



Strategy Mash Up

Episode #14

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Lisa Larter (00:01):

Welcome to, She Talks Business. If you're an entrepreneur, business owner or aspiring mogul, chances are you want to learn more about marketing and mastering and monetizing your business. She Talks Business is where you'll learn all of that and more. My name is Lisa Larter and I'm an entrepreneur, high school dropout, wiener dog enthusiast and your host. Let's get started.

Lisa Larter (00:24):

Hello, hello, hello, and welcome to the final episode of season one on strategy. I feel like we could talk about strategy on every single episode from now until eternity because it really does infiltrate into absolutely everything you do in business.

Lisa Larter (00:00:45):

What we are trying to do on today's show, as we wrap up the last episode of season one, is I asked Stephanie Rainey to join me, and I asked her to compile a list of questions from listeners and clients and people that have done work with me on the most common questions that they have related to strategy in their business, and I got to tell you, I have not looked at these questions. I'm just going to be riffing, which means I may trip over my words, so forgive me. There is no script reading happening here. We're just going to go through those questions today, and hopefully, that will be valuable for you.

Lisa Larter (00:01:30):

I would assume that maybe some of the questions that she may ask are questions that you have had yourself related to business strategy. I also want to just talk briefly about our next season. Our next season, starting with episode 15, is a summer of reading. I love books. I think I even own that domain, ilovebooks.com. I love books so much that I want to talk about



books for pretty much the month of July and August. I want to talk about books that have really shaped my life and view on business. Then I'm going to introduce you to some authors that I've had conversations with in my Thought Readers community. You can learn about Thought Readers at thoughtreaders.com.

Lisa Larter (00:02:17):

Essentially, it is a business book club. It is a book club for business owners who are jazzed about learning and reading the way I am. Yeah, reading is good for you. Reading makes you think and most leaders are readers. If you want to be a better leader in your business, you need to be a bigger reader. I hope you enjoy that season. All right, Stephanie Rainey, thank you for doing this with me. I always have so much more fun recording these episodes when you are with me. Thanks for being here.

Stephanie Rainey (00:02:50):

Thank you for having me. I'm so glad to be back.

Lisa Larter (00:02:54):

Yeah, it's awesome. You just made a comment to me that because you've been doing all of this work on strategy or you've been doing all of this work with me on some of the podcast episodes, you feel like you are deeply entrenched in strategy. You want to tell me about that?

Stephanie Rainey (00:03:10):

Yes. Oh, my gosh. I feel like I'm just entrenched in strategy, thinking about it, writing about it, talking about it. I realized it's a pretty deep subject. I was headed to the cottage yesterday, and I couldn't stop thinking about a comment that someone had made about the difference between arrogance and confidence, and how sometimes business owners that work with you, we get pretty confident, and then we start to worry that we sound arrogant because we've just learned so much and gained so much confidence. I think it's really linked to strategy.

Lisa Larter (00:03:50):

Strategy is such an important part of what we do. I actually think you're right. The more strategic you become and the better you get at executing on your strategy, the more your confidence and your competence grows as a

business owner. For us women, we start to feel confident about what we're doing, the “itty bitty critical committee” steps in and then they make us think, “oh you're too big for your britches”, and we worry about that. I'm glad you said it.

Lisa Larter (00:04:25):

Because for anyone out there who's feeling confident, don't dim your confidence. Let your confidence shine through, because you are an example for other people of how to be confident. If you think you're being arrogant, I am going to guess with 99% certainty that that is a story you are telling yourself. All right, Stephanie, let's get started. I can't wait to hear these questions you have for me.

Stephanie Rainey (00:04:51):

All right, awesome. The first one's going to be really basic because I like to take it back to the very basics to get started, just to define things, so it's clear in my mind. Can you define the following terms and how they relate to each other? Business strategy and marketing strategy, how are they different, and how do they intertwine?

Lisa Larter (00:05:10):

Sure, that's a great question. I think strategy is a term that gets used loosely in many different areas of business. When I look at your business strategy, I think of business strategy as the overarching strategy or the vision, so to speak, for the business. It is the big, big picture. Your marketing strategy is really a tactic. Your marketing strategy is a strategy, but it's a tactic under your business strategy, if that makes sense.

Lisa Larter (00:05:44):

Your business strategy is like the kingpin, and your marketing strategy is like a micro strategy underneath the kingpin. If your marketing strategy is done well, it is in support of the business strategy. Where people go wrong is they try to create a marketing strategy in isolation of the business strategy, and so it doesn't plug in. It's like it's this silo off by itself, instead of something that is integrated into the bigger picture. Does that help?

Stephanie Rainey (00:06:17):

I love that. That's a great definition. I'm nodding my head here. The audience can't see that. But absolutely, and I think that's where people get tripped up. They think that their marketing strategy is their business strategy, and really, they're not one and the same.

Lisa Larter (00:06:30):

No. Marketing is to attract people, marketing is everything that you do to help people know about you. But one of the examples that I used to use years ... I've used many times when I speak, is when I used to own a bricks and mortar TELUS dealership in the cell phone industry years ago, my marketing strategy would be everything that I would do to get people to come to my store. In the beginning, when the iPhone used to come out, it was on what's called allocation, because there weren't enough iPhones to support the consumer demand.

Lisa Larter (00:07:07):

What would happen is the parent company, TELUS, would have a certain number of iPhones and they would allocate them to different retailers. I knew that through allocation that I might only get maybe five phones for launch. If I put all of my eggs in my marketing basket and I had 100 people lined up outside of my store to get iPhones, and they were gone after the first five people came in, that is a perfect example of a marketing strategy gone rogue that doesn't support the overarching business strategy. Because the overarching business strategy should have said, "You know you're not going to have that many to sell.

Lisa Larter (00:07:44):

Therefore, don't create a situation where people are disappointed. Instead, design a marketing strategy that allows for a waitlist that allows for people to feel like VIPs and go through your list one person at a time without making people stand outside of your store." Do you see how the disconnect can happen? If you're not clear on the business strategy, and you go all in on the marketing, you can actually disappoint your consumer and it can backfire.

Stephanie Rainey (00:08:15):

Wow, great example. That makes a lot of sense. When I think of strategy, I always think of the Roadmap workshop, because that's just how it's been

framed for me now all these years. Can you explain to me, if I didn't know anything about a roadmap, why would I go to a Roadmap workshop? What would it offer me?

Lisa Larter (00:08:34):

Well, I do a lot of strategy work, as you know, privately with my clients. A lot of people hire me to create a strategic marketing or business marketing roadmap for them. I recognized years ago that I have what is called unconscious competence in terms of strategy development. I've done it so many times for big organizations, smaller organizations, entrepreneurs, myself, that I didn't realize that I had a process that I followed. One day I decided I needed to unpack my own process.

Lisa Larter (00:09:12):

When I unpacked my own process and really took a look at the different steps that I go through in order to get clear on the background of a business, in order to get clear on the overarching business strategy in order to support that strategy with marketing, I realized that those pieces were teachable in a workshop setting. That's why I created Roadmap. I created Roadmap so that people could sit in a room for, I don't know, two and a half, three days, and they could literally roll up their sleeves and they could write down their business goals, they could write down their buyer avatar, they could write down the overarching strategy, they could write down their products and services, and really look at how do I generate leads?

Lisa Larter (00:09:57):

Where do my leads come from? And document and discuss all of this with other people. Now, the documenting and the discussing is really important. When you document something like this, it becomes real. But when you discuss it with someone else, and they go, "Oh, yeah, that makes sense. Oh, and did you think about this, and did you think about that?" All of a sudden, you're crystallizing your strategy, you're cementing it in your mind. When you do that, you are far more able to take action. It goes from being this airy-fairy thing to a solidified concept and plan that you can implement over time.

Lisa Larter (00:10:39):

That's why you should come to a Roadmap workshop, because as an entrepreneur, you've got big, crazy ideas. I'm going to guess that if I asked

you to make a list of 10 things that you really want to do in your business that you haven't had time to do yet, you can make that list easily. When you come to Roadmap, you prioritize which of those things you need to do first, second, third, and you actually get them done.

Stephanie Rainey (00:11:03):

Huge difference between solidifying it and actually, because when it's in your head, there's so many possibilities. Then all those possibilities can overwhelm you or just keep you going around in circles.

Lisa Larter (00:11:15):

Yeah, your head is a dangerous place for strategy to live. The reason it's a dangerous place for it to live is because we tell ourselves stories about what is and what isn't possible. You may have a really, really great idea, but if you don't write it down and look with it ... I have a blog post. It's called Dancing With The Idea Fairy. If you just let the ideas float around in your head, they will eventually float away. You need to capture them. Years ago, I was in the shower and my best ideas always happened then, I had this idea for a program called the Pilot Project.

Lisa Larter (00:11:49):

Because in corporate, we always ran pilots. Pilots were a proof of concept. We always did things on a small scale before we did them on a big scale. What I realized back then, this was probably almost a decade ago, is that everybody came to me because they wanted help with marketing. But what the real problem was, is they didn't understand their business strategy, they didn't understand the mechanics of business. I had this idea for a program called the Pilot Project. As soon as I get out of the shower, I dry it off, I grab my house coat, I ran into my office, and I wrote down the ideas for all of the different modules that I wanted to help people with.

Lisa Larter (00:12:27):

Then I went to Facebook, and I said, "I just had this idea. Is this something that's interesting for you?" All these people are like, "Yes. When does it start? When can we do it?" The next thing I knew, there's been I think over 500 people have paid for the Pilot Project. I now give it away for free at the pilotproject.com, but that is an example of when you take the idea in your

head and you write it down and you discuss it with other people, you get instant validation on whether that idea is worth running with or not.

Lisa Larter (00:13:02):

Too often, we don't act on the ideas. We don't write them down to get crystal clear on what they mean, and then discuss them with buyers. Buyers, not cheerleaders. Lots of people tell you things are great ideas, but they've never spent a penny in your business. Don't listen to those people. Listen to the people that have written checks, that have clicked buttons and bought things from you before. Those buyers will tell you what they want to buy. But don't let the strategy die in your brain.

Stephanie Rainey (00:13:31):

Awesome. We've gotten into it. That's the magic behind a business strategy, to put in quotes. I know it's not magic, but it feels like that sometimes when people look from the outside. Can you give an example of a business before it had a strategy and after a strategy was put in place? What impact or transformation did you see?

Lisa Larter (00:13:54):

Yeah. I can talk about a business that I worked with in the United States. It was a psychology practice. The psychology practice had hired a bunch of coaches that were trying to apply, I'm going to call them, typical online marketing tactics to the business. So they were trying to apply marketing without getting clear on strategy. I went in there and helped the business owner really peel back the layers in their business and look at what was the driver of results in their business?

Lisa Larter (00:14:31):

When we did this and we looked at what were some of the days that were the highest performing days from a sales perspective in their business, and what caused that to happen? As we went through and we looked at the data and we sifted through the numbers, we found the strategy. We figured out what it was, and what it was, was testing. When people came to her practice with their kids for testing, testing always resulted in a higher day of sales because testing is an investment, and it resulted in follow-up therapy in most cases to support the diagnosis from the testing.

Lisa Larter (00:15:12):

We looked at that, and we made our strategy really simple. We need more testing clients. That's it. That's all. How do we become known for our testing? Then we looked at all the marketing pieces to figure out what's missing when it comes to marketing for testing. Who needs to know that we do testing? We got really clear on what marketing strategy could support testing, and over the years, they've quadrupled the size of their practice, and they've become known as the best testing practice in the city. People will drive from all over the place to go there and get their kids tested and do therapy. That's one example. It's like you have to figure out what is the lever?

Lisa Larter (00:15:59):

I think I talked about this in a previous one. The guy, Jackie, who lifted our cottage up with the ... Not our cottage, our shed. We bought a shed at the cottage, and he dropped by and said, "Oh, you got a new shed." My husband said, "Yeah, but I need to go into town and buy a ..." Whatever we call it. One of those things to crank it up, so that I can level it because it's not level. He's like, "Oh, you don't need that." He walked over by the shore and he grabbed a rock, a big boulder, he set it by the shed, he grabbed a two by four, he wedged it under the shed, he went to the end of the two by four, he stepped on it, and lo and behold, that shed lifted up. It was like magic.

Lisa Larter (00:16:35):

That's the magic of strategy. Figure out what lever is the best lever for you to get results. I had this conversation with a client of mine this week. In her practice, the most important thing that she can do is have a 15-minute free consultation with a buyer or a potential buyer. That 15-minute consultation leads to a one hour paid session, which then leads to a bigger piece of business. I said, "Well, every single thing we do with marketing needs to lead to the 15-minute consult. Doesn't matter if it's online or in-person." You need more consults to get more buyers. Plain and simple.

Lisa Larter (00:17:16):

It's figuring out what is the piece that is going to help you get the lift, get the business moving forward the fastest. It's not about the matrix of complexity. It's really about the simplicity of what is the thing that you can really focus on and have all paths lead to to propel your business forward. You and I did this with your swim school. Fill the holes. First step was respond to the low

hanging fruit. We got to get back to those people quickly. Now we need to look at the schedule, we need to fill the holes. We literally systematically looked at what pieces of the business did we need to focus on to help you with growth? That's what the magic of strategy is.

Stephanie Rainey (00:18:03):

Yes, that's exactly what we did. We took it one little lever at a time. We looked for the one that would have the biggest impact, and then once we had that one under control, we looked for the next one and we looked for the next one. I find it so interesting that looking from the outside, people looking at your business will look at that and say, "Wow, she grew a business in three years, four years, five years and then sold it," and yet, there wasn't any magic to it.

Stephanie Rainey (00:18:32):

It was really doing a strategy every single year. It's amazing how strategy actually changes your psychology. When you sit down on a regular basis and think about strategy and map out where it is you're going, I think it has a huge psychological impact. Can you talk about some of the impact that has, just that you've seen?

Lisa Larter (00:18:54):

I see people go from overwhelmed, disorganized and uncertain to confident and clear. I see them go from uncommitted to really committed. I see them go from not having a picture of what success looks like long term to being very clear about it. I still remember you and I sitting in that coffee shop, and you telling me that you wanted to build a business and you wanted to sell it for X amount of dollars and what you wanted to do with that money when you sold it. Now I knew that everything that we did was moving you towards that.

Lisa Larter (00:19:31):

There were a number of times where I asked you, "Is this still the goal?" Because sometimes you were like, "Oh, and I could do this and I could do that." I'd be like, "Okay, wait a minute, wait a minute. Yeah, you can. But let me ask you, is the goal still to sell the business for this much money? Because if the goal is to sell the business for this much money, then these are distractions from the ultimate goal." Right?

Stephanie Rainey (00:19:53):

Absolutely.

Lisa Larter (00:19:55):

But because you were clear on the ultimate goal, it was really easy to refocus and re-engage on the strategy that would help you get to the ultimate goal. You reached the ultimate goal faster than you expected.

Stephanie Rainey (00:20:11):

Way faster.

Lisa Larter (00:20:12):

Way faster. I think that that is another thing that happens from a psychology perspective, is you almost have these holy shit moments. When I have a strategy and I do what I need to do, I can make stuff happen, and that is a beautiful thing.

Stephanie Rainey (00:20:29):

Yeah. My holy shit moment was definitely sitting by the pool. I remember because I had told you what my goal was and we were working on strategy that day, and I had a five-year plan of ... I set a goal of making a certain amount in my business so that I can then go on to travel and stuff like that, and then ultimately sell it at year 11. When we reverse-

Lisa Larter (00:20:56):

[crosstalk 00:20:56] 11 years. We don't need 11 years to do this. Come on.

Stephanie Rainey (00:21:02):

Well, that was the crazy thing is that you took the goal that I had, my five-year goal, and you showed me how we could do it in one year. In one year. As you walked away, I listened and I paid attention on the edge of my seat, looked at you writing on your big board and seeing exactly what I had to do. I thought, "Gosh, that's doable. Okay, no, that's doable too," as we went through the list, and then when you walked away to go get something to drink, I burst into tears because it was exactly that. I had been so unclear about where I was going, Lisa.

Stephanie Rainey (00:21:36):

I knew, I had a gut feeling, and I felt like I was walking around in a fog. When you put it all down on the chart like that, you really do have that moment you're like, "Wow, yeah, I can do this." I didn't do it in one year, but by gosh, we did it in two years. It didn't matter even after that year one, I knew that I was on my way to what we had looked at on that board. Yeah, it completely changed the way I looked at my business.

Lisa Larter (00:22:05):

Yeah, absolutely. I think that sometimes we think that the path has got to be longer and it's got to be harder. Momentum loves speed and complexity slows you down. The more clear you get ... Think about it. Even if you're driving your car in a neighborhood, if you turn left, right, left, right, left, right, to try to reach your destination, versus just going down one road that gets you there directly, it's going to take you longer to get there. Strategy is that ability to really hone in and crystallize on what's most important and what's going to get you there the fastest. Here's what I will say. It's really hard to do it by yourself. It's really bad to do it.

Stephanie Rainey (00:22:50):

I was just going to talk about that.

Lisa Larter (00:22:50):

Yeah, it's really hard to do it by yourself. Because when you are doing it by yourself, you have all these limiting beliefs that show up and make you think that you can't do it, and you have all of these how questions that get in the way of figuring out how to do it. When you work with someone else who is not as attached to your business, they help you see what is possible. I need people to help me in my business. If we look at the Strategy Lab, you have been ... It's funny how it's all come full circle, right? I help you build your business, I help you sell your business, I help you plan the next business, and then I drag you into mine to help me, because you understand my business because you worked with me for so long.

Lisa Larter (00:23:33):

But everybody needs to ... It's this discuss point. Everybody needs to discuss the idea in order to get clarity. When you leave it in your head and you're not discussing it, you can't get the clarity you need to execute. You cannot do

that effect... if you can do it by yourself, you are a rare, special unicorn. Most people cannot do that because our limiting beliefs get in the way of us seeing what's possible. But when we start to talk about it with someone else, all of a sudden, their enthusiasm for what we want to do is infectious and we start to see how we can. But you can't just talk about it with anybody.

Lisa Larter (00:24:14):

I'm going to just make fun of my mom for a second. All right? If she's listening, mom, I love you. But I've heard this from you so many times, "Oh, my God, child. Are you sure?" I don't go to my mom for business advice. All right? Because my mom's not an entrepreneur. My mom is the type of person that would stay with one job for a really, really long time and create safety and stability in her life. Whereas I'm the person who's like, "Oh, let's try this. Let's do this." I need somebody that's going to help me take steps forward, not somebody who's going to hold me back and that's what every business owner needs.

Lisa Larter (00:24:52):

They need somebody to help them move forward, not somebody who is going to tell them, "That's a really bad idea. You shouldn't do that. You should play small, you should say safe." Don't talk to employees. Nothing against employees. I love employees. But if your spouse is an employee and they're not an entrepreneur, don't ask them for business advice. Find people, role models, who have done what you aspire to do. Not people that post platitudes on Instagram all day long, but they don't walk the talk. Find people that have actually done what you aspire to do.

Lisa Larter (00:25:28):

If you want a million dollar business, don't work with a business coach who's never hit a million dollars, and don't work with one who's hit a million dollars once because that's just by accident. If you want to sell a business, don't work with a business coach that has never sold a business. Work with somebody who has. I look at the reason I was able to help you sell your business is because I've sold mine. I've sold two. I sold one for pennies on the dollar and I sold another one for not bad money. You got to find mentors out there that don't just talk about it, but have actually done it so that they can guide you and help you do it. Sorry, I get a little fired up about that.

Stephanie Rainey (00:26:07):

I love that.

Lisa Larter (00:26:09):

I see all of these people on social media, and they're like, "Oh, business coach for this and business coach for that." Some of these people, they look like major influencers with all these followers and I've coached them and I know that they're not where they're positioning themselves to be, right? Then I look at people who reach out to me and they want to help me grow my business, and I'm like, "Dude, you don't know anything about my business. Thanks, but no thanks." I think it's really important that you inspect what you expect when you are hiring a coach. This is not a pitch to work with me by any means.

Lisa Larter (00:26:48):

But what you need to do is you need to ask really smart questions. If you want to work with a coach that has ... I don't know. Let's say they've done a million dollar launch, all right? I'm going to talk about my former client, colleague, friend, mastermind buddy, Sigrun. She has done a million dollar launch with her online program. I have not done a million dollar launch. If you were interviewing me or Sigrun and what you really wanted to do is sell an online program and have a million dollar launch, if you ask me this question, have you ever generated a million dollars with an online launch, my answer would be no.

Lisa Larter (00:27:24):

I haven't done that. But if you ask me if I've built a business to generate more than a million dollars based on services, and if I've done it in more than one business, I would say yes, and I could talk to you about that. You need to ask behavioral-based questions when you are vetting a coach to actually uncover whether or not they have done what it is that you want someone to help you do or if they are just talking about it.

Stephanie Rainey (00:27:53):

I think with all of these different people who are offering coaching of all different sorts, and you see their faces and you see their pop up ads and you see them in your scroll, in your feed when you're scrolling, you become overwhelmed, and then it's like cherries. You feel like you don't know where

you want to put your money. I know that there's a lot of fear behind going to a coach or asking for a coach or asking for coaching, but I also want to tell people that if you find the right coach, it can be the shortest shortcut you will ever take in your business.

Stephanie Rainey (00:28:26):

Because that person, when you hit the right person, that can really help you build your confidence, build your knowledge. That's something else you talked a lot about, confidence and seeing these things. But by gosh, when you sat down with my spreadsheet and we talked about different pieces of my business, the knowledge that you had, sometimes I would sit back and be like, "Oh my gosh. It's a sad situation here, Lisa, because I will never know what you know." I remember what you said to me about that as well. You're like, "Well, if we were in the pool, it would be reversed. You know everything about the pool."

Stephanie Rainey (00:29:05):

I think it's really important to, one, yes, you can be afraid because it's your brain telling you be discernible. Then the second thing is, is that also trust yourself to evaluate your coach. As a person who has been coached for so many years, they will show their true color. If you ask them enough questions, like you're saying, you'll discern what they have done, what they haven't done, but also the proof will be in the pudding right away. I had another coach before I worked with you. I knew after a couple of months that this person was not going to be able to get me to where I want it to go.

Lisa Larter (00:29:44):

That's fair, and there are people that have hired me and I haven't been able to help them get to where they want to go in. I think there are a bunch of different things that come into play. I think that the coach needs to ... You need to resonate with the coach and you need to be coachable.

Stephanie Rainey (00:30:01):

Yes.

Lisa Larter (00:30:02):

You need to be willing to do the work.

Stephanie Rainey (00:30:04):

Yes.

Lisa Larter (00:30:04):

In a lot of cases, when I have worked with people and we haven't gotten results, typically it's because they're not really able to do the work. They get distracted by other things and they're not able to focus on the things that they say that are important. Call after call after call, some of the same things come up. I have a client who just recently renewed their coaching program with me, and after the first year. Most people who coach will be coached with me for at least two to three years, at least. This individual, one of the things that I had been telling them that they needed to do is they needed to be more visible on LinkedIn. But there was something getting in the way.

Lisa Larter (00:30:46):

There was perfectionism getting in the way. On one of the coaching calls, I was like, "All right, we're just going to do this right now. Share your screen, open up LinkedIn, let's do it," and we did it together. Then the response that they got, they literally reached out to me later, and they're like, "What the heck is wrong with me? You've been telling me this for months and I haven't been doing it. I did it and, oh, my God, look at what happened." I think that sometimes, as a coach, you have to ... When somebody isn't doing it, is there an opportunity for you to do it with them so that they can actually do it? I think that's really important. But I think that there are seasons when we're not coachable.

Stephanie Rainey (00:31:27):

True.

Lisa Larter (00:31:29):

I think you have to recognize when you're not coachable. I don't believe that everybody needs a coach. I really don't. I don't have a coach right now. Alan Weiss is my mentor and I have access to him for coaching. But I'm not coaching with him regularly right now because I'm too busy implementing. But I will tell you that I know when I need help. I know when I need help and I know what to do when I need help. I'm not afraid to pay for it when I need it and to go get it. I also think that it's important that when you are hiring a coach, that you recognize who the right coach is for you.

Lisa Larter (00:32:09):

Stephanie, you're a bit of an exception, I'm going to say. Because I would tell people that I'm not the right coach for people who are in startup mode, and that I don't have the patience for people that are in startup mode. I do better with people that have ... They're a little bit more established in their business. When you came to me, you weren't that established, but your willingness was off the chart. Your willingness to communicate honestly about where you were struggling, where you were getting tripped up, what you needed help with, was there. It was all present.

Lisa Larter (00:32:49):

You were exceptionally coachable. I think that people have to ... It's not just about you picking the right coach, but the coach also needs to pick the right person and make sure that the person is willing to do what needs to be done in order for the relationship to be win-win. Because it's not fun for me either if I coach somebody and every call, they haven't taken action.

Stephanie Rainey (00:33:16):

Yes, that makes a ton of sense. Because I really was in a space where I was so firmly embedded in what I wanted that anything you said, and then once I got the advice from someone who had worked with you for a number of years, and they said, "Just do what she says." Once I started to follow that advice, I saw such an impact on my business that I was jazzed up and ready to go even further. That ties us back to strategy. Now, once you have a business strategy and you've created a revenue goal, how do you go about making a marketing strategy? You've got your goal, and what part of how do you do that with the marketing to back up what your revenue goal is?

Lisa Larter (00:33:59):

Well, first, you need to understand the pathway of how your marketing generates a lead for whatever the thing is that you're selling. I can do a superficial marketing thing and just throw stuff out there and market myself so I'm visible all day long, or I can be really specific and detailed about what it is that I'm trying to do. I can be very intentional about it. I think that the more intentional you are around your marketing, the better. But in order to be able to do that, you have to almost take that financial goal and reverse engineer it and figure out exactly what you need to reach the goal.

Lisa Larter (00:34:42):

Let's just pretend the goal is \$100,000, and you look at your business and you have a bunch of different products and services that you sell. I always tell people they should look at their business through the lens of big rocks, pebbles and sand. That is my metaphor. There's a science experiment where they take a jar and they put sand in it, they put pebbles in, and they try to put big rocks in it and the big rocks don't fit. But if you do the opposite, if you put the big rocks in the jar first, and then you sprinkle the pebbles in, and then you put the sand in, there's actually room for beer.

Lisa Larter (00:35:15):

I always want people to tell me what's the big rock. If we go back to the psychology practice, testing was the big rock. Testing was the first sale that led to the second sale. If you're trying to reach a big revenue goal, you've got to be brave enough and confident enough to double down on the biggest rock you sell. In my business, when I first, first, first started my business, my big rock was private coaching. I had a \$12,000 and an \$18,000 coaching program when I first, first started, and my strategy was simple, I need 10 private clients. I wanted to exceed \$100,000 a year in my first year of business, and so I sounded like a broken record.

Lisa Larter (00:36:03):

Everywhere I went, I was like, "I'm looking for 10 people who want to work with me this year. I'm going to bring together a group of 10, we're going to mastermind, we're going to do this, we're going to do that," but I literally sounded like a broken record. I was very intentional. Within 60 days, I had 10 people, and that first year, I did over \$160,000 in revenue because I was clear on what is the one thing I can focus on to hit my revenue. Now, if you take that 100,000, you're like, "Oh, I want to sell 1,000 programs for \$100," right? It's not going to help you the same way. It's going to be a lot heavier of a lift.

Lisa Larter (00:36:43):

The lower the price point, the harder the work is. But most people think that if the price point is low, it's easier to sell. It's the same amount of effort. It's just the confidence to actually charge what you're going to charge, and know that ... I just raised my coaching fees to \$50,000 a year for private coaching. I did that because I was having a conversation with somebody, and they were

telling me what they charge and I was like, "Oh my God, my fees are way too low," especially given the financial outcomes that I see so many of my coaching clients get year after year after year. But you have to be confident enough to actually say, "Oh, you want to work with me? Sure. This is what it looks like."

Lisa Larter (00:37:28):

If you don't have the confidence to sell that high price point or ... Forget about my price point. Whatever the highest price point in your business is, it could be \$200 instead of 20, it could be 2,000, instead of 200, it can be 20,000 instead of 2,000. It's not about the number as much as your ability to sell the most valuable thing that you offer in your business, and then deliver on the value. I can't charge \$50,000 for coaching if I can't help you get results, because you're not going to work with me very long if you're not getting results. You've got to be able to deliver the value in whatever it is that you're selling for the price that you charge, but you can't be afraid to lead with the highest value.

Stephanie Rainey (00:38:12):

I think you also have to be able to say that sentence without choking.

Lisa Larter (00:38:16):

Yeah, you do. You do, and you know what? I'm going to give you a tip for that. I'm going to say I'm a little bit beyond it now because my business has grown so much for so many years. But when I was in the earlier stages, what I would do is I would use the, well, my coaching fee is going up at the end of the year to this, or my strategy fee is going up at the end of the year to this, or next month my fee is going up to this, but if you decide within the next 60 days, I'll honor this fee. I literally would use it as a future state to get comfortable saying the number.

Stephanie Rainey (00:38:54):

That's [crosstalk 00:38:55]

Lisa Larter (00:38:54):

Now, I just have the confidence to say the number because I'm not attached to the outcome. You either want to work with me or you don't, that's okay. But I'm not attached to that outcome. The reason it's hard, Stephanie.

Stephanie Rainey (00:39:07):

Yeah.

Lisa Larter (00:39:08):

The reason it's hard, and if you're listening, the reason it's hard to say big numbers is you're attached to people's response, and you attach that response to your self worth. You go, "Oh, they don't want to spend 50, they don't think I'm worth \$50,000." That's the label you put on it. Your fragile ego doesn't want that rejection to happen. Whereas it might not be that they don't think you're worth \$50,000. It might just be they don't have \$50,000 to invest right now, and maybe they're going to come back later and they're going to be able to do that.

Lisa Larter (00:39:42):

You can't take it personally. You have to be detached from the buyer's decision, and you cannot make assumptions about what people will or will not pay to invest in their future. You don't know how much money people have under the mattress. You don't know how much money they have in the bank. Don't make assumptions about what people can or cannot afford to do. Be completely open because you just don't know somebody else's business.

Stephanie Rainey (00:40:12):

That is very true. We make a lot of assumptions sometimes, and it really ... Getting that confidence to just say it, I know it sounds like we're joking about it, but the truth is that that is what holds up a lot of people.

Lisa Larter (00:40:24):

100%. I'm glad you said that because you're absolutely right. I remember, I used to do this little QuickStart coaching program and I learned from it, because when I first started, it was a 90-day program and I was charging \$2,500, and the clients that I was getting for \$2,500 were so needy. Then I raised it to 3,000, and they were still needy. Then I raised it to 5,000, and I found going from saying 3,000 to 5,000, that was so hard to do.

Lisa Larter (00:40:55):

I had to say \$5,000 and trip over my tongue a number of times before I finally got somebody to say, "Yes, I want to do this." Then when I increased it to 65 and 7,500, it became easy. But there are those glass ceilings that we

impose on ourselves that we will stumble up against. It's okay to stumble, just keep doing it. Practice saying it to yourself, and it will be easier to say to someone else.

Stephanie Rainey (00:41:24):

You used to put it in the context of the person is not saying yes or no to you, right? They are saying yes or no to themselves. What was it? How did you phrase that?

Lisa Larter (00:41:34):

People are not investing in you, they're investing in themselves. They're-

Stephanie Rainey (00:41:37):

Yeah, exactly.

Lisa Larter (00:41:37):

... investing in their possibility.

Stephanie Rainey (00:41:40):

Yes.

Lisa Larter (00:41:40):

If somebody is not willing to invest whatever amount of money it is, it's because they're not prepared to invest that in themselves. I will tell you, women get tripped up on that too.

Stephanie Rainey (00:41:52):

Yes.

Lisa Larter (00:41:54):

I know women that won't buy themselves a \$500 handbag because they have kids, and they feel like they don't deserve it. There are times when, as women, we really want something, but the story we tell ourselves is I don't deserve to invest that much in me, or I'm afraid I won't do the work, or I'm afraid to take that risk. But then there are the other people that are like, "I'm doing this. I'm investing and I'm going to step up and I'm going to make this work." That's why you have to recognize that it's not about you. It's about

the decision to invest in themselves for the outcome that they want by doing work with you.

Stephanie Rainey (00:42:39):

I was so glad that Sue was here, Sue B. Zimmerman. It was so great to hear her interview, and she really was talking about building a team behind the idea that you have. How does building a team fit into strategy? When you're creating your strategy for the year or for six months, how do you fit that piece in of building your team?

Lisa Larter (00:43:01):

I'm glad you asked. One of my summer reading author interviews is with Dan Sullivan, who wrote Who Not How. Who is a really important part of your strategy. Because if you're trying to do everything yourself, you will eventually run out of time and you won't be able to do things. You do need a team to support you. But I think finding the team that has the right skills and abilities is really important. What I see people do is, in the beginning, everybody wants to DIY it because they are afraid to invest money. Then when they get to a point where they're like, "I can't do this all by myself anymore," they need to hire someone, they actually look for the least expensive resource because they're trying to save money.

Lisa Larter (00:43:44):

By hiring the least expensive resource, you are now committing to all the time that it takes to train and manage them. You're really not that far ahead. What people need to do is they need to hire people who know how to do what they need done, so that they don't have to micromanage them, and they can just trust them to take the baton and do it. I highly recommend that you listen to the upcoming episode, I don't know the number off the top of my head, but we'll put it in the show notes, with Dan Sullivan as I talk to him about his book, Who Not How, because hiring the right whos to be on your team is a really important part of your strategy.

Stephanie Rainey (00:44:20):

I feel like that book changed your outlook a lot on building your team.

Lisa Larter (00:44:25):

It really did, and it's cost me a lot of money. It really has. Because I am over investing this year in my whos, I am over investing in my team, but I am getting a lot of stuff done. I am getting a huge progression of work done. I'm getting better systems created. I'm really moving forward on a lot of things, including this podcast, getting the Strategy Lab up and running. I'm working on two different website projects. I wrote a book with Alan Weiss. I'm getting a lot done by making these investments, and I'm recognizing that I am going to compromise my bottom line profits for 12 months as I get all of these things up and running, and that it will pay back dividends later on.

Lisa Larter (00:45:14):

Sometimes you have to recognize that there's going to be a runway to make your money back, because you need to get some foundational work done in order for the dividends to start to pay back. It's like when you build a house, right? When you build a house, if you don't have a solid foundation, the house is going to fall apart. When you buy a house, typically you pay for the whole house, but you got to wait for them to build the foundation before they build the house. In business, you have to recognize that there are some things that take time, but it's just like a flywheel. Once it starts going, it really starts going.

Lisa Larter (00:45:55):

I've done this many times where I've invested before I felt ready, and then I've seen the business within an 18-month period really scale and grow as a result of those investments. The first time I did it, for the following three years after, the business grew at a rate of 50% per year.

Stephanie Rainey (00:46:15):

That makes a lot of sense because you've got a whole lot of great structure in place. You've taken the time to build that out with your team. Great.

Lisa Larter (00:46:23):

Right. Having said that, I'm going to speak out of two sides of my mouth, you need to invest, but you need the cash flow to invest.

Stephanie Rainey (00:46:32):

Yes.

Lisa Larter (00:46:34):

I'm a bit of a cash flow crazy person, and so I don't invest money that I can't afford to lose. Again, you have to know yourself. I'm just going to go back to the coaching thing, as an example. There are some people that will invest their last \$50,000 and they will step up every single day all day long to make that work, and there are other people that will invest it, and they'll put it on a credit card or a line of credit, and they will be paralyzed by the decision they make. They will lie in bed at night and agonize over what they did, and they will get stuck. You need to know which of those people you are.

Lisa Larter (00:47:10):

Because if you are the person that's going to get stuck, don't use credit to fund your future. When people come to me and say, "Oh, I need to take out a line of credit or I need to get a loan to work with you," I say, "I'm not the right coach for you. I don't think you should do that." I was in a room one day where another coach told people to go to the bank to finance coaching, and I was like, "Oh my God, how can you stand on that stage and tell these people they should finance coaching?" To me, that is the stupidest thing you could ever tell somebody. You should run away from that coach. You should not hire that coach.

Stephanie Rainey (00:47:46):

It's so much pressure.

Lisa Larter (00:47:47):

So much pressure, I would rather teach people how to make the money so they can fund it. I don't make people pay 50,000 upfront. Obviously, I have a payment plan. But I would rather work with people on getting the wins every day, every week to make back and exceed the money. I don't want people to go into debt. Not a great place to be.

Stephanie Rainey (00:48:09):

Yeah, that leads to exactly what you were talking about, about then you feel, as soon as you put your price out there, you have all this attachment to whether people say yes or no because you are under such pressure to perform to make money that it doesn't come across and you just ... That's a very difficult place to run your business from.

Lisa Larter (00:48:27):

Right. You can't be detached from sales if you are buried in debt, because as soon as you're buried in debt, you become desperate and you'll do just about anything to sell to people. You will over promise and under deliver instead of under promising and over delivering. When you under promise and you over deliver, you always deliver more than what your customer expects. That's how you keep people buying from you. That's how you keep people being customers for multiple years. That's how you get people referring other people to you.

Stephanie Rainey (00:48:56):

All right, we're going to take things from a different point of view because there's a lot of people that are running their businesses day to day, and they would say to you, "I'm so busy putting out fires in my business. I have something to do every moment of the day, sometimes way late into the evening, and I just don't have time to sit down and make a strategy." What would you say to those people? Is there a way that ... Can you actually fix the fires that are in your business by having a strategy?

Lisa Larter (00:49:24):

Yeah. It takes time to make time. Your processes create your profits. This is what Cassy and I actually were talking about this morning, because we actually had a fire in our business last night. When we looked at what happened with one of our clients and we looked at the process, we realized that the person who had been asked to really go back and document the process hadn't done that, and so there were some gaps in the process. We were just having this conversation. I think that failure to have a strategy is what causes you to be overwhelmed and fighting fires.

Lisa Larter (00:50:02):

Failure to document processes around how things need to be done is also part of the problem. But here's the other thing that I'm going to say, people always think they need more resources, and sometimes, they just need to be a little bit more resourceful. Right? Sometimes it is a lack of skill. It's a lack of organizational skill, a lack of time management planning, that gets in the way of results. When we say that organizational ... We call it organizational skills. It's a skill, which means it can be learned, it can be taught. If you do not have

a strategy and you are putting out fires, I am going to guess that you need some organizational skills.

Lisa Larter (00:50:51):

If you have better organizational skills, you will create better structure, better plans, better strategies, and you would have less fires to deal with. But that means you have to press pause and you have to make the time to create the strategy. That means that sometimes you got to work more, you got to work harder, because it takes time to make time. If you're thinking that you can build this business working two hours a day and not have a plan, well, guess what? You probably are wrong. There may be days that you have to work 12 hours, 14 hours to get things done. You have to choose your pain. What's more painful, the fire or putting in some extra hours for a couple of weeks to get the fires under control? There's going to be pain along the way. You have to pick which one you want.

Stephanie Rainey (00:51:35):

Looking back to my swim school, I can honestly say that I was always doing both, and that one fed the other. There were fires going on in my business, but I was also taking time to create strategies. Then the fires sometimes really indicated places where my strategy was lacking or where I needed to step up. It's like one will feed the other. When you have a fire, you learn from that, you put it out, and you create a strategy. You put that into a high level on your strategy list.

Lisa Larter (00:52:08):

Yeah. We always say don't let a good lesson go to waste, learn from it. Figure out how to reverse engineer what the cause was. Even last night, I was trying to find the cause and effect of what happened so that I can mitigate that from happening again. Too often, when things go sideways, we have a fire, we take it personally. You have to get a little bit clinical, and you have to be able to ... Yes, it's going to be frustrating. I was frustrated last night. I'm enjoying a nice glass of Chardonnay on the couch in after hours, and all of a sudden I'm fighting fires. I don't want to do that.

Lisa Larter (00:52:41):

It's not what I want my business to be about. But you have to ... In the moment, you can be ticked off about what's happening, but the next day, you

got to regroup, you got to get clinical, and you got to look at this thing through the lens of what happened, and reverse engineer where the problem is so you can fix it. Otherwise, it's just going to happen again. You can't just throw a bandaid on it and think that it's over and gone, done. It's going to happen again if you don't isolate what caused it to happen.

Stephanie Rainey (00:53:10):

We're going to talk KPIs now. I know that in the Strategy Lab, and in, I think it was Accelerate, there was so much talk about KPIs because it's so important to measure things and have metrics in your business. But everyone, at first, is like, "I don't know what to measure. What do I measure?" I'm actually going to put you on the spot, right?

Lisa Larter (00:53:30):

KPIs, for those of you are listening, are key performance indicators. Some people call them KBIs, key business indicators. Really, it's the measurements of success in your business. It's the data that gives you feedback on how you are doing. Numbers don't take things personally. Numbers don't rationalize or make excuses. They just are what they are. They are the results of the things that you choose to do in your business. For me, I think that there are some KPIs that are more important than others. What I'm going to tell you is every business is different, and you have to figure out what KPIs are most important to you.

Lisa Larter (00:54:14):

But I will tell you, in my business and in the work that I do with my clients, the number one KPI to look at is top line sales. The number two KPI to look at is bottom line profit. Because if you are not generating the profit that you need from your top line sales, then I know you either have a pricing problem or you have an expense problem, and I need to help you fix that so that your business is profitable. That's the first lane. The second lane that I want to look at is, and a question I ask my clients all the time is how much money do you have in the bank? Because I want to know that they have cash flow.

Lisa Larter (00:54:47):

I want to know that they have money in the bank to pay their bills. I want to know that they have money in the bank so they have peace of mind. That is something that I think is really, really, really important. You're building a

business to build wealth long term. If you don't have any money in the bank, you don't have any wealth, and if you look at the stats on the percentage of businesses that don't make it to the five-year point, it's because they don't have cash flow. People think that customer service is the most important thing in a business. It's not. It's cashflow.

Lisa Larter (00:55:17):

Because if you don't have money, you don't have a business. Because if you run out of money, you can't buy stuff, you can't operate your business. Cash flow to me is such an important thing, but it is the result of top line sales and bottom line profit. You can't accumulate cash flow if you don't profit. That's the third thing. Then the fourth thing that I would look at is really the marketing piece, but I think it's about the traffic, to leads, to sales conversion. How much traffic do you get? How many leads do you get? How many buyers do you get? Because you have to be able to look at those three pieces to know whether you have a marketing problem or not.

Lisa Larter (00:56:01):

Because you can have tons of traffic and zero customers because you can't close a sale. Those three things to me are diagnostics to help me help you. Are you getting the wrong traffic? Do you not have a sales process? Are your customers not staying because you're not doing a good job? But each of those three pieces allows me to drill down and then identify what the marketing needs to do to support the right traffic so that you can close the right business and do a great job servicing your clients. Those are the numbers that I would pick.

Stephanie Rainey (00:56:39):

You totally foiled the question that I was going to ask you because I was going to actually throw a bunch of different kinds of clients at you and say, "What would be your top three for these?" But now I know the top three for all of them.

Lisa Larter (00:56:49):

Yeah, it's the top three for everyone. That's all.

Stephanie Rainey (00:56:50):

All right, great.

Lisa Larter (00:56:52):

That's what business is about. A business exists to generate a profit. If you do not have a customer, you do not have a business. If you're not generating a profit, you're not running a business.

Stephanie Rainey (00:57:08):

All right, I got one last question for you having to do with strategy. You ready to wrap up this season?

Lisa Larter (00:57:12):

I'm ready. Let's do it.

Stephanie Rainey (00:57:14):

All right. This links back to the first webinar that I ever listened to and how I met you in the first place. Can strategy help me reignite my passion for my business if my passion for my business has dwindled and I'm not even sure I want to continue running it?

Lisa Larter (00:57:32):

Oh my gosh, yes. Because what happens is, when you are fighting fires, when you are working hard and you're not making any money, when you feel like you're exerting all of this effort and you're not making anything work, then your passion and your enthusiasm for your business starts to dissipate, and you start to think, "Man, I should just get a job. I am not cut out for this. This is really hard. I wish I'd known. I feel like I can't do anything right." All of that stuff starts to come together, and it's like this big dark cloud that you're carrying over your head.

Lisa Larter (00:58:14):

But when you sit down and you construct a strategy and you look at all the things that are really getting in the way of what you're doing, when you look at all that stuff and you reconnect with the purpose behind why you want to do what you're doing, you can get a lot more clarity on what the priorities are from the strategy and you can let go a lot of stuff that maybe you think is important that isn't important. For example, I really don't care how many people follow you on Facebook. That's not an important metric. But a lot of people, oh my goodness, if I had \$1 for every person that sends me a

message on Instagram to tell me they can help me get more followers, I'd have a lot of money.

Lisa Larter (00:59:04):

Everybody thinks Instagram followers are the cat's meow. I really don't care. That doesn't impress me if you don't have customers. What happens when you don't have a strategy is you focus on all of these tactics that you're weighting as important and they likely are not. Because you're making everything important and it feels like you're walking through quicksand, it's like you need somebody to lift you up out of the mud so that you can see where you're headed and you can get all that slime off of you and focus on what is going to help you get there fast. Strategy will reignite your passion, and if it doesn't, then that strategy will tell you what you need to do, which is divest of your business.

Lisa Larter (00:59:49):

Sometimes you're allowed to just say, "I don't want this business anymore." That's okay. You did that. You sold your business. I sold my business. There came a point where I was like, "This business is not the right business for me anymore. I want to exit." Exiting your business is part of the pathway when you build a business. It's okay to exit your business. But look at what's going on and organize it and clean it up and make your business worth something so that you can at least sell it to somebody else who has passion on the other end if creating the strategy and redesigning how you do things doesn't make it easier.

Stephanie Rainey (01:00:28):

Well said. Thank you-

Lisa Larter (01:00:31):

You're welcome.

Stephanie Rainey (01:00:32):

... for all your answers.

Lisa Larter (01:00:33):

This was fun. Strategy, it sounds so complicated and complex. Really, strategy is just about getting clear on where you're headed and what the most

important things are for you to do and focus on. I'm going to say one last thing that I think is important in strategy, and that is minimizing the voices you listen to. I think that sometimes what happens is, as an entrepreneur, you're on this journey to improve your business, and so you start to follow a million and one different marketers and advisors and business people online. You start to listen to everybody's opinions, and everybody's opinions are different.

Lisa Larter (01:01:16):

Then all of a sudden, you feel like you have to do all this stuff. Maybe if you just focused on one thing, you would actually be getting more results. But you are fragmenting your attention, you are letting too many voices into your head, and those voices are drowning out your own voice. It's important that you recognize when that happens. That happened to me years ago. It was 2014, and I remember. I unsubscribed to everybody because I felt like I was so caught up in what everybody else thought I should do in my business that I had lost touch with what I wanted to do in my business.

Lisa Larter (01:01:53):

I think it's important to have an advisor in your business. But I think it's important to do the work that you want to do with that one, maybe two advisors, and stop listening to everybody else until you've gotten everything you can from the people that you have chosen to listen to, then go find a new voice. But don't let everybody else's opinions drown out your own judgment and drive for this business you created. You started this business for a reason. You had big hopes, dreams and goals. Get back to what they were and you can make really amazing things happen.

Stephanie Rainey (01:02:32):

I think that was the beauty of every year doing strategy with you, is that I did the homework. You gave assignment one time, and I would make myself do it every time before we sat down the strategy, simply to reconnect to what my goals and hopes and where I wanted to go and what lifestyle I wanted for my family and the commitment I had made to them. That drove everything else. It made everything else worth doing.

Lisa Larter (01:02:56):

Absolutely. Absolutely. All right. Thank you, Stephanie, for being here, for bringing all those questions to the table. This was fun.

Stephanie Rainey (01:03:05):

Thanks for having me, Lisa.

Lisa Larter (01:03:06):

It was awesome. If you are listening, thank you for listening. I know this show went a little long, but I hope it was valuable. I love having these little riff sessions with Stephanie. I hope you got value. If you have a question about strategy, hit me up on Instagram or social media or email me, let me know, leave a comment on the blog, and stay tuned for next week because I'm going to share a bunch of books that have been hugely impactful in my life. It's a solo episode where I'm going to introduce you to some books.

Lisa Larter (01:03:37):

Then every episode after that, for the next few weeks, I'm going to introduce you to some amazing conversations that I've had with authors of books that I also think really highly of. If you're looking for some inspiration through reading, you will not want to miss season two, which is all about a summer of reading. If you enjoyed the podcast, do me a favor and leave a review. Do you know that the vast majority of podcasts have less than 20 reviews? Do you realize how jazzed I get every time I see a review. It makes me feel so good. If this helped you in some tiny little way, I want to hear from you alright? Thank you so much for being here listening and we'll see you next week. Bye for now.

Lisa Larter (01:04:19):

Thank you for joining me for this episode of She Talks Business. If you enjoyed the show, you know the drill, leave us a review, tell someone about it and join the conversation on social media. Thanks for listening and until next time remember, done is always better than perfect.



Lisa Larter is a Business Strategist, Digital Marketing Expert, Author and Speaker.

The Lisa Larter Group helps their clients to formulate marketing strategies that support their business goals and objectives. Lisa provides consulting & advisory services, and implementation services including social media & content management, book marketing, and website design.

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Stephanie is a former high school drama and science teacher who has used her B.A. in education to design innovative learn to swim programs for both her former children's swim school, The Aqua Life Swim Academy and now her new adult swim school, The Swimologist. Stephanie has also been a Special Olympics swim coach and Head Coach of a high school swim team.

Stephanie is also currently working with Lisa Larter as a podcast researcher and adviser.

