

Episode 14 Transcript with Lisa Marker

Wambui: Hi there, Lisa. Thank you so much for being on my show.

Lisa: Oh, thank you for inviting me. I'm excited to be here. It's going to be a fun conversation.

Wambui: It will be. I've been looking forward to this conversation for a long time. So thanks for making the time.

Lisa: Absolutely.

Wambui: So now for those who don't know you please tell my listeners who you are and what you do.

Lisa: So my name is Lisa Marker Robbins and I mean at the heart of it, I'm a teacher and a coach, That's if I just had to say one or two words, I'm a coach, I'm a teacher. And back in 1991 when I graduated college, I was a teacher. I was a classroom teacher. So that's why I always say I'm still a teacher at heart. I love to inspire growth and I can do attitude for those I serve. Now who I serve, really there's a couple of different buckets. So, for the last 30-plus years, I have supported teenagers and their parents because, you know, quite frankly, we're all in this together, help and support our kiddos. I've helped them navigate what comes after high school. The heart of it is, that I have a course called Launch Career Clarity, where we help teenagers get clear on what comes after graduation. Get clear on the career that aligns with them, and what college and college major would get them there. And if they're not college-bound, we help them too. So, you know, teenagers have to figure out, what comes after graduation. The clock is ticking on that. And there are some very real deadlines. We love to step in, help teens understand their wiring, and begin with the end in mind. Like focus on that 40-plus years that you're going to work instead of the four-year college experience. Let's be in this for a long game. And then my other heart, still a coach, is I'm an executive coach for individuals who are at a C level or they're, most of the people I serve are business owners and they're trying to get that work-life balance they're trying to achieve at work and in their personal life as well. And I support them in that.

Wambui: Wow, I love the two hearts that you wear because it's really both developing people to be the best at what they do with their students and then with the executive coaching. Now, I wish I had known you when we were working on my twins going to college three years ago because it was a lot.

Lisa: It is a lot. I always say to families Especially being on the other side of it, my husband, I have five kids total. So, and I also have twins, so my twins are 22. They're the youngest. If any of your listeners are, you know, you and I can sit here and go like, Oh, the kids are in college or out of the house. You know, we have more time, There is never. a busier time and I see this with both my executive coaching clients who have families And those that I serve in launch career clarity you have so many demands on all the things we should do and we have competing priorities. I mean, we've got to say no to a lot of things. We've got to make sure we're saying the right yeses and the right nos. And I would just say like we have

supported thousands of people before and you can get there and there will be ease when you go at it with intention and then you'll be able to. You have a deep sigh of relief when you get those kids to the finish line.

Wambui: I believe that. and I know you work a lot with schools.

Lisa: We do. Launch Career Clarity which is now our course, which we get in there, they take the Birkman personality assessment, we coach them through our three-step framework in the course, and give them live support. But it was born originally out of a one-on-one model that we were just delivering to families. And 2018, I ended up in a Forbes article about how to increase your ROI on your college investment, that kind of exploded things, and so the reach then went beyond Cincinnati, Ohio, where I live and it became national and there were just not enough hours in the day. And I feel called to use my expertise in this area to support families. I'm like, we got to come up with a better way of doing this. The original intent of the course was let's just to support and help more families to inspire them and get them out of confusion and overwhelm so that they are motivated, clear, and confident. And then what happened was schools went. Oh, wait a second. We have all these high school families and I mean, honestly, God loves the school counselors and the college counselors who are in the school setting. They have so many demands on their plate and it's even more since COVID. What we provide is the insights of like. How does your hardwired personality align with, the career path that you're going to choose after high school? They can't be an expert on that as a school or college counselor or your teen's teacher can't be. So all of a sudden these schools started saying like, wait, wait, wait, I want that for our school. So we took the model that we have where we serve one-on-one and now we take it into schools as well. And we support them. Just as a partner, really, with the schools. Yeah.

Wambui: That's good. The one to many. So is it the students who take the course?

Lisa: That's a great question. It is and we invite their parents in., I truly believe that if they're college bound or even if they're, you're just like, they're going to go directly into employment or maybe some other type of training, that journey is a family journey. The outcome is for the teenager to get some things solved for them, right? So the outcome is centered on the teen, but we're supporting the family, you know, you did this with your twins. I did this with our kids and continue to navigate. I mean, as a parent of five adults, we continue to navigate life with our children. Parents are encouraged to curate a weekly conversation with their teenager about the work that we're doing. When we have our live monthly Q and a. Parents and teens are invited in.

It's funny, last year there was a family where, that just, now they've graduated and they're not in the course with us anymore, the kid did not want to be on with the parent sitting next to him. They're like, ugh, get away from me, Mom. Like, you know, and that's normal. I mean, that, yeah, I celebrate that. I go, oh my gosh, that means you have a normal teenager, even though as a parent it can feel like, ugh. But the parent dialed into our live calls for us. From a different room in the house on their laptop, and the teen was on their laptop in a different room in the house, so we were supporting all of them, and they weren't getting on each other's nerves.

Wambui: Of course,

Lisa: This often happens with teenagers, right?

Wambui: It is hard. That resonates so well because two weeks ago, my girls had a family weekend. Now the Sarah Lawrence College in New York when we went there, the first thing the president told us as parents. Don't worry if your child doesn't want you to be here. It's understandable, but you're on this journey together. So she was telling us, you know, you still guide them if they're juniors, let them know they need to go to their career office and start looking into like internships and stuff like that. So I get it. Sometimes our teenagers don't want to. You know, for us to be there, to participate.

Lisa: This stage of life that they're at, they're, like, psychologically, they're still developing. We all know that the frontal lobe's not done until they're 25 and out of college, so they're fighting and forging their independence and still needing you as well. My daughter, who's a senior in college, she... Always tells me she reserves a right to decide when she wants to adult and when she wants to have her mom step in and Sometimes it'll be like Hey Mom Can you make that doctor's appointment for me and all jokingly go I thought you were an adult she goes no No, no, not this time And that's okay. We're there as their support in their safety net and their greatest cheerleader.

Wambui: Yeah, that's funny that she decides when she wants to adopt and when she wants mommy to step in, which it's all good. We love it.

Lisa: It is good. Exactly.

Wambui: So now with this B2B model, how can someone who's a coach like My audience or my audience is professional who have nine to five, and then they also have side businesses and some are coaches? How can they benefit from this kind of B2B model that you have,

Lisa: You know, I served. Nearly 3,000 people one to one before I did my B2B, right? So what I learned from that, it's just like I live launched my course for a couple of years. And now we have it into an always available evergreen offer. I think what we learned from the one-to-one and what I learned from live launching helps inform what's next because you get, so you don't throw out the one-on-one, but look at it as it's teaching you some really deep lessons that will help you serve better on the B2B. The B2B. While I would say they're harder to close the deal and get that contract, whatever it might look like because it could look a little different way as you and I have talked about previously. As you think about that, you're going to have to put a lot of work out. Front right because that initial conversation might start with the person who's not the stakeholder that needs to make the decision nurturing that along the way, the model we have is we've served a. College graduating class. So like one of our school partners, it's a private high school, and they take every single junior through our course every year. So that's almost like a subscription model in the B2B piece. So I would encourage your listeners to think about it through that lens. You know, a one-and-done.

You worked hard to get that B2B contract, but then, like, you fulfilled it and you're finished. I think part of what is the win as far as if you're, you know, you're in a 9 to 5, you have a side hustle, you're dreaming big about what's possible, is to think about your B2B model in a way that it could be recurring.

So, for me, I put a lot of effort in trying to nurture that relationship and get them to use us, and get a contract on the B2B. But then like this, this one school that I just was using as an example, as one of our partners, it's every single year, about 130 kids go through my course. But it's recurring. So once you put that work in and you continue to facilitate the relationship and show up strong and serve well, now it's almost turnkey for us year after year after year.

Wambui: Wow. That's beautiful that you get that consistent income

Lisa: it is because it allows a lot of other things in my businesses to take place.

Wambui: Yes. And it's that foundational work that you did before that you were patient with. Cause it's like I said, it's not like the one-to-one it takes a long time to even just get that contract, I assume.

Lisa: Years. I mean, honestly, the first time with that first school that now we're like in year six of doing the entire graduating class every year, The counselor first asked me like can something like that ever going to be possible and this is even before I had the course. It took us three to four years before even the dream became a reality, but they continued to advocate that. I think that's another piece. Like I had a key contact within the school in this case, or maybe it's a business, right? You get a key contact. Continue to nurture them and arm them with the information and the resources they need to advocate. And when you do that well, I got to be honest, like a lot of times I don't ever end up having to have a conversation with somebody who is the final decision maker because I've armed my advocate where we have a natural synergy well with how they can advocate for us.

Wambui: That's great information there. Now, Lisa, you have a couple, of several successful businesses.

Lisa: Yes, I basically have three businesses currently.

Wambui: How do you stay consistent with the podcast? Weekly newsletter. How do you stay consistent with three businesses?

Lisa: Time management and honestly, my strategic and dialed-in goals inform me on how I'm going to spend my time. This is, you know, when I talk about my executive coaching business, which I keep a roster of 10 executive coaching clients, and I have a waiting list, I could do more.

Wambui: Wow.

Lisa: If I wanted to, but I choose not to because I'm saying no to those opportunities, which is saying yes to being able to have the capacity to grow my, with my Launch Career Clarity course. The company's always actually called Flourish Coaching. If I took everybody off my waitlist who wants executive coaching and business coaching with me. I wouldn't have any time to do a weekly newsletter like we literally with intention in May of 2021. I started the Flourish Coaching Weekly Newsletter way before I had a podcast. I didn't have a podcast until January of 2022 and I committed to showing up every single week in my community's inbox. I have never missed a week of my weekly newsletter since May 2021.

Wambui: That's what amazes me. You have never missed a weekly, never, not, not even.

Lisa: Never missed a single week. And we started the podcast. Actually, my birthday is in January. The year that I started the podcast, it had been a dream.

Wambui: Okay.

Lisa: Well, I'll go back to this part in a second, but I started the podcast as my birthday gift to myself in January of 2022. So we're going on the gift to give you. It was, I'm like, this is how we're going to celebrate this year. And so I've never missed a weekly podcast and we have our hundredth episode. It's called College and Career Clarity is the podcast. We have our 100th episode on December 23. We're almost there. We already recorded it. It's so good. It's a panel episode. And so we did something a little different.

It was. such a great conversation. But like if I said to myself, Oh, I'm going to take people off the waitlist who I would love to serve all of them, but we just can't, we have to say no to some stuff. I would never be able to. do a weekly email for two and a half years. I would never be able to do a hundred weekly podcast episodes over two years. It just wouldn't be possible. So it's identifying what's your vision, what are the goals quarter by quarter that are going to get you to that vision that you have, and then those goals and that vision inform you of what to say yes to. And what to say no to, no to. And so I going back to what I was going to say, you know, the podcast was an idea in June, July of 2021.

Okay? Okay. Mm-Hmm, .

And I had to say no to that idea. Okay. At that time for now until January 2022. Yes. So I go like, it's June 21. And I'm like, you don't have capacity because I had not yet launched my course for the first time. I was working on the content. I was recording my course. I was building out my course platform and all of the assets we use to support families. And I truly felt called to do this work. And I knew that if I allowed the podcast to start, Podcasts aren't that hard to get up and started, like it takes a couple of months, right? You got to get a logo, a name, you got to just find some guests and start recording if you're going to do guest episodes, which you do and I do. I knew I wouldn't achieve my vision and my goals if I allowed myself to chase that shiny object. So I said no to it for the Trello board, a future ideas list. And honestly, most of them, I never end up going after, but I can park the idea that sparks in my brain. And then I come back to it and I'm like, okay, now we're going to say yes to this one, but oh my gosh, those other five, that was a fun idea, we're not going to do it.

Wambui: I love that intention and the clarity. And then having that vision, and I know you do your personal and professional vision, right? You have that.

Lisa: Yes, I do.

Wambui: So yeah, so then you decide, okay, what are the two goals of two or three goals you're going to do every quarter?

Lisa: And I think that what you just said right there is key.

It is two to three goals. I think a mistake that many people make is they've got a whole list of goals that if you do that, you're just going to stay overwhelmed. Yes. And I also think that a lot of people, what probably is just a project, like a short-term project, they identify it as a goal and it's not.

Like I think that would be something I'd encourage your listeners to get clear on. Or maybe a project is a subcategory of a goal. Like when I said, okay, I'm going to do this launch career clarity course, I identified five steps. Okay. To get me there. And as it developed, there were more things and more projects that came in, but there weren't new goals.

And so the end goal was like, in a year, I'll have this course. I mean, I'm thinking way out, right? If somebody asks for time on my calendar, six months from now, I'm already booked up. I already know what I am. Centered on I, I don't have room to do a new project. Yeah. And so I had this long-term goal of like the course will launch in September of 2021.

Okay. That was a goal more than a year before that. Wow. And then I went, okay, so that means that 2020 Q 4 goal is, I ran a beta program. Okay.

Q1. I got a website.

Wambui: All right.

Lisa: Q2. We got all of our branding and our brand script and we started our newsletter and we started our social media channels so we could start to get brand awareness.

Wambui: Great.

Lisa: Q3, develop the content for the course. Q4, live launch for the first time.

Wambui: Wow. So that's a year.

Lisa: It's a year.

Wambui: That's very well organized and it doesn't seem like it can overwhelm you because you have it all planned. Q1, this is what I'm going to do. You do. Yes. On and on. That's very true, I'm going to listen to this podcast over and over.

Lisa: Well, you know, and sometimes you've got to also go like sometimes I could have discovered something along the way. Well, one of them that I discovered was. In the middle of the course creation, I was like, I am tired of writing blogs, which I had blogged for years and for my other third company as well. I'm like, I love talking to people. I love like what you and I are doing, right? And so that's where I learned in the middle of it, like, I think there was a place for a podcast, which is content generation to serve people and Lead people to my course, yes. I paused it, but then I made room for it a couple of quarters later.

Wambui: Quarters later.

Lisa: Yes. I love, I love podcasting. It's, I love it, I used to blog, but I find that talking to people, I enjoy it so much. I think people in this day and age also like consuming. Videos and podcasts, I think how we consume content changed as a society. And so being in tune with that, if it's, if conversations are something you like to have then, you know, I don't love my solo episodes as much on my podcast, although some of those topics are quite popular, I'd always rather talk to somebody.

Wambui: I've listened to some of your solo podcasts. They are really good.

Lisa: Oh, thank you.

Wambui: Now most of my listeners, as well as myself have struggled with imposter syndrome that self-doubt of putting ourselves out there now as a person, as an entrepreneur, who's had this successful three businesses, have you ever dealt with imposter syndrome, do you deal with it and how have you handled it?

Lisa: Okay, every single day. Oh, okay. And if anybody ever says they've never had imposter syndrome, I'm just going to say they're not being honest, right? I think it shows up in different ways and it gets better every single way, but it's still going to show up differently. So. If I go way back in time, before Zoom existed my first company in the entrepreneurial journey of supporting families was a test prep and academic coaching and independent college counseling company. And so we would do an annual, big event, and to educate people. It was our free event that we did one time a year and we'd have a couple hundred people show up locally. Okay. Then one time Procter and Gamble asked me to do a speaking event for some of their executives who were living here in the United States, but they're maybe from Europe or, you know, they and they weren't emigrating, they were just here for a time to support them and understanding the U.S. educational system, college options, things like that And I remember even though I was very comfortable presenting, and I, before I got on the stage, I was like almost, I didn't have a panic attack, but imposter syndrome set in and it was not that familiar of a feeling to me. And I'm like, what in the heck is going on?

Wambui: What's happening?

Lisa: And a friend of mine who was working with me, she said, you know your stuff. They don't know it. They know Tampax Tampons, Crest Toothpaste, and Charmin Toilet Paper, these are all Procter Gamble brands. And you're not talking to them about that. You're talking about your area of expertise. And it calmed me and I took the stage and I was fine. Fast forward, you know, Instagram starts and we're all supposed to be doing videos and reels, right?

Wambui: Yes.

Lisa: Oh my gosh. I had such imposter syndrome around that at first. And. I was my, we're all our own worst critic. Let me remind all of us. And I would probably record a real 20 times.

Wambui: Oh my goodness.

Lisa: Oh yeah. I'd record, I'd watch it, I'd be like, Oh, I might look the wrong way, or I said that word stupidly, or whatever. I would delete it. I mean, it would be like 15, 20 times. Not a very good use of time for somebody who prides herself on efficiency, right? And so now I just had to submit content for my social media manager this week, and I did two reels for them on the first take, and I don't even re-watch them. Like, I just got like, good enough. I've had to show up to empty rooms on, Facebook Live and just talk, but I know that people are going to go back and watch it later. And you just keep showing up and it gets easier and know that there's probably another imposter syndrome around the corner, but you've already done hard things and you're going to get over this new hard thing also.

Wambui: I love that, that it gets better and it's especially with practice, and then there's another thing and you, you've done it before.

Lisa: So yes, you've done it before.
You can do hard things.

Wambui: You can do hard things. Lisa, this is a very good conversation. I can talk on and on and on, but I want to be respectful of your time, please tell my listeners where they can find you.

Lisa: Absolutely. So Flourish Coaching Co is our handle on most social places, on Twitter, you can find me by my name, Lisa Marker Robbins on LinkedIn, Flourish Coaching Co, and I'm also on there as Lisa Marker Robbins. And you know, then, if your listeners have a teenager and they're like, yeah, I don't want to mess up. major and college selections. We have a free complimentary video. It's me teaching for about an hour. , they can watch it at their leisure. They get six days of access to it. And they can find that at flourishcoachingco.com/video. And it's really how to like. Do not mess up your teenager so that they don't have limited future options or make choices that can't be undone and don't align with who they are.

Wambui: Perfect. This is going to be very helpful. I have many friends who have kids in high school, and I know my listeners as well will benefit from this. So thank you so much for your time, Lisa. I appreciate so much of what everything that you've talked about here today. I appreciate it.

Lisa: Thank you for having me, and I'm so glad we're in each other's worlds.

Wambui: Thank you.