

Ep #39: Ideal Clients – Hoax or Reality?



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Keeling

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Want to have it all? Well, the best day to get started is TODAY. Welcome to *Love Your Living*, a podcast for ambitious women who want to take their life and business to a WHOLE new level of success. I'm Brooke Keeling, multiple six-figure business owner, passionate entrepreneur and your host.

Welcome to another episode of the *Love Your Living* podcast...

Hey everyone, and welcome to the *Love Your Living* podcast. I'm Brooke Keeling, and I am so excited to be here with all of you. And thank you so much for tuning into this week's episode. Today, I am talking about a topic that I think you will all find an incredible amount of value, and that is ideal clients – a hoax or a reality?

Now, when I talk about ideal clients, a topic comes to mind that I think we all, in business, have struggled with at some point in time. And if you haven't, you likely will. It's a topic that is very much talked about in every area of business, I feel like, at whatever phase that you're in, but especially with where the market is changing, how people market to people, how people are responding, and how to get in front of the ones that want to work with you or buy your product or your services, whatever business that you're in.

And it comes down to niching. And I have had so many conversations. I think this is one of the biggest struggles that most businesses have, especially in the beginning. It's because we aren't clear enough on who it is that we're serving. And we don't like to talk about it.

We hate getting clear on our ideal client because, one, it's a cliché – we think it's a cliché. Two, we find that ideal clarity exercises are boring. I don't know about you, but I filled out like 20 of these in my lifetime on who's your ideal client, why do they want to work with you, why are you so different? What did they do? How do they spend their time? How do they spend their money? All of those things – it gets boring after a while. It's the same thing.

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I can tell you so many stories, and I will tell you many stories of my own journey on this topic, but it gets old after a while. It is like rinse and repeat. You can so easily get stuck on the spin cycle when talking about this. And three, there are people who believe in serving whoever they can.

And again, I'm raising my hand here as well. We want to serve whoever we can however we can, because of either money or just feeling like you want to help everyone, or you can help everyone. You don't want to niche down too much because you don't want to lose business, you don't want to miss out on this person because they'd be okay, but they don't quite fit this specific profile.

There is so much that goes into this one topic; ideal clients, niching down, knowing who they are and how they show up and serve them. I can tell you that when I first started my real estate business, it was the same as my online business, it's the same as my husband's business, it's the same as other business ventures that we have, and you start out thinking, I'm going to take anything and everything that comes in the door.

If anybody wants to buy a house or they want to sell a house, I don't care if I'm driving 45 minutes, I don't care what price point it's at. I don't care about anything, I just want to have business coming in the door, right? And then, you start to think about who's your ideal client. Well, I don't know, anybody that wants to buy or sell a house, right? I don't know, anybody that wants to live their best life? I don't know, anybody that wants to scale and grow?

But what is their outcome? How are you going to show up and best serve them? Is it geographically? Is it certain price points? Is it certain lifestyles? And you can go around and around and around because we, oftentimes, will sit down and do this work and start doing this work and get so frustrated because it is work and it is confusing, and sometimes – here's the biggest kicker – sometimes, I believe, that we don't know what we don't know when we're first starting out, right?

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You have to sometimes say yes to some of the clients or business or situations that you end up loathing, you end up hating, or you end up realizing that it is just not a good fit for you. Because those circumstances are almost more powerful than aligning with some of the people that you are meant to serve and that do align with your messaging and your products and your services.

They're extremely powerful and you can learn so many incredible lessons. And these are the lessons that I truly feel that no one can teach you. I can't sit here and say, fill out this form and you will have 100% clarity on who your ideal client is, because we're always working through that. And if your business, or if you're someone that likes to continue to grow and continue to make your business better and your life better, likely your business is going to change over time. And that person that you want to serve is going to change over time as well.

And so being able to be open to saying yes maybe to some of the – one, fear stops us from so much, from saying yes to some of the clientele that we have coming in or we think, oh my gosh, what if I can't serve this person? Oh my gosh, what if I'm not good enough? You start to have all these second guesses and second guess yourself in general.

But if you say yes to some of these things that scare you a little bit, you really start to know who it is that you want to work with, who lights your soul on fire, what their problems are, what they want out of life. You learn so much along the way. And that's part of the journey too.

So if you're just starting out and trying to figure out, who is it that I want to serve and who is my ideal client or who is my niche, there are so many books on this. There is not a right answer or a wrong answer. I have had many, many, many conversations where people that are extremely successful that are in a circle of mine and they have an opinion of you need to niche down more – you feel like you're so clear and they're like, nope

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you're not clear enough, you need to niche down more and it pisses you off.

It pisses me off. And then I have other people who are crazy uber successful as well that aren't niched down. You look at them and you think, well you're not niched down. I have people that have more than one niche and that are killing it in their industry as well. There are books on you must niche in order to be successful. There are books on – I don't know what you even call it – the passionate energetic entrepreneur that has a full heart and just goes after what they want and what feels good. And that's not niched down on black and white paper.

So I feel like there is black and white in some of this and in knowing who it is that you're showing up and serving and what your message is. However, there's many people and there's books and there's resources that you don't have to niche to one thing. Now, I do think it's pretty powerful to start with something. Start with one thing and focus on it, and then you can expand and you can grow, and maybe your business expands and you start adding different services or products or groups of people.

But just starting out, you want to at least have some clarity of who it is you're serving, what problem they have. Because when you know this – here's the thing – when you know it crystal clear, when you can pinpoint, who is she? You can write down absolutely everything about them, you can understand their pain points, you can understand their problems, you can understand how they show up every day.

You can basically paint a picture of them. Who is she? Who's your ideal client? I've done a lot of exercises that I feel are actually very, very powerful, of putting white paper up on my wall. And you could do this probably every three months and you can see how it changes, but just writing out all the qualities that she has.

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Or maybe you're looking at a leader already in an industry that you're in and you can write down all the qualities that they have that you absolutely love, and not forgetting your personal spin and what your heart has in it and how you're showing up and you're serving to those people.

Now, especially in today's market, where it's ever-changing and you have to have the right messaging in order to touch your ideal clients, and there's a lot of competition out there, right? There's so much going on in our world, there's so many distractions that becoming more and more clear on who it is that you're serving is going to allow you to have such better marketing efforts and conversations and touches and be able to scale and grow your business so much faster in such a fun way, versus constantly hitting roadblocks and having clients that you don't align with and you're thinking, okay, this is part of it.

You have troublesome clients and you're starting to get really frustrated or depleted of energy or your confidence starts to go down because you feel like you can't help someone. That's not you. Sometimes it's just us getting clear on who it is that we need to align with. You have clients that you feel like you can't help them get results.

One of the biggest qualities that I have when I hire anyone in my businesses is they have to be coachable. They have to be coachable because that's one of my number one values. One of my number one values is growth, and if you're not willing to grow, you're not willing to learn, you're not willing to be coached and to look at some of your weaknesses and try to grow them and become better, it's not going to be a good fit.

And I'm always growing, I'm always changing things. And so, being able to be coachable and being able to understand that you can make changes in your life but you have to do the work, that's one of my number one values. Or you're going to get clients with the wrong expectations. Or the worst, is

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you're going to not have any clients at all. And that's the worst. That's when it's like, okay, what am I doing wrong? How do I turn the boat around?

So, my point is that absolutely, you will find clarity by working with people, for sure. I've found so much clarity in this, so much. And it's the clarity that's like a gut-check, I'm telling you, because it's the hard lessons. And my experience, that clarity looks like this...

It looks like doing everything that you possibly can and you still can't make someone happy. It looks like someone that pushes every single boundary that you've ever set, doesn't respect your time, doesn't respect your energy, doesn't respect really anything about you, someone that doesn't want to pay your fees or pay for the work that you do. You hustle your ass off and they want a discount or they want a good deal.

I hate that. If you are in business – someone within my network just posted about this recently and I 100% agree. I want you guys to take this. It's not on the topic of niching, but if you are in business, don't go around asking people for deals or freebies or handouts. Just don't do it.

I'm in a business where that's my livelihood. I don't get paid until I provide results. In my real estate industry, I can sign contracts all day long, but until I close on a contract, I don't get paid. When you have someone that wants to get a good deal or get a discount or they want you to pay certain fees or whatever, most of the time, those people are like, you get a paycheck after two weeks. I don't get that.

I could work for years with you and not get a penny, not get a dime. Don't ask people to discount their services. Don't be that person. Pay full price. Find good people. I work with a contractor that is, by far, not the cheapest contractor in my industry and he's also a friend, and I respect him tremendously. And he does incredible quality work, he shows up. He does a phenomenal job.

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I would never – I would rather pay extra for his high-quality services. I would never ask for a discount from him ever, ever, ever. If you ask that, it's going to come back in return. So that's my little two cents for the day.

So, of course, yes, you're going to find clarity by working with people, however, there's some homework that you need to do that needs to be done on your part as well. And this can be part of the journey. And again, it's going to change.

If you're in the online space, if you're running ads, if you are doing any type of online marketing – I do for my businesses – what's changing in the online world, it's ever-changing. It's absolutely crazy. You can barely keep up. But if you don't niche down and know your target, like crystal clear, you are throwing money out the door. And it's not just like a couple bucks. You're talking thousands of dollars you're throwing out the door.

You're paying premium. You're not going to get the results that you want because you don't know who you're talking to. And so, you have to get much clearer on that and be able to clearly articulate what it is that you're doing and why. And, you guys, don't feel like you need to help everybody.

I've done this in my businesses. Oh, I just want to help anyone and everyone. I've done this in real estate. I have said, oh well, I don't want to not work with low price points, because it made me feel awful because I was like, look, everybody deserves a house, right? Absolutely everybody deserves a house.

I was that person buying the 800 square foot condo and a government loan and I was not a high price point. Like, I was that girl. And so sometimes, when I get people in, it's like, I want to help everybody. I truly do want to help everybody. But at some point in time, you have to understand what the value is of your time and you need to align and reconnect with what makes you happy and what's also smart from a business standpoint.

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And if it doesn't make sense to you or if it doesn't make you feel good or it's not allowing you to pay your bills, then it's time to reevaluate and take a little look at what that looks like. And so even with real estate, it's really looking at geographic areas.

Does it make sense for me to drive an hour outside of my area to show a house or to list a property? And then how many times do I have to go back to it? It doesn't make sense. It's not worth my time. It's not worth my effort. It doesn't align, right?

Like, I live a certain lifestyle in a certain community, and when I'm outside of that community, it doesn't quite align with my values and my lifestyle and what my business does. And so make note of that, and also, think of your client as well, because for me to say yes to some of those opportunities, it's not fair to them either because I'm probably not the best fit for them if I already have those feelings.

So, my homework for you – and not even homework, but I know that there's so much around niching, I want you to really, really think about this for a second and not get caught up in a spin cycle. Say yes to some of the opportunities that come to you. Say yes to the things that scare the shit out of you because, oftentimes, when something scares you, it's a sign.

It's a sign that you should go there. Don't let your fear stop you. You have to push through that. And think about what your ideal life looks like. Think about five years from now. This helps big time too when you're thinking about who do you want to target, who do you want to work with.

Think about yourself in five years. Think about your business in five years. And think about what your day to day looks like in a dream world. In a fantasy world in five years, you've worked your ass off, you've built your business, you've gotten to a certain point, you're making the money that you want to make, you're growing, whatever it is that you want to do.

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Think about your dream business and I want you to walk yourself through a day, a week. What does that look like? What does your schedule look like? Who are you talking with on a daily basis? Who are you working with and what does that person look like? And how does that make you feel? What type of lifestyle do you have? Where do you live? What kind of car do you drive? Where do you vacation? Who are you friends with? What do you do on the weekend?

Think about all of those things. What makes you happy? If you've had clients previously that you really, really enjoy working with, write them down on a big sheet of paper and map out what their qualities are, what they enjoy, why you aligned with them, why you enjoyed working with them. That will help you get much clearer on who it is that you want to work with at this moment in time and where you need to spend your money and spend your time to grow your business to where you want it to go.

And it also makes it a lot easier to say no to those things that don't align within that, and this is going to be the hardest part for so many of you; saying no to things that come your way, saying no to business that doesn't align with what your ideal client is. Because I'm telling you, when you say yes to something that doesn't quite feel good in your gut, or you say yes to something because you think it will be a quick sale, or I can work through it, it will be easy, those are the ones that you really have to say no to because they never are.

It's the troublesome clients, it's the clients that you cannot make happy no matter what, you can't help them get results. It's the clients with the wrong expectations. They don't respect you, your boundaries, your time, your business. So be mindful of that too. Get really clear. And it might not be fun in the beginning, and I've seen so many people do this.

Now, there's many people that I look at in my businesses that I think, oh my gosh, they're so great. And when I think about who they're working with

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and how they got to where they got, it didn't happen overnight. So if you want to build something that allows you to create the life that you want and brings you happiness and joy in your day – it's not going to bring you happiness and joy every day, let's get real. It's business, you need to work as well.

And there's going to be hard days and days where you don't want to wake up and days when you don't want to record a podcast at 9pm. There's going to be those days. You've got to suck it up and you've got to keep going and you have to do the work.

However, when you say no to the things that no longer serve you and the clients and the people that no longer serve you, the business that no longer serves you, when you don't think about just saying yes to anything and everything that you can sell, your energy – you make space. You make so much more space for those clients and people and services that do make sense for you.

Think about that energy. Think about a client that you took on that was miserable. They drag you down. I've seen this a million times too. They take you down this tunnel of death and you think, okay, only one more week, only two more weeks, only another month. And it drags out, and it drags out, and it drags out.

And it sucks every piece of effort, energy, and emotion out of you. You don't have anything more left to give to your business, to your clients that you love. You're not attracting anything but more shit. So be brave enough to say no to those things that don't serve you anymore, because saying no to those things are what's going to make space for the things that really matter and it's going to take a little bit longer, but I promise you, it's worth it and you will see so much more business coming through your doors and so much more happiness in your life, and you're saying yes to the things that you love and you're building off of that.

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And it just builds and it builds and it builds, and then you have a business that you love. You see people who do that for five years and the people that say yes to everything, the people that say yes to everything are just bitter. All they do is work. They don't like people. I've been this person as well and you look at the other people that have built this big business.

They say no to the things that don't fit within that ideal client and they're able to attract more of that. So take some time and find some clarity in who it is that you want to work with, what you want your life to look like, and how you can attract more of that in your life and work with more of those people. Say yes to that.

Niching is a real thing. You have to wade through, like anything else. But I promise you, if you have this in mind and maybe go back to filling out some of those forms where it asks you questions and it gets your mind thinking every few months, you will see so much progress as you go. Just be mindful, eyes wide open.

Now, if any of you are thinking, oh my gosh, I don't even know where to start, or yes I am that person that thinks this is all a bunch of BS or I hate when someone tells me I need to niche more, or I don't want to do another freaking exercise or download another sheet to find my ideal client and then you're just more confused after filling out five pages of a bunch of crap you don't know what to do with and you're even more confused – if you are one of those people, I would love, love, love for you to join me next week.

I'm doing a three-day challenge. And this challenge is called Made to Get Paid. We all want more money in the bank, especially in the winter months, right? So join me next week. It's a quick three-day challenge. It's not going to take much time out of your week and it's going to set you up to bring in more money in your business, align better with your ideal clients, and that is what we all want as we start the new year.

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You can't say no to that. I know you can't. So join me next week. You can check out all of the details in the show notes on how to sign up. Again, it's a free challenge, Made to Get Paid. I hope you will join me. And in the meantime, I hope you all have an incredible rest of your week and an incredible weekend and I will see you all next week. Thank you so much for tuning in and I can't wait to see you next week.

Thanks for showing up and listening to this week's episode of the *Love Your Living* podcast. If you're ready to create a business and life you love or simply take your already-pretty incredible life to the next level, head on over to loveyourlivingonline.com or simply check out the link in this week's episode of show notes to instantly download my 6-Figure & Beyond Business Blueprint. You're going to absolutely love it.