

How to Choose the Best Idea for Your Online Business and Finally Move Forward When You Feel Totally Stuck and Uncertain

by Jason Van Orden

If you're feeling uncertain and stuck when it comes to what idea to pursue in your online business, then this coaching call recording is for you.

Before our call, Tejas felt paralyzed about which of his ideas to pursue. He had huge doubts that had held him back from taking action.

By the end of the call, he had clarity, confidence, and a clear path forward after months of being frozen by uncertainty.

Pay close attention to the specific actions I suggested he take to finally generate momentum and earn him some money fast with one of his business ideas.

You can [listen to the audio recording of this coaching call here](#).

Also, be sure to read to the bottom of this document for a list of key takeaways, suggested next actions, and an opportunity to get personal guidance like this from me.

Coaching Call Transcript

Jason: All right. I'm on the line here with Tejas. Tejas wrote in with a question about helping him choose what business idea to pursue for his online business. He has two ideas that he's been thinking through very carefully and just wants a bit of help on deciding which of these two might be the right one to pursue given his goals.

Jason: The first one is, as I understand your career is in QA testing, so quality testing for websites and stuff. This is a career based idea. We want to help people get farther along in this career that you've been in. The skill sets have changed. A lot of employers are requiring people to understand this more automated approach, and you want to teach people the skills to help them be able to get the competitive jobs that are out there since most of the jobs and employers are now asking that people have this more automated approach to quality testing of websites.

Jason: Then the second idea that you shared with me was a podcast called In Their Shoes where you interview a lot of different experts in different careers and professions in order to kind of find out, just to gather a lot of information on pros and cons of different fields and what kinds of skills are needed so that this could inform high school graduates, people going into college, as to help them make decisions about what career to pursue and exactly how to go about pursuing that career. That's what we're going to be diving into. Let me go ahead and just say, welcome, Tejas. Thanks so much for joining me on this coaching call so we can talk about this.

Tejas: Thank you, Jason. I appreciate it.

Jason: Did I summarize that about right? Did we get that right when I explained the two ideas there?

Tejas: Yes, yes. Perfect. I think it's pretty much about right.

Jason: All right. It sounds like, yeah, you've been feeling a little stuck on this. As I understand, the one that's about the career, the quality testing automation, which is your career right now. You've been doing that a while, so you're not feeling super excited about continuing down that path, given it's something you've already been doing.

Jason: Then the second one, it sounds like excites you more, the podcast called In Their Shoes, but you're not as clear as to whether there is a business model. What exactly would you be selling there to make money? So I guess that's why you're feeling a little bit stuck. But maybe tell me a little bit more about that. What is it about these two ideas that has you feeling a little bit stuck right now and it's making it hard to choose one direction or the other?

Tejas: Right. The main dilemma that I have is I am looking to do something for the long term, and I'm looking to make it my mission, if you will, and do that. I feel like it's great that I'm able to help people with the QA automation testing because there is a need in the market, and people's lives will literally be transformed because they will be able to command higher salaries and some of them may be able to get the job that they are not able to get, which is great.

Tejas: But I don't see myself doing this for more than a year because like it's going to get very mundane. It's like a product that I'm going to create, and then pretty much I'm hoping it to be on autopilot. If I have to

expand on that business, then I have to go into other, like creating other processes, other programming or technologies and so on, which I don't feel really excited about. I don't see myself doing that for a long period of time, like five to ten years.

Tejas: On the other hand with podcasts, I feel like the specific idea, the niche that I told you about, that itself had some leg in terms of helping people with their career choice. But other than that, the podcast wave is just beginning, and I want to learn the process of creating a podcast and producing a podcast and so on. I'm hoping that will help me. That will open up more avenues into maybe creating more podcasts or creating a production media company for a podcast down the line, or I could even marry my technical skills with that. But again in the short run, it's not viable at all. I don't know if I'll make any revenue podcasting.

Jason: Okay.

Tejas: Yeah, that's the main dilemma.

Jason: Okay. Yeah, I mean it sounds like you're just not feeling driven to go down the path of the career skills. I will say that historically career skills have done really well. Of course, the famous example is Pat Flynn, who was a past student and did the LEED exam. He'll help architects pass the LEED exam and we've had other people help people pass, learn skills and pass exams as a pediatric doctor. We've had people who have started courses helping people become better project managers. Historically those career niches have done really, really well. That said, so it sounds like there is really a lot of business potential with the first idea of teaching these automation skills for quality testing websites. However, yeah, it sounds like you're not super motivated to go down that path.

Jason: The advantage, I would say, of going down that path is there is a clearer ... When you can help people to start a business or further their career, to make more money or save time, or have better relationships, or some of those really hot button issues. Yeah, it's a lot easier to get people ready to spend money with you.

Jason: One thing that you could do ... Let me bounce this idea off of you. I'm not trying to push you in that direction, but imagine. I like what you said about, "Well, if I start a podcast, I could at least be learning about starting my podcast and then seeing where that takes me." What if you did pursue this career skill niche and you just used that to make some

money to really cut your teeth and learn what you need to learn about making that first money through your online business and yeah, maybe in a year or two you don't necessarily continue that idea. But because you've learned a lot of stuff and made some money, it'll be that much easier to leverage into the next idea that might be related to that niche.

Jason: If you imagine yourself a year from now and you're making some money helping people further their careers in automated ... What is it, the automated quality testing? I mean how would that feel motivating at all a year from now if you're making some money doing that even if you had to maybe switch eventually?

Tejas: Yes, in fact I do think about that, and that is absolutely a viable idea. The problem with that, as I thought about it more is, and I don't know if it is justified or not, I'm just making it up in my head is that yes, I can start the technical course which will give me enough room so that I can leave my job, which is nine to five job. That really give me the freedom and free time to invest my time on other things like podcasts, for example. Because I know based on my research, creating a podcast is a very laborious work, and I understand that. That is perfectly fine. The fear I have is like, am I going to miss the podcasting train? Because a lot of players are coming in like Apple and Spotify and Luminary and all of those, and I feel like it would be too late.

Jason: I see.

Tejas: Thousands of people are launching podcasts every day, and I don't want to miss the boat ride, I guess. Yeah.

Jason: Sure. Okay. Yeah. I can understand that. But I mean, here's the thing is like podcasting has been around for a good 15 years now. I've been around long enough with podcasting to know that every few years it has like one of these surges where it seems like a lot is going on and a lot of people starting podcasts and yes, there already always be new podcasts coming out, but there's also always new people being brought in to listen to podcasts as well as the technologies develop. Certainly with Spotify getting a lot more into podcasting, that's going to make it easier for people to find and listen to podcasts.

Jason: What I mean is, I don't think that in like if you don't start a podcast now that in two years the chance will be gone to start a podcast. I think there will still be plenty of opportunity. There's always going to

be opportunity to create good content on topics that people are really interested in.

Jason: But what's most important here is for you to find something that is going to be motivating enough for you to be consistent at working at it. I kind of see two possibilities here that you can decide, and sorry there's a horn honking outside because I live in New York City and that's what happens is people honk their horns as they're driving past. I'm kind of hearing this trade off between the motivation of making some money going down the one that feels more sure when it comes to making money, which is the career skills and automation, or you go down the path where the money is not quite as obvious yet, but you feel like there's a demand because like you said, you've done ... One thing you told me before we got on our call, which is great, is you've done a lot of talking to people both in your career, colleagues in your career skills niche, as well as talking to people in the podcast that you want to start for our high school graduates and talking to parents of high school graduates.

Jason: I think that's wonderful. Anybody listening to this, if you're stuck on choosing a niche, Tejas definitely did one of the best things you can do and that is to talk to people who are the target market that you think you might want to help because you can learn a lot by doing that. That's really great that you did that, but now you've kind of got, it sounds like, this little more passion behind the going down the podcast route or having a little clear path to making money sooner route with the career skills.

Jason: If you were to project, if you were to think forward, let's say, about a year from now and you imagine having a podcast with a thousand people listening, a thousand people regularly listening, who love the podcast and you're getting a lot of great feedback and the podcast is continuing to grow and you've learned a lot about podcasting and you're enjoying doing interviews and creating great content. If you imagine that, but it's not necessarily making money yet, but you're building the audience and continuing to look for the opportunities there.

Jason: Or if you think about, let's say a year from now, you've made some money making some training with the automation career skills and programming, and it's not necessarily as exciting in terms of you haven't started a podcast or any of those things that you've thought about. But you have made some consistent money and really proven

that's like, "Hey, I can do this. I can make money online. I got to the money faster."

Jason: Which one feels more motivating to you, to have that audience building up, or to have some of that money in the bank proving that you were able to make money with a business idea?

Tejas: Yeah, that's hard. I can already ignore the fact that I could literally, given the fact that if I'm selling the course to people who are already employed as manually QA testers, they could ask their employer to pay for it and it could be 3,000 out of the box. If I did a hundred students over that period of year, then that's a lot of money. I think that will go a long way in whatever side I want to pursue going forward. Maybe podcasting, or if there is something new on the block. I don't know. The main reason behind doing podcasting is I always wanted to have my own distribution channel, so to speak. That's my reason. Long time I taught about book, and I think podcasting is even better basically to take your message across the masses. Right?

Jason: Yeah, it sounds like you're really-

Tejas: I think that makes sense.

Jason: It sounds like you're really interested in starting a podcast, and that's great. Have you thought about starting a podcast in the QA field, in the career skills field?

Tejas: I taught about it, I just don't see a lot of QA, first of all. It's just tight niche. So it's not like you're going to have a lot of listeners. I went with that, like QA folks are just like regular people like you and me. We don't want to listen to podcasts about our work.

Jason: Okay, that makes sense.

Tejas: So that's going to be an issue still. Yeah.

Jason: That makes sense. So I mean here's the thing is often ... I mean I know you said you really want to start something for the long term here. There's always that chance that whatever you start now is going to be the thing that goes for the longterm. But one thing that I've definitely seen in, and this is in my own experience as well as students that we've worked with, is that there is some other idea or opportunity out there that you just haven't even run into yet because until you're moving forward, you just don't move. You just don't run into those things. Also

because you haven't put some of the work behind you of just pursuing something, getting the skills, the entrepreneurial skills, the podcasting skills or whatever other skills.

Jason: Then as you do those things, that's when you start opening up to new ideas, you start bumping into new ideas, you start feeling. You're basically leveling up and feeling more capable of, and by taking action, your brain starts more actively engaging with new ideas. Like if I were to say, "Hey, no matter what, whichever one of these you start, you're going to either really love doing the podcasting thing or make some good money doing the other career skills thing. But no matter what in a year or two, you're going to have to choose something else because you'll just ... Then in fact, probably something better will come along by pursuing one of those two. Which one will you be happier having done?" If you just assume, just say, "Okay, I'm just going to assume that in a year, year and a half, two years, something else or more interesting or better is going to come along. I'll pivot. That's okay. I'll pivot fast because I've already learned some of the things and proving myself that I can do it."

Jason: Which one do you feel you'll be happier having spent some time doing if you just assume that you'll have to pivot at some point in the future?

Tejas: That's a tough question. I feel like if I started with the QA, because what's motivating to me is helping people, and if I see actually people are being helped, then I think I will like that as well. Yeah, because I haven't taken any action, very tangible action yet, I just don't know how it's going to be. But I feel like I basically just started like a free workshop for just folks that work with me, and the response has been overwhelming. Like they're like, "Oh, wow. It would be really nice if you taught us." That was very hard for me. I can imagine myself doing that and being happy.

Jason: So you offered a-

Tejas: [crosstalk 00:16:49].

Jason: You put together a workshop and offered it for free and people responded really, really well to it?

Tejas: Yes.

Jason: That's great.

Tejas: It was at my work. Yeah.

Jason: Tejas, I want to say, you're taking some really great steps here in the way that you've talked to people to find out more information and the way that you went ahead. Even though you're telling me you feel stuck in that you've been kind of going in circles, I actually see some really great progress that you've already taken there. That's huge to have even tested doing a workshop to see what that feels like.

Jason: Here's what I recommend. When it comes to business, I know how much we wanted to be able to feel like we're going to choose a path and it's the right path and it's all going to work out, and we don't want to waste time or money or energy going down a path that's not going to work out. But the truth is, the way that you arrive at success in business is that it ends up being a little bit of a zigzag.

Jason: When I first quit my job back in 2003, there was no way for me to know that I was going to end up in podcasting. Podcasting hadn't even shown up as an opportunity yet. Right? But there's no way that I would have been in the right place to discover podcasting had I not branched out and tried some things in real estate investing and marketing consulting. There were two or three or four, probably half a dozen things that I tried and then podcasting popped up. I was like, "Ah, this is ..." That's not to say that podcasting is the thing.

Jason: What I'm saying is that it's in the forward momentum that something that you haven't even imagined is out there waiting for you. I think this is some really good steps that you've taken. I always just like to think of what is the simplest experiment that I can do right now just to see what will work and how it feels. I love that you did that workshop and I think one of the next ... If we were to think about what's a simple experiment you could do in either one of those two niches and then I would go ahead and try that out and see. That forward momentum is going to feel really good, and it's going to give you a lot of feedback in terms of whether or not it feels like the right direction to go.

Jason: Let's talk about a quick experiment that you could do in either one of these two niches. In fact, I would say you might even want to try a little experiment in both of them and then look at it and go, "Okay, which one is my intuition telling me is the best one for me to do?" Let's look at the career skills one right now. You've done this free workshop. You've gotten a really amazing response. Have you already finished the workshop, or is the workshop still going?

Tejas: No. Last week I sent out an email and I got positive response, but I haven't started yet. I could definitely start that and that will, for one, tell me do I have the chops to teach somebody and making them really appreciate it? And for two, it will give me lot of course content as I'm teaching them because I don't really know exactly how I'm going to teach, even though I know the stuff.

Jason: That's amazing. That's perfect. In fact, here's what I tell people, is that before you make an ebook or a course or anything like that, just go find at least one person to help doing the thing that you want to help them with. Maybe they pay you a little bit of money. Maybe it's free, but just like you say to like to dig in and just listen to somebody, hear their questions, answer their questions. I find it very motivating because usually I'm listening to what they're struggling with. Like you said, you'd like to help people.

Jason: I think a lot of people listening to this want to create something that helps people. Sitting down in a free workshop or inviting somebody to go to coffee for a free coaching session or even putting out into your network to have somebody pay you even some low amount for some coaching. I think that's absolutely one of the best things anybody can do. It might feel scary. If it feels too scary to ask for money, they can just do the free thing like you said, and it can be super motivating. It's like people responded, they wanted that, and now you go and you teach them for a couple of hours, and you're going to learn so much about what those people want. It's going to boost your confidence because you've done something. You're going to learn all this stuff about ... Eventually if you did make a course of what would need to be in that course because of the feedback that you'll get by teaching people in the room with them.

Jason: Then what I would say to do is I would be ready so that at the end of your workshop, so do this free workshop and I don't know if you're doing it in person or over Zoom or whatever the case may be, but do this free workshop and then be ready at the end of the workshop to offer an opportunity to say, "Look, I've got one or two spots for people." Don't teach everything. In that workshop you mostly want to show them, here's why automation is so important.

Jason: Here's the way to go and kind of a high level overview about what they need to know and do. But don't get too much into the specifics because then what you can do is you can offer one or two spots. You need to say, "Look, I have one or two spots for somebody who wants to

work with me personally one-on-one, and I'm going to help you map out exactly what you need to do in order to ..." Whatever that big outcome is that they want. It sounds like the outcome that they want is to get a better job or position that probably pays better, right? Because they've got the skill set to get that.

Jason: That's what you want to do is you want to find out what is that outcome that they really, really want. In this case it's the better job, the higher paying job and say, "Look, I am accepting ..." Just say whatever you're comfortable with. "One, two people to work with me personally to get you to that outcome." Then just think about what amount are you comfortable charging for that? I know it's hard to think about charging people. But look, you have all this expertise and experience. You know what you're talking about, and if you've just taught a really good free workshop, at the end of that workshop, there's a good chance that somebody is going to raise their hand and say, "Yeah, I'd like to talk to you more about working with you more closely on this."

Jason: Even if it's \$100 or whatever, just the fact of making that first, we call it the money milestone, right? That first money milestone of getting paid. Now I know that ultimately you don't want a business doing coaching, and that's not what I'm trying to tell you to do is start a coaching business. But I'm saying that is like the perfect way to learn exactly what it is that you can make in terms of a course or something else more scalable and just to get some money in the door, which is just going to be a huge win, right?

It's going to be so motivating to have first person say, "Yes. Yeah, please help me, Tejas. Here's \$100 or \$500." Whatever. Just kind of ask yourself, "Okay, what do I feel comfortable asking for?" Then just whether it's 50 or 100 or whatever, you don't need to worry about right now, the point is just to get somebody to pay you something to work with them some more. That's the experiment that I would recommend you go for in the career skills idea. Do you have any questions about that?

Tejas: Yeah. No, I think that's a very good advice. I think I will follow that. Like the idea of doing a little experiment and see where that takes me. Yeah. I think it will be very encouraging if somebody ... I feel very uncomfortable right now even thinking about it, but I think it's very encouraging if somebody is ready to pay me. You want a little bit if amount for me teaching them the skills.

Jason: Yeah. Awesome. Then if you want a simple experiment, if you feel like, well I want to try and experiment on the podcast, the In Their Shoes podcast talking to career professionals about their careers. Then I would say a simple experiment there would be just a set up one or two calls using Zoom or something like, you and I are talking on Zoom right now, and just do a couple interviews. Don't even worry about the podcasts art or setting up the website or any of those other things that need to be done. At first just say, "I'm going to do two interviews, and I'm just going to see what that feels like to record those interviews."

Jason: After you've done those two interviews, then check in with yourself and go, "Okay, I did the free workshop. I did the offer to make some money to find that first person to pay me to guide them. I did a couple of interviews." Maybe once you do those two interviews. You said you talked to some different parents and people. In fact you said, you talked to some parents who said, "Yeah, it'd be awesome to have that information for my kid coming out of high school going into college."

Jason: Maybe you go back to talk to them and say, "Well what are some of the professions that you would be interested in hearing about?" Then go find one or two people in those professions to interview and then you can send those interviews.

Even if it's like you're just kind of doing a little mini podcast and just sending out to a handful of people, that can be hugely motivating just to have taken that step, done an interview, created something, handed it to somebody and have even one person listen to it and go, "That was really cool."

Jason: Then once you've done both those little experiments, come back and check with yourself and go, "Okay, which one of these do I feel really driven to take further right now?" What you need right now is just a little step, a little momentum, a little experiment, a little thing to try moving each of these forward and then see. Because no amount of like sitting and thinking and trying to figure it out is going to bring clarity. It's in those little actions that are going to start bringing the clarity about which direction to go.

Tejas: Got it. Yeah. That makes sense as well. I never thought about it that way. I could just call up people I know that that are really good at their job. I could just call them up on Zoom and just do a mock interview to see how it's like. Yeah. I think that's good idea as well. I probably will try that.

Jason: Yeah. In both cases you're keeping it really simple. You're not worrying about a sales page or a fancy course or a whole podcast or setting up a blog. It's just something really simple, just record interviews and send them to somebody to listen to, do the free workshop and make an invitation, limited invitation for one or two people to pay you something to work with you and see how it goes.

Tejas: Perfect.

Jason: How does that feel? Is that helpful?

Tejas: Yeah. No, it's definitely helpful, and it was nice to talk it out with somebody first of all because I don't find a lot of people who could understand what I'm trying to talk about.

Jason: Right, right. I totally understand that. Yeah, it is. It's hard when you're just by yourself thinking about these ideas. I mean, look, I've been doing this 15 years and I still get stuck thinking about my ideas, and that's where I've got colleagues or even my wife or somebody that ... I've got people I turn to, to talk through things because otherwise I just sit there going in circles in my head.

Jason: But yeah, I'm glad to hear that's motivating and clarifying for you. Anybody that's listening to this, the takeaway for you is to just find some simple experiment. It might be as simple as like just go find one person that you can help for free doing that thing that you're thinking about starting a business in and see how that feels.

Or if you're feeling brave enough to ask, you could even put out on social media saying, "Look, I'm starting this new thing. I want to help such and such people to accomplish this specific outcome. I'm looking for one person and because this is a new thing, I'm charging a really low price. If you know anybody who fits this kind of person that I want to help, if you could refer them over to me."

Jason: I've actually used that to really good effect before where I've had a new idea, I've gone to social media. I said, "I'm trying this new thing. I'm looking for ... And just like bullet point, bullet point, bullet point. This is the kind of person I'm looking for. This is what I want to help them do." Then inevitably somebody goes like, "Oh yeah. I know somebody who needs help with that," and they refer them over. Then you've got a person to work with and try something out with.

Jason: Sometimes, especially if you're offering some kind of ... If you just use that positioning of, "I'm trying something new out here so I'm charging less money, but this is something I'm building out and I just want to like be able to get some results for one person." That could be as simple as one session in a coffee shop with somebody, but you can learn so much doing that. I just kind of wanted to tie it up for anybody listening to this, some simple things that they could do to move forward with their niche ideas.

Jason: But Tejas, thanks so much. I appreciate you being willing to come on and share your ideas and talk through this with me. I know a lot of people would benefit from hearing your story as well. I'll tell you what, will you be sure to please let me know how it goes as you try out those those experiments?

Tejas: Absolutely. Yeah. Thank you so much, Jason, for your time and these ideas. I will definitely try it out as an experiment, and I'll share my results with you.

Jason: Awesome. I'm super excited. I can't wait to hear how it goes. So we'll be in touch. All right. Thanks, Tejas. Have a wonderful day.

Tejas: Thank you. Same to you. Bye.

Jason: Bye.

Key Takeaways

- The longer you stay stuck. The harder it gets. The only way forward is to take bold action, even a small, imperfect action.
- Finding a good business idea and building your business is a process of experimentation. Don't wait for the perfect answer. Try something. Do something. See how it feels. Get your feet wet. It will boost your confidence and provide valuable information about what steps to take next.
- There are amazing opportunities ahead waiting for you. They won't reveal themselves until you are in motion.
- There are no failed experiments. Each one plays a role in creating forward momentum, even if it doesn't work out as hoped.

- One of the best things you can do is to test out a business idea by finding one person you can help. You can do this for free or even have them pay you some money. What you will gain from this experience is invaluable.

Take Action

What is one small (even imperfect) experiment you can do right away with one of your business ideas to generate momentum, boost your confidence, and finally take one step forward in your online business?

Here are some ideas:

1. Have one conversation with someone who is your ideal customer. Ask them about what they struggle with. Ask them about their biggest questions. Use it as an opportunity to find out exactly what you can offer to best help them.
2. Find one person to coach (for free or for whatever you are comfortable charging).
3. Create and share one piece of content.
4. Hold a free workshop. Ask your friends, family, social media following and network of contacts to help you find a handful of people to teach. Use this as an opportunity to test out ideas for an eventual course or product you might create.

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