage is what Maslow calls conscious competence. This is the stage where you have moved from conscious incompetence now into what's known as conscious competence. What happens in this stage is that you have been putting in work, and you've likely implemented more strategies in your business. Because you've gone through those earlier stages, you've clarified, you've gotten better, you've worked on those skills that we talked about.

Now you're in a place where you're developing your skills even more in those areas. Where you are becoming more competent in the things that are required to grow the business. So in this stage, you understand the importance of things like marketing. You understand the importance of things like selling. You understand the importance of things like testing.

You also understand that if you want to go to that next level, if you want to reach that level of mastery that we're going to talk about, and really be great at what you do and really make a great impact, that you also have to be really consistent. That you really need to stay the course. That you understand that things while they might not be great right out of the gate, but you're also willing to do the work. You're willing to be consistent and show up and really become the leader that your business needs.

Typically, when you're in this place, there's a really strong level of determination that I see with my clients where you operate from this place of determination. It's great because it really helps you stay the course. It really helps you to stay focused on the right things when you're in this place. Now, one of the ways that I see coaches get stuck in this phase is by not managing their time effectively and not getting the support or I will say even the right type of support for what it is that they need.

So for many coaches, they are probably experiencing a level of success in their business, but it's still not consistent. It's still not repeatable. What

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happens is that coaches get really stuck in this phase because they have certain expectations. Of how they think things should be or how they think they should maybe be further along in the process than they are or how certain things in the business should “be working” but maybe isn't quite there yet.

So there tends to be, in my observation, a lot of times where coaches get very impatient in this phase. From that level of impatience, a lot of times, they see a lot of coaches who make decisions not from a clean place. Who make decisions that end up actually slowing down the growth. So things like changing directions or deciding that they're going to focus on a different strategy or change something significant in the business.

So rather than getting really proficient and reaching the next level, which is that mastery level, what happens is that they instead they undo a lot of things that are needed, and they jump ship a little bit too soon. There's a lot of start-stop. There's also a lot of indecision that tends to come up. When I see this happen, what's really important is that we really work to get back to the main focus, and we really start to understand what to prioritize in the business.

So when coaches are in this phase and when they're stuck in this phase, what's really happening is that they're probably trying to focus on too many things. When we layer on that impatience, when they are coming from a place where they want to be further along, or things aren't quite working quite as well as they want, it really creates a dangerous ripple effect in the business. It can really slow down their growth overall and really slow down even their own inner growth as well.

So I will tell you all self-sabotage, when it comes to this phase, is rampant. It's really common in this stage. What's really tricky about it is that a lot of times, it's not even recognizable because our brains are so clever in masking it in things that appear like evidence. When in reality, a lot of coaches are experiencing a level of growth. To have reached the stage, they have reached a level of growth that they've probably never

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experienced before in the business. They're also being confronted with new levels of mindset blocks that they likely never encountered before.

So being able to have true clarity, being able to operate from a clear mind and making clear decisions and being able to leverage that determination and being okay with not being great at this stage is really, really important.

All right, the last stage. Stage four is what Maslow calls unconscious competence. So this is where you have reached a level of competence in the business. The truth is that it doesn't require as much effort as it did before. So let me give you an example. This is a level where a lot of my higher level clients are stepping into. Where they have been able to move through definitely the first stage, definitely the second stage, and they're probably on those later stages of phase three.

They're now in a place in the business where they have traction with a lot of things. There's a lot of momentum. Things like their marketing are working where they've really been able to dial in their messaging. They're really clear on who they serve. This is a goal that I have for all of my clients to help them really reach this level so that they can get to a level of mastery in all areas so that they can continue then to build and grow from there.

So for my clients who are really kind of, again, in that third level moving into this fourth level, because they've delivered the program over and over again, because they have a high level of confidence as it relates to their program and their coaching skills.

They've also, through the process, developed skills in all other areas of the business. So things like their marketing, things like their skills, even in things like hiring, managing maybe a small team of contractors at this point, being able to manage money differently. All of these capabilities really help them step into this next phase.

So what's really important to understand is that it requires—This stage, stage four, requires that you have developed a very high level of emotional

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resilience. One of the most important things in this stage and in order to even get into this stage is that you have to be able to manage your emotions very effectively.

It's important to understand that to get to this fourth level, you have to be able to show up and to become the leader your business needs. It requires developing lots and lots of different key skills in terms of operating as a true CEO, as a true business owner, as an entrepreneur who can consistently create and generate sales and clients in the business.

So when you move into this level because by nature of moving through the first three levels, you've developed already so much skill on your way to this phase that what ends up happening is that it actually gets easier in some ways because you are not learning so much in this phase, because you have already done that learning in those first initial phases. In many ways, this phase becomes somewhat easier because you're not learning so many of those basic skills.

Now, this is where I will say, for me, and for my clients, for example, this is where you can get creative with scheduling, for example. So this may be the case where you want to work on certain days of the week. Or like my schedule, I choose to keep certain days of the week open for certain things in the business and for certain things personally.

So what's happening is when you're in this place, you have a very high level of consistency in the business. That consistency in the business comes from the consistency that you've demonstrated in the phases leading up to this phase. So the beauty of this fourth phase is when you can start to delegate more and more, you can start to leverage yourself. You can start to leverage your time.

I will also say that a threat to this stage is what I call shiny object syndrome. The reason this can be a threat, and I will say shiny object syndrome is a big, big threat, I think too in those earlier stages, but it becomes a different type of shiny object when you're in this phase.

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The reason that this can be a threat is because you have a much higher level of competence, you have a very high level of confidence in the business, and you have created consistency in the business. What happens then is your brain, it starts to offer you all sorts of new ideas and all different ways that you can make even more money or maybe different approaches you can take. Or I've even seen in some cases where it might be the thought of starting a whole new business altogether.

I will say it can be a very slippery slope because all of those things when we add in things like that to the business it actually ends up complicating the business. So when we put on more complication, it actually slows the growth, and it actually puts more constraint on the business. So the answer here is when you are in a place of unconscious competence is that you really focus, and you really double down on what's working.

So I hope that was helpful for you. So that was a really thorough breakdown of the four different phases that you will go through in this entrepreneurial process in building your business to a high level. I want to offer to all of you to really take the time and take the time to assess based on what I just laid out for you where you're at in the process. Based on where you are at, what your next steps are in terms to take yourself to the next level and to really take your business to the next level.

I know that if you really do this work and get super clear about where you're at it can help you gain so much more clarity in terms of what is next for you. All right, everyone have an amazing week. I'll talk to you all again next week. Take care bye, bye.

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