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LIFESCAPE COACH
Liberate Your Legacy

25 Signs Your Business Needs Developmental Coaching



25 SIGNS YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS DEVELOPMENT COACHING

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As business owners, we've been there. The passion you once felt for your work has started to fade. The daily grind has sapped you of the motivation to grow and innovate. You've started to wonder whether owning your own business is still the right path for you.

There isn't a single successful small business owner who hasn't experienced these challenges. So, what separates those who persevere and go on to greater success from those who give up?

The savviest business owners know that successful businesses are not created in isolation. It's simply too great a challenge, requiring too many skills, for any one person to have all the answers. Because of the breadth of experience required to operate a successful business, it's incredibly valuable for owners to invest in growing their skills in areas where they tend to struggle. Developmental business coaching helps small business owners name and problem-solve those areas on their way to smart, sustainable growth.

At The Lifescape Coach, we believe most business owners' challenges fall into five categories:

- Financial
- Relational
- Developmental
- Operational
- Emotional

We'll explore what these challenges look and feel like, and how our coaching model is designed to address them.

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Before diving into this list of 25 signs, it's important to note that our founder, Monique Allen, experienced each and every one of these hurdles over the nearly four decades of building her multi-seven figure landscape company, [The Garden Continuum, Inc.](#)

Growing a business through trial, error, and hard knocks was the only way in those early days because the idea of coaching was not in the mainstream. If one found a coach, it was far too expensive for a business in bootstrap mode. Eventually, Monique realized that getting professional guidance wasn't an expense, it was a business-building strategy, and so she began a decade of working with pros in the industry as well as those outside the industry on the road to mastering the art of entrepreneurship. As you read through these challenges, keep a mental tally of those that feel most salient for you. You may find that your most pressing challenges fall into one specific category, or that you're experiencing challenges in multiple areas. Linked within each category are Lifescape Coach blog posts that explore a specific challenge in more detail.

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

These are often the most obvious challenges for business owners to identify. In each phase of developing The Garden Continuum, one or more of these challenges came up. As you grow your business, the financial challenges morph to fit the size of your bank account. One consistent outcome with our clients is the realization that individual money blocks can take you off course. Things like fear of talking about money, discomfort with asking for the sale, or feeling guilty about raising rates, can slow and even stall a business growth trajectory.

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Here are some of the most common issues our clients face:

- **Inconsistent cash flow:** You can't predict when and how much money will be coming in month to month.
- **Small profit margins:** Your client base is healthy, but that isn't translating to healthy profits.
- **Struggling to make sales:** Whether the difficulty lies in identifying strong sales leads or closing deals, new sales are stagnant.
- **Failure to market or self-promote:** Marketing is seen as an expense and treated like an afterthought, so it's not robust or focused enough on reaching your ideal client.
- **Weak pricing strategy:** You haven't done in-depth research on what your prices should be, and/or have not examined your pricing structure in years.

HOW COACHING CAN HELP WITH FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

Every person we've partnered with in coaching has experienced the ability to make more money as a result of their engagement in the coaching process. Practicing the simple skill of asking for a sale has helped several of our clients close deals, when in the past they came up short. Introducing options into a sales pitch helped one of our clients add 25% to one project simply because the client hadn't known of that option at the initial conversation. Just one season of coaching and focused commitment enabled one of our clients to explode through the million-dollar ceiling after spending years hovering below it.

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Simple tweaks to how you think about money, sales, pricing, and even expenses will help you increase your revenue. As we help our clients identify barriers to success, they can then implement small changes that lead to financial gain — whether through selling a design, closing a deal, adjusting pricing, or securing more referrals.

RELATIONAL CHALLENGES

Seventy percent of entrepreneurs report working well over 40 hours a week, and twenty-nine percent say that hiring is extremely difficult. Freedom comes when you are no longer part of those statistics, and developing your relationship muscles is a huge leap in that direction. However, it is not always easy to manage the vast array of relationships that come with owning your own business. Owners must successfully cultivate internal relationships with employees, as well as external relationships with clients and vendors, and one's larger business network.

In our initial conversations with clients that come to us for coaching, nearly every one reports having trouble with navigating difficult employees, unpredictable contractors, or unappreciative clients. This is because most entrepreneurs come to their businesses with industry skills and not professional relationship skills. Early in the coaching process, we are able to identify toxic employees and clients, negative owner habits, and poor team structures that when fixed can almost magically bring a spark of inspiration and motivation back into the heart of the owner.

Some of the biggest challenges in this area include:

- **Being unable to say no to clients who aren't a good match for your business:** There is a mismatch between the clients you want to be serving and the ones you have.

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- **Difficulty navigating client pushback:** You have trouble setting boundaries or navigating awkward conversations with clients.
- **Difficulty in dealing with toxic employees:** You are drained by interactions with these employees, and they negatively affect their coworkers.
- Being stuck in unproductive business partnerships: You're tethered to partnerships that you've outgrown or that don't actually benefit your business.
- **Being unable to delegate (wearing "too many hats"):** Handing off tasks to other employees feels like more trouble than it's worth.

HOW COACHING CAN HELP WITH RELATIONAL CHALLENGES

Successful business owners take it as a given that the responsibility for your business lies with you. This is simple to say and hard to learn, because it's very easy to blame clients or employees for things that aren't working. Ultimately, the person at the intersection of all of these relationships is you, the owner.

From time to time, all of us find ourselves running in circles, tethered to negative beliefs like a dog tied to a stake. Many clients come to us wondering why it is so awfully hard to navigate people. Relationship work is hard in our personal lives, so it stands to reason that it would be challenging at work. At the Lifescape Coach, we have a central focus on people; how to navigate the people you've got with you now, and how to become intentional about the people you want around you in the future. Ultimately, the tribe you find yourself connected to is more than just your responsibility, it is your choice. We help owners clarify what they want and what they need so they can do the work to build better, more productive relationships.

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DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGES

Developmental challenges occur when there is a disconnect between an owner's goals and operating philosophy, and their day-to-day activities. The business you have today may be quite different from the business you started. Success has a sneaky way of changing the playing field faster than owners can keep up. Sometimes the dysfunction can sneak up on you as you're focused on the work of the day. And then all of a sudden, you realize nothing is working.

Owners with developmental challenges may feel:

- Unsure of who your ideal client is: Rather than creating an ideal client profile, your approach to marketing has been haphazard.
- **Unable to differentiate your services from your competitors:** You haven't identified what makes YOUR business unique and attractive to clients.
- Distracted by activities that aren't growing your business: You're having to push aside actual growth strategies because you can't find the time with all your other responsibilities.
- A sense of entrenchment (Can't break away from "the way we've always done it"): There is some reluctance or fear to try new strategies or ways of doing business.
- Unsure of who to turn to for connection and networking: You can't identify a strong support network of professionals you trust.

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HOW COACHING CAN HELP WITH DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGES

Being in business for yourself is like being married. It's not enough to simply say "I do" on Day 1. Just as you have to choose every day to stay married, you must choose every day to remain self-employed. And just as marriages grow and evolve over the years, businesses must do the same.

The world likes to profess the "happily ever after" of marriage and the "freedom and success" of self-employment as though it's a given that this will be true. In fact both require commitment, grit, and perseverance. Active choice must remain as a vibrant tool used to navigate each hurdle and opportunity that comes your way. The minute we believe we "have no choice" in the matter is the moment we start to feel our energy draining away.

The adage, "new level, new devil" is one that we love at the Lifescape Coach, because we know that as you evolve in business you will need to keep your eyes on all of the people, systems, equipment and skills that you used on your growth journey. The new challenges (devils) at the new iteration of your business will require a fresh perspective.

Think of it this way: When you get married it's just the two of you - easy peasy, right? Add a puppy... then what? Add one child... Now what? Add another kid or a parent in need of your care... Okay, hold on a second! As each challenge presents itself, we think, "Sure, I can handle that." But as the challenges compound, all bets are off.

What worked for you in the first few years may not be sufficient to achieve the kind of growth you want — for your business, yourself, and your team of professionals. We empower clients to make the leap into thinking differently about the right structure, philosophy, and partners that will help you grow.

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OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Operational challenges are often the result of insufficient business “infrastructure.” What does that even mean? When you are an owner-operated business with maybe just two or three employees, you will have direct “control” over how the work unfolds each day. As soon as you begin operating with multiple teams, you are no longer at the center of it all. That “control” is no longer in your hands, you have to “trust” others to operate as you would. This is where operations can come off the rails.

If your business has grown too fast or is struggling to keep up with evolving industry practices, you are likely experiencing some of the following:

- Lack of digital presence: You have an over-reliance on “word of mouth” or haven’t updated your website and social media accounts in some time.
- **High employee turnover:** You’re too busy recruiting and training new employees to invest in your team’s learning and development.
- Inefficient collections: You lack a cohesive system for managing billing and accounts.
- **Difficulty creating and maintaining a schedule:** You have trouble setting and enforcing parameters around how you spend your time and how your team schedules theirs.
- **More time spent being reactive than proactive:** You’re waiting for things to happen and responding when they do, instead of making things happen for yourself.

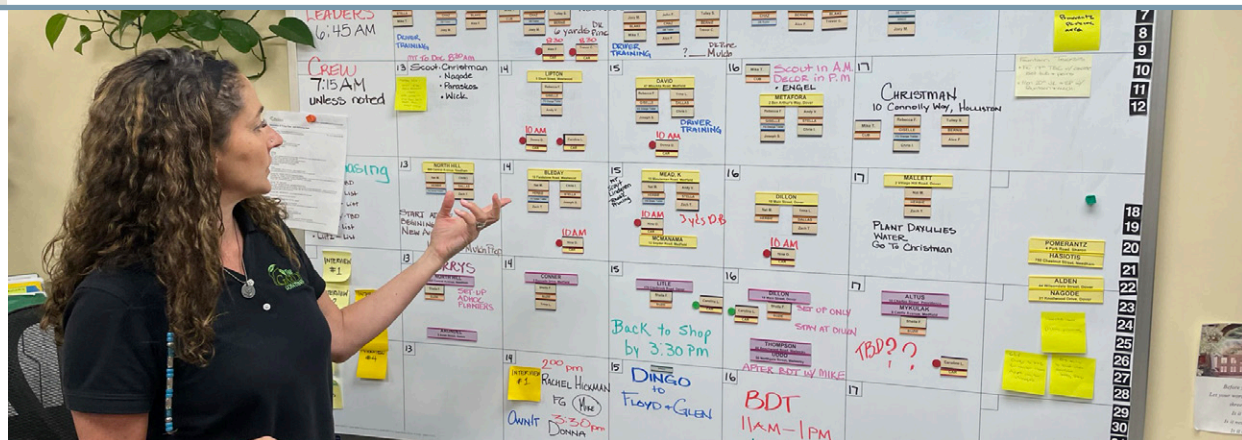
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HOW COACHING CAN HELP WITH OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Sometimes, tackling operational inefficiencies feels so overwhelming that we can't bring ourselves to make a start. Operations is the work that's done in service or product delivery as well as the daily activities that support and sustain your business. If you can't get invoices out, you'll have a cash flow problem. If you can't train your teams, you'll have a service delivery problem. The list goes on.

Our clients achieve small wins early on in the coaching process by identifying micro movements they can make in their business. Those small wins generate the emotional, physical, and mental energy to keep going. By chunking the big hurdles down to smaller bits, it's less daunting to do the work to make change. Incremental small changes have a huge impact when compounded over time. Examples of this are as simple as learning calendar blocking, hiring a trainer to teach your team, or working with a virtual assistant to help with invoicing. These small shifts help our clients develop the courage to pursue more change and the belief in their potential to turn small wins into big ones.

EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES

To own your own business is to place a lot of responsibility on your own shoulders. Experiencing ups and downs over the course of many years can take a toll on your emotions, and this is sometimes difficult to name. We hear the term "burnout" more now than ever. In fact, when our founder started out (in the mid 80's), no one would dare to share their stress openly. At least now, it's no longer taboo.

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But how do you know if you are suffering emotionally in ways that could be avoided? Consider whether you identify with the following:

- **Feeling overwhelmed:** There seem to be too many areas that need your full attention.
- **Experiencing burnout:** You're going through the motions while numbing any sensations in your heart, mind, body.
- **Feeling isolated:** You feel that no one understands the pressure you're facing, and no one can help.
- **Lacking work-life balance:** You feel you can't take time off from work or things will come unraveled.
- **Dreading the next work day:** Work feels like a drag, with few opportunities to earn "wins" giving rise to anxiety and stress.

HOW COACHING CAN HELP WITH EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES

One of the biggest gifts the coaching process can provide is validation. Owning a business isn't easy, and you're not the first person to wonder if you're really cut out for this. Time and again, we see a weight being lifted from our clients' shoulders as they realize there is someone else who understands what they've been going through and who can help light the way forward.

Through our coaching process, we look to create a fully integrated person in an entrepreneurial experience. It is easy to think of oneself as "just a business owner," or someone who has only one set of discrete skills. Over time we help our clients transform to see themselves as multi-dimensional and feel whole.

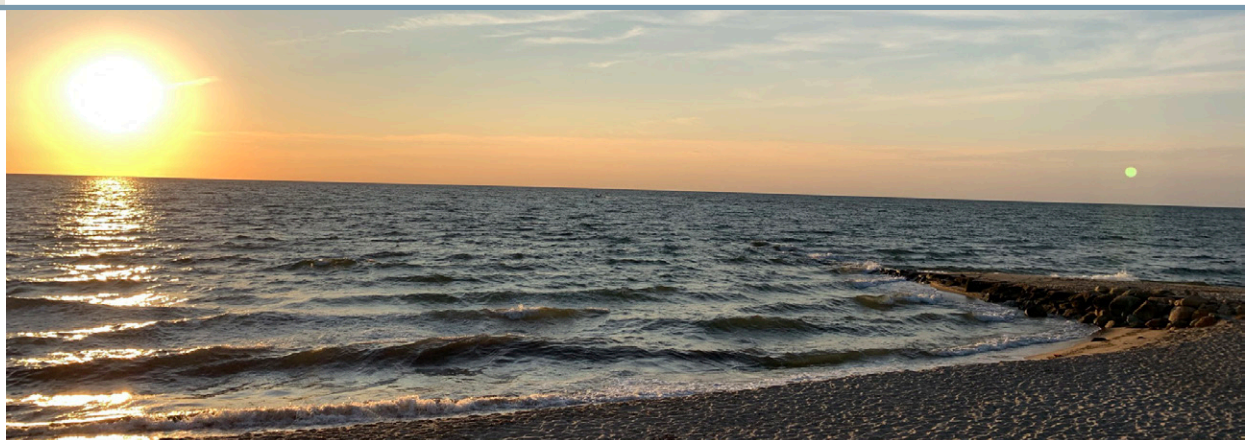
Embodied in the name "Lifescape" is the intentional statement that your life - the whole of your life - is yours to create. Just as one would

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design and build a beautiful landscape, you could also design and build a beautiful life. Our emotional state can be developed into a beautifully resilient part of our existence when we are intentional about caring for it.

COACHING SOLUTIONS

The Lifescape Coach has designed several unique coaching solutions to address the needs of business owners.

PRIVATE LIBERATION BUSINESS COACHING

Private Liberation Business Coaching is aimed at owners who are looking for an accountability partner to work in lockstep with them over an extended period of time — someone to help them navigate the chaos of ownership.

To do this effectively, it is critical that there are regular touch points between coach and client. Clients have the option to set up a weekly or bi-weekly schedule to begin, and can eventually move to monthly meetings. In between, you are able to access your coach as a lifeline to tease out pressing issues.

RAPID RELIEF PROJECT COACHING

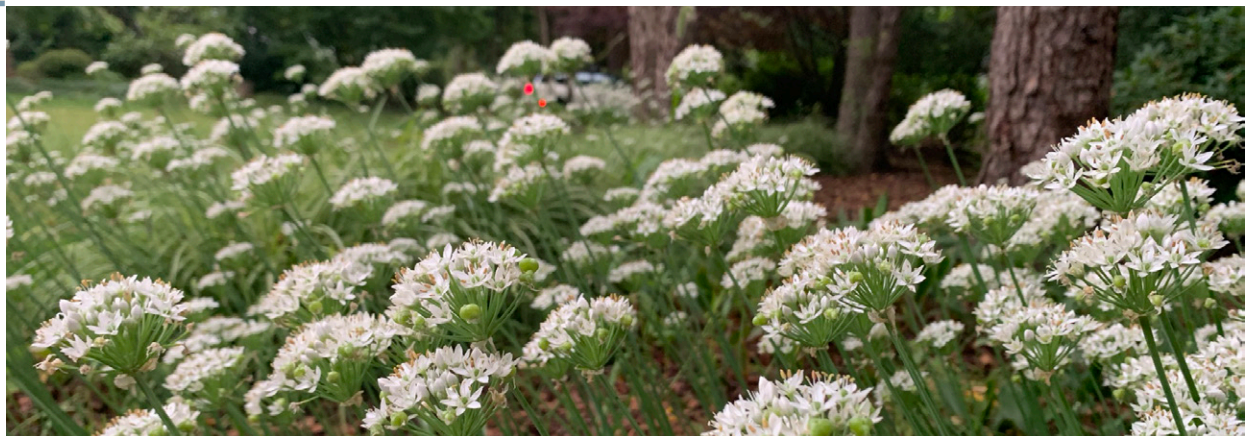
Rapid Relief Project Coaching is an intensive, time-limited coaching program for clients with an immediate, critical problem to solve. This model of coaching involves five meetings over a period of five to seven weeks. In between meetings, clients must be willing to engage in assigned “homework” and spend five or more hours working on the issue at hand. Rapid Relief Coaching requires a strong commitment to the process, but represents less of a financial commitment than ongoing private coaching.

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REGENERATIVE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Our Regenerative Business Community is an invitation-only group coaching program designed to give clients access to a dynamic group of specialists to demystify elements of business ownership.

Group sessions may include guest speakers, or masterminding sessions where a participant can present a problem and other members can cross-pollinate ideas to solve it. A confidentiality agreement is required to ensure that participants do not share information that is revealed during group sessions. The Lifescape Coach typically opens a group cohort twice per year.

ONLINE CLASSES FOR LANDSCAPE BUSINESS OWNERS

The Lifescape Coach has developed two online modules: The Landscapers' Freedom Formula (four classes), and The Landscape Business Owner's Survival Guide. These courses are offered at an accessible price point that clients can ensure they've mastered the basics for landscape businesses, including:

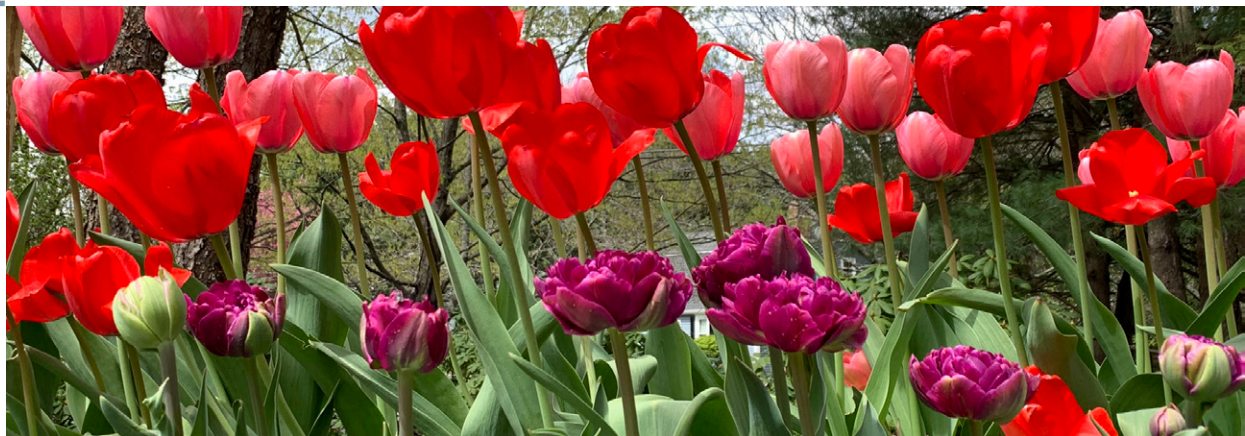
- Entrepreneurial mindset
- Clarity of service offerings
- Sales strategy
- Teambuilding
- Cashflow

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SPEAKING PROGRAM

Our Speaking Program has been designed to address the fact that every landscape company has its own unique culture and will therefore have its own developmental gaps. We begin with an intake to understand the desired learning outcomes and modify our program to address those specific goals.

Past speaking engagements have focused on team building, service development, sales strategy, fine gardening, ecological and regenerative design. Sessions can be tailored to the specific needs of each client's business or organization.

THE COACHING PROCESS

Our coaching process is about empowering the client to solve their own business problems. We think of ourselves not as "answer experts," but as "process experts." We help clients access the right state of mind to be able to generate solutions without drama or reactivity. In doing so, we foster a sense of clarity about the present and feelings of hope for the future.

At The Lifescape Coach, we begin with a complimentary discovery call to gather information about where the client is, and why. We'll work to identify which of the 25 challenges have triggered the call, and determine whether rapid relief or more long-term coaching is best suited to addressing them.

Once we have a recommended coaching strategy, all coaching sessions are conveniently held online. (In-person meetings are often scheduled with local clients). Our work together is guided by an intention document created to identify the issues to be addressed. We work collaboratively

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to strategize and plan, and the client is empowered to do the implementation themselves.

By the end of our process, the client has benefited from getting an expert's eye on their business, and leaves feeling better equipped to tackle future challenges.

GET STARTED

To apply for a complimentary coaching consultation, click the Get Started button below.

Online classes are available in our [online store](#).

Visit our request a speaker page to inquire about [speaking engagements](#).

I'm ready to break my isolation and work with a landscape business coach!



Apply for a Complimentary Coaching Sessions

[GET STARTED](#)

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