

E121- Why Your Teaching Job is Riskier Than an Online Business (And How to Build True Security).

Welcome to The Empowered Edupreneur Podcast. My name is Michelle Smit, and I am an ex-teacher turned online business coach for Edupreneurs, the owner of Digiteach and a six-figure entrepreneur. I am in love with empowering educators, just like you to create freedom filled online businesses and lives they love.

If you are looking to uplevel your skills, your finances, your mindset, and change the trajectory of your life as an educator in business, then you are in right place. Think of this podcast as your weekly dose of business and mindset development to help unlock the infinite potential within you to play bigger with your life and go after your dreams.

We are going to have so much fun together. So thank you so much for pushing play today. Now let's dive in.

Hello. Hello. I hope you're doing fabulously today. So good to have you here with me. And today I am going to talk about something a little bit thought provoking, I would say. And certainly it's something that would test the beliefs that many of us may have. That the world tends to have, society tends to have. And I want this podcast episode to open your mind.

And think about things in different ways, potentially, which, hopefully it will do. Now, before I dive into this episode, I want to let you know that I'm running the first live free Masterclass of 2025 and it's happening soon. It's on the 18th of February and it's for educators, teaching business owners, online teachers, freelance teachers, anyone who is an educator at heart, but wants to start an online business and specifically launch online courses and group programs.

So if you have a desire for big impact, big income expanding your skill set, expanding your influence, creating something more in your life. And that's with especially focusing on courses and group programs. Then definitely this is the masterclass for you. I'm going to be sharing some awesome stuff.

It's going to be really, really impactful. And I'm going to be sharing my four-step method for launching your course or group program and flooding it with students that really can't wait to work with you. It's a live session and you're going to be able to ask your questions and I can answer all your questions live. And I'm giving a gift to those of you who are there live, which is an awesome course, actually. Which is going to help you launch your course and especially with the tech side, because I know tech is a little obstacle.

So, if you're there live, you'll get that course as a gift. And I'm really, really excited to host that masterclass. And another thing that's happening, which is really exciting is I'm opening the doors to Digiteachers Biz Academy Gold. And that is something that only opens a couple of times a year.

But this time, the exciting thing is that the offer is completely changed, and it is incredibly looking. I'm so excited to share with you what it's going to be. And those of you at the Masterclass, you'll learn about it first. But basically, it's going to be way more helpful and way more supportive to help our clients get results in their online business and in their launches.

Because I'm taking it from being three months to being 12 months of support and it's at a crazy price as well. And so it's going to include a lot of stuff which I'm really, really excited about. So that's also happening. So if you've been waiting for the time to join DBA, this certainly would be the time. I'm so excited.

All right. So now that I've chatted to you about that, let's dive into this episode. It's all about why your teaching job or any job, but most of you may be educators. But why any job is riskier than an online business and how to build true security.

So here's the thing. If you had told me years ago that my online business would be more secure than my teaching job at the time, which was an ESL teaching job. I would have laughed in your face because, like most people, I was raised to believe that a real job equals stability. And I'm doing a real job with little bunny fingers, if you know what I mean, quotation marks.

When I was an ESL teacher, I did have a guaranteed paycheck. It felt guaranteed. My income fluctuated, but it felt guaranteed in the sense that if I taught, I would earn. And it was pretty predictable. I knew how much I was going to make every month and things like that.

It did fluctuate, but it was within reason. Now, I was an ESL teacher. I was a contractor, so I didn't have all the benefits. Now, obviously, if you're a classroom teacher or in a job, you might have other benefits that come with that, which makes it, obviously, more desirable. So, anyways, we go to school, we're told to get a job, and then we get a job, right?

And we get this guaranteed paycheck, which you think is guaranteed. But let me tell you what they don't tell you that ain't guaranteed. Nothing in terms of jobs is guaranteed and it's so interesting because I was an ESL teacher, then I luckily started my business on the side of my job, and then a couple of years in, I think two years into my business, once I had already started making six figures. I think it was literally like the month or two when I decided to quit my teaching job. It was very close.

I can't remember exactly, but I decided to quit my teaching job and go all in on my business. And the entire online ESL industry basically crashed. And that meant people were losing jobs left and centre. Thousands and thousands of people were losing jobs. And it was absolutely terrible. And then I was like, wow, that's crazy.

The whole time I thought a job was more secure, but actually I'm living through this epic crash of an industry. And I'm not being touched by it because I have an online business. I've been building it on the side. I have complete control over it, and I was unaffected by it, thankfully. But a lot of people were affected by it.

And so that was like a big aha moment for me where I was like, geez, we are not actually secure in our jobs. And having an online business and building skills to make your own money is where security comes from. At least that's what it was for me. It gave me security then. And that was 2020, now we're in 2025, so that's five years ago.

Since then my online business has been my full-time income. I have never picked up another job again. And it supported me in ways that my teaching job could never have supported me. And that's given me much more security. Now, of course, there are income dips in business that is normal.

And you may have months that are not good. That is normal. But I've made it every month for five years now. Let's dive into it, I guess. Firstly, what I want to

say is this. I want to share that business is risky, okay? I'm not saying it's not risky. But there are things you can do as a business owner to create security.

And these are the couple of things that you can do as a business owner to build up that security. Number one, building up a buffer for the low-income months. So saving up a buffer amount of money for when you have dips in income. That's really important in your personal finances, but also in your business finances.

Number two, investing money. So your money grows on the side and works for you. So that's really important as well. Taking some of the money that you've built from your business, putting it into some investments that can work for you. Number three, being smart with your business finances and keeping on top of profit margins and costs.

Don't get super lazy. Don't let costs just slip through. Be on top of it. Cut costs where you can. Try keep profit margins good. Number four, risk management. So taking calculated risks in your launches, in your promotions, in your costs, with the amount you spend and seeing how much you make back and do all of that in a calculated way.

I spend a lot of money during launches. People think I'm crazy, but it's completely calculated. I know my numbers. I know what I can do. It's not gambling when you know your numbers. And then the next thing is really just building up a community, building up relationships, and building up an audience, an email list of people who trust you and believe in you, and want to work with you, and all of that.

Building up a personal brand, basically, is what you want to be doing. Now, if you can do all of these things, then I believe your business is pretty secure. If you have low-income months, you'll always have a buffer. If your business falls apart for some reason, something happens and business just crashes, then you should always have at least an email list and an audience of people who trust you that you can provide solutions to and sell things to.

So given all of that information, if you have these things, if you're doing these things. Then I think that business is more secure than a job. And I'm going to chat into the ways of thinking because I know that we've been taught that a job is more secure, but I believe that it's a false sense of security and I believe

that it keeps us locked into a traditional system that does not necessarily work anymore.

So a hundred years ago in the industrial age, a job was the secure thing. But now we are living in a very different time. We're living in the digital age. And tech and going online and all of this stuff is the future. It's what we're shifting into.

And what we're finding is a lot of people are moving their skills online instead of in jobs and they're taking back their power and they're creating their own personal brands and they're selling their own products online and they're making way more money. Much more scalable, impacting way more people. And it's something we've never seen before years and years and years ago.

And so the world is changing. And so this is what's happening. And this is why I really think that moving into online business is actually such a secure boss move. It's not a risk. Now here are three points why. Number one, my job could have disappeared overnight. And it did for many, many people.

Luckily, I was not one of those people. But many people lost their jobs in the ESL industry, and my business has kept me secure for years. I was a good ESL teacher, my students loved me, I was doing everything right. And then I realized the company didn't care about me. And people were getting fired.

I remember people would just get let go. Because you were a contractor, you could just be let go, and it was quite uncertain. And there was always this feeling of like uncertainty, and I saw in the ESL industry people just getting laid off with zero warning, big budget cuts. Random policy changes. One day you have a job and the next day you didn't have a job and that was the case for that. And I've seen it in all kinds of industries and jobs like people just losing their jobs.

And that's when I understood something huge. My security wasn't in my hands as long as I was working for someone else. And giving away my power to someone else the whole time. And that was a realization. It happened a couple of times. And I realized actually, building up my own skills.

Empowering myself with particular skills, money making skills that no one could take away from me that would help me generate my own income online, or even in person. You can use it in person as well. I guess these skills are

transferable but being able to generate your own income and have that ability to make your own money, sell your own products, that's yours.

No one can really take that away from you. Yes, industries change, and you have to adapt. You have to be adaptable, you have to be flexible if you're a business owner. You have to be able to move with the markets and evolve and grow and shift and change. That is true. But in the online space, in the online business space. People are just making so much money selling their own stuff with their personal brands.

13-year-olds on YouTube are making millions of dollars. That's where we're at right now. You went and studied your master's, and you got your PhD, and you spent a thousands of dollars in student loans. And now you're in debt and now you can't get a job.

And I've seen it over and over again, it makes me so angry. UGH, it makes me so angry that people go and do this, because the world has changed! It's not about going and getting the degree anymore. It used to be about that, but now the world has changed. And going and getting that job, it's not actually secure, because firstly, you might not even get the job because it seems so many people are so qualified and unable to find traditional jobs.

And then you've got people who are in jobs that are just getting fired and losing their jobs. And it's so clear to me. And when you have your own business, you are not at the mercy of someone else's decisions. And for me, that is security. You having the power to make the decision is security, in my mind.

Yes, as I said, you got to be adaptable, you got to evolve, you're going to have tough months. It's not always going to be easy, but you have the power to make all those decisions. No one else is making those decisions for you. And so often people get fired from their jobs and then they can't find another job and they've only built skills in one area, and they don't know how to make money.

It's very, very stressful. Nothing about that feels secure to me. So that's number one. The second point is. My online business has paid me way more of what my online teaching job gave me. So, let's look at just educators, even though so many people in the world are underpaid and overworked. But educators are typically underpaid, and they're overworked, period.

Now, I would work for 20 an hour, and I would have to teach hours and hours every day. And I could not increase my hourly rate. I was at the top. 20 was the top. Can you believe it? And at 26 years old, I had hit my income ceiling, and I was like, cool, this is great. And I was like, I don't have any money to invest.

I don't have any money to save. I don't have any money to enjoy my life. And then I saw online business owners making multiple times the amount of money doing work that they loved from anywhere in the world. Traveling and working. And then I was like, this is crazy. So I went and found a mentor, invested and took my knowledge and created my own programs, started my online business.

And I broke free from that paycheck. I started making six figures in my business. The first time I remember I made more in five days than I had in my whole year of online ESL teaching. So I made my entire yearly ESL teaching salary in 20 minutes. And I promise you, that is what happened.

We had a launch and within 20 minutes, so many people bought. that I made 20,000 in 20 minutes. Boom! Mind blown, right? And that was crazy. And so what I'm saying is that I had this money. I was able to take that money, and I was able to save more money.

I was able to invest some money. I was able to pay myself more. And so for me, that gave me more security. I felt more secure. I never felt security in my job. But when I started making my own money, I felt the sense of security. Like I can do this. I can generate my own money. This is possible. I don't have to wait for someone else.

I can do this myself. And that is empowering. And let me tell you, that is a whole lot more secure than waiting for a 2 percent raise every year when inflation is like 10% every year. So for me, that is security. And then the third point is if you build an email list and an audience who trust you, then I believe you are solid for life.

Now, this is where it gets good because the real security in an online business, it's not just about money and all of that. It's actually about the relationships you build, the community you build. And here's what I mean. Over the years, I've built an email list and an audience of people who genuinely trust me. Especially past people who I've worked with my past students, anyone who's come into DBA, they trust me because we've worked closely together.

They see I genuinely care about them. And so, there's that level of trust there. Now, because of that level of trust, when I create offers, they trust me that I'm going to genuinely give a good experience and you'll get more people buying because of that, right? So that means that no matter what happens in the economy, no matter what platform changes, no matter what trend comes along.

I have a direct line to people who trust me enough to invest. Trust is everything when you're making investments online. And so building up that trust building up that community and email list of people. And even if you do pivot niches and stuff. I've already had a niche pivot before I still had people buying from me even though I was in a different direction. And so it's because of that level of trust. So when you have an audience, you don't need a boss deciding your paycheck.

You don't need permission from a school. You don't need an employer or a system that undervalues you and tells you what you should do. If you can cultivate an email list and an audience and you can show up, provide value, create real relationships with people. Genuinely be of service, and you put some offers out there, people are going to buy from you.

People are going to want that. No one can really take that away from you. You can't diminish unless you totally destroyed your reputation by doing something terrible, which you're not going to do, right? So for me, that is security. So those are three big reasons why an online business is actually the more secure thing then staying in a job.

And as the world changes, as we keep moving into this digital age, it's going to become much more normal to have an online business. It's going to become much more normalized to have a personal brand. People are going to be selling their own stuff much more. People are going to be buying from other people. Things are changing. The whole schooling industry actually has to change because it's outdated and it's not actually working for the world we live in today.

Alright, I hope that was interesting for you and opened your mind a little bit and maybe shifted a few beliefs. Now before I say goodbye, just a reminder. I've got my live master class coming soon. If you are feeling like you want to make more money, have more impact, create amazing skills, build skills,

expand yourself, grow, then I really want you to come to this masterclass. Because I'm going to show you at least how to create and offer a course or a group program that can make you money for years to come.

I'm going to show you how to sell it specifically because the selling part is hard. So that when you sell it online, people want to buy from you and they're excited to work with you. And basically, I'm going to help you take your teaching experience and turn it into an online business that actually supports you and creates a life of freedom.

I'm really excited to share that with you. The spots are limited in the virtual room. And I don't know when I'm doing another live one. The last live one I did six months ago. So definitely sign up. And as I said, I'm giving a free gift to those who are there live. So you can click the link in the show notes or on my Instagram bio and get your seat.

And if you can't find it, just message me and I'll send it to you. Have an amazing rest of your day and I will chat to you soon.

Thank you so much for listening to today's episode. I have some exciting news for those of you who are wanting to learn more about how you can launch a course or group program online and fill it with dreamy students.

I'm hosting my Free Quadruple Your Teaching Income Through Launching Courses, masterclass soon. I'm going to share my four-step launch success system that will help you launch any offer online and fill it immediately. It is a life changing system that has helped me make hundreds of thousands of dollars online, as well as change the lives of many of my students.

This masterclass is free. It's going to be live. There's just one session and there are limited spots in the virtual room. Click the link below to join us.

I appreciate you so much and I can't wait to connect with you in the next episode. In the meantime, go create a business and life you love.