

## Scaling Up Services

Episode 230 - Libby Rothschild

<https://www.scalingupservices.com/podcast/230-libby-rothschild>

Libby Rothschild, Founder of Dietitian Boss

Libby Rothschild shows coaches, consultants, and entrepreneurs how to attract clients online without ads or a website. As a former clinical dietitian, Libby transformed from making 55k a year in a windowless clinical office to building a million-dollar company. Within her first 3 years of business Libby grew a 7 figure company without using paid ads or SEO. Libby's first company shows dietitians how to create a 6 and 7 figure virtual private practice using her trademarked method.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIXPySZ-j09S9NZwE17d-iQ>

<https://www.dietitianboss.com/podcast/>

<https://www.instagram.com/dietitianboss/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/libbyrothschild/>

## EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

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### [0:02]

You're listening to Scaling Up Services where we speak with entrepreneurs, authors, business experts and thought leaders to give you the knowledge and insights you need to scale your service based business faster and easier. And now here is your host business coach Bruce Eckfeldt.

### [0:22]

Are you a CEO looking to scale your company faster and easier? Check out Thrive roundtable. Thrive combines a moderated peer group mastermind expert one on one coaching access to proven growth tools and a 24/7 support community. Created by Inc award winning CEO and certified scaling up business coach Bruce Eckfeldt Thrive will help you grow your business more quickly and with less drama. For details on the program, visit [eckfeldt.com/thrive](http://eckfeldt.com/thrive) that's [ECKFELDT.com/thrive](http://ECKFELDT.com/thrive)

### [0:58]

Welcome everyone. This is Scaling Up Services, I'm Bruce Eckfeldt, I'm your host, our guest today is Libby Rothschild. She is founder and CEO of Dietitian Boss, we're going to talk to her about the journey she's been on on taking her business based on hourly work and hourly wage and really kind of providing services to people one on one, to really come up with a new model that helped her scale, help her leverage her time, get

out of what I call the tyranny of the hourly wage really helped kind of figure out how to grow and bring the business to the next level. And there's a lot of interesting experience that she's had she's going to share with us and hopefully really kind of share some insights on how anyone out there and service businesses can really kind of rethink how they provide their services, their engagement models, and how they can grow and scale and really leverage their time, while leveraging their experience and helping more people and creating more value. exciting conversation. I think this is something a lot of service companies struggle with at various levels, whether you're kind of solopreneur or looking to scale or whether you've got a going concern, you're just trying to figure out even how to take it to the next level. I would say how do you add a zero to your revenues? And and there's some ideas here, hopefully you can take away and you can apply it to your business, hopefully kind of change the way you're thinking about your business and doing things. So with that, Libby, welcome to the program.

**[2:15]**

Thank you so much for having me, Bruce. Happy to be here.

**[2:17]**

Yeah, it's a pleasure. So before we dive into everything you're doing today with Dietitian Boss, let's get a little bit of the background. Give us the professional story, personal story, how you how did you get into the business give us the journey you've been on?

**[2:30]**

Absolutely. So I am a trained clinical dietitian, completed my master's in clinical nutrition at NYU, and I worked as a clinical dietitian for five years. My story of how I got to create the business that I have today is that it was in my clinical office, underpaid and undervalued. I was making \$55,000 a year and feeling very unappreciated, in my position, highly educated and significantly undervalued. And this is pretty typical for registered dietitians were paid under 60,000 According to the statistics of labor and Bureau and so in my clinical office in Manhattan, I had to work other jobs to make ends meet because I couldn't afford my rent and I was also more than the money issue because I was able to be savvy and consultant teach and speak I had seven revenue streams. I felt depressed because I didn't feel I didn't feel valued and I didn't feel heard and seen and the nutrition department was a complete joke at my facility. I had to struggle to get nutrition consults, and they just because I wasn't a billable provider, I really wasn't seen as an urgent need. And that really was difficult for my psychology given that I'm very passionate about nutrition and most registered dietitians are heart centered individuals 85% female, according to statistics from from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. So what I did is I decided one day after working so many physicians and I was teaching a curriculum at the hospital bridging the gap between oral health and systemic health. One day a friend of mine said, you know, Libby, you should share your story on social media. And I thought this this was in this was maybe five years ago, four years ago, and I had a lot of imposter syndrome. So I doubted her at first, but because I respect this friend and Pierre, we used to work together we were personal trainers together at Equinox so we we've been friends for a decade. I said you know what, I'm going to give it a try. So I went on social media with the effort to connect with other dietitians and find who else like me was doing unconventional things to align with our purpose and make money because I really had intended to make more money than \$55,000 a year. And the rest is history. I went on Instagram in my clinical office I always talk about on social media now how I worked in a windowless clinical office and I took pictures and videos of me in my office just documenting my life. It was that simple. I shared what I was doing how I was making money and I connected genuinely with dietitians around the world and within the first month of being on Instagram, somebody I had made over \$1,000. And within the first two or three months, I had a handful of private clients. So what I had learned is that there wasn't many resources or

dietitians, who have created their own business or call it private practice. So basically, according to the statistics from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, only 8% of dietitians own their own business, and even fewer create a six figure salary. So I saw there was a gap in the market that I had naturally filled, taking my experience and sharing my story every day on social and it had turned into a full time coaching business within a year and a half, and I was able to quit that low paying clinical job. And then my company reached the million dollar mark within 18 months, which was really exciting.

**[5:42]**

That's great. You mentioned earlier that you had you had seven different revenue streams. I mean, tell me a little bit about how, like, what drove that? What were the streams? What, like, what was the analysis of that strategy?

**[5:55]**

Yeah, so I am an overachiever. And I do love making money. And I genuinely when I teach and speak about nutrition, it doesn't, it didn't feel like work to me. So it kind of fell into my lap, I had a lot of consulting contracts and speaking contract. So speaking for the 1199, healthcare union and Manhattan, I was teaching two different curriculums, one for the dental department, one for the pediatric nutrition department of teaching medical students. And then I was also working overtime at one clinic, and I worked at an obesity pediatric clinic. And then I also did some consulting for restaurants in a menu analysis to promote sustainable eating habits and sustainable practices and restaurants.

**[6:35]**

And did you are these, like you sat down and strategize the different revenue streams and find them? Or was this just things that kind of came to you that you just figure out how to monetize? And you ended up with seven? Going?

**[6:47]**

To be honest, this doesn't sound strategic. But the truth is, it kind of fell in my lap. I went from initially I did ask when I when I landed my position, my \$55,000 a year position. I said, Ooh, this is rough. Can I work the evening shift? And I always ask for unique things. And I've been lucky and fortunate to receive them, mostly because I asked, so I said to the manager, like, you know, am I able to work the night shift? I see you have a clinic here, you have open hours at late hours twice a week, would you be able to let me work tend to eight or 10 to seven or 1111 to seven? Actually I did, I did noon to seven or eight times a week. And that afforded me the opportunity to have mornings open and work another job. And so I create, I mean, I did work around the clock, but I created an environment to allow for opportunities to fall on my lap. And then I capitalize on the opportunities when they came, but I did not look for them. I had because I was so I was everywhere, right. And so people would come up to me I just said the dental Department said hey, would you mind teaching a lecture on sugar sweetened beverages? And that turned into a four year curriculum where I was paid 1000s of dollars every year to teach the dentists about oral health and systemic health. Yeah.

**[7:54]**

And do you find? Or is your kind of reflection on that? It's like, wow, that was kind of a waste of my time, I should have done this other stuff earlier, or do you feel like this was just part of your journey and you learn things from it? And you know, it allowed you to then take the next step?

**[8:06]**

It's a good question, because part of my story on social is that I hated my clinical position. And where that's true, the nine to five was difficult for me because I was underpaid and undervalued, I absolutely loved and stayed because of the alternative opportunities that I had and the people I met and connected with and the skills I learned. So now I have a proprietary process called the dietician method at the dietitian boss method. And a big part of what helped me create that is that I created curriculums for four years. And I got that experience, not from clinical but from being in clinical and connecting with other people that afforded me the opportunity to teach and lecture and so that skill translated into my current business. So there's a lot of great things that came with that, I might have done it a little differently in retrospect, and all the opportunities I've had have been ungrateful for,

**[8:55]**

yeah, is there any I know just kind of piece of advice or anything, you'd give someone you know, who's kind of in that situation, right? They're, they're in a, you know, kind of a nine to five grind, or they're, you know, they're in some kind of position that's, you know, much lower than they want to be getting paid, but it's, you know, maybe providing some basic income, in terms of how to leverage that either in terms of knowledge, contact experiences, you know, developing yourself in different ways, you know, because it's easy, I think, to be in those situations. And just to say, alright, well, look, this sucks. It's not serving me, I just need to find something else versus this. Okay. Well, you know, I'm here, you know, yes, I want to find something else. But what can I do? In the meantime? What can I do to advance myself in different ways? Anything that you'd suggest people sort of think about or do in that position?

**[9:37]**

Yeah, I would suggest a couple things. The first thing would be to have a practice for developing a growth mindset is important. And that could be reading audible, or it could be actual books that you're creating a schedule to read a certain amount in a certain time and it could be people so networking, and that could mean virtual, it could mean in person or both, and leveraged Social media, that's what I did is I found a way to talk about and document my life. And that really helped me connect with other people and feel inspired and valued. So I would, I would say those three things can really help propel or pique your interest and identify what you're interested in. I think it's important that everybody leverages social media to build a brand. And I know that's very controversial. And it helped me create my business. And that's how I help my clients as well. And you might not start with a stellar strategy. But when you're able to show up on social media and show your face, you're giving yourself the opportunity to connect with other people. And that can help you grow your mindset.

**[10:36]**

Yeah, you mentioned you had someone in your network or you know, you've surrounded yourself by who gave you some feedback, they say, Hey, you should share your story. How did you find that person? What was that relationship? Like? Is that something that you feel like it was important in terms of your development? And how might someone else or how might you suggest people find surround themselves with people who are going to serve that role?

**[10:58]**

Yeah, and excellent question. And I'm really big on networking. I'm a people person, I love people, I love talking to people, I love helping people and the mentor, I absolutely love it. And I find that it's really important to be connected and is one of human needs is connection. So that person, her name is Melissa. And we had worked together for a decade at Equinox and we reconnected over social media, we just hadn't talked in a few years. And she had actually asked me because she had a health company, if I could teach a nutrition course, or

health or nutrition lecture, because she needed somebody for her company. And we had spoken in a while. And we had just reconnected on social because I was showing up. And so when we reconnected and I had caught up with her about my life, that's when she had suggested that I share it publicly. So if I were to connect the dots between what I had suggested no reading, connecting with people and leveraging social, I would say doing that can put you front and center of opportunities that you can seize, that can lead to more opportunities. So building a strong personal network is extremely important. And maintaining that has really helped me and that's how I was able to grow from some of the income streams. And that's also how I was able to attract clients on social media. Because I grew my business without ads. And with no SEO, it was all through leveraging Instagram, and then my podcast.

**[12:14]**

Yeah. So and I'm curious was this, you sat down and said, Okay, I'm going to use social media to grow a following this the content I'm going to put out and this is the intended outcome I have and or was this kind of you just sort of found discovered or found yourself in a situation where you started getting followers? And I was like, Okay, how do I leverage this play with some things, see what sticks, how kind of upfront strategy was this versus figure out as I go and leverage kind of fortuitous events,

**[12:42]**

it was a lot more figure it out as as I go until I got to, I'd say, three of a couple 100,000 Until I until I really started making more money, I was a little bit more intuitive, in the sense where I felt something and I saw it, and then I found a way to leverage it. And that's how I ended up with so many income streams. So as I've matured, as my business acumen has developed, and I've matured, as a business owner, I've employed a much more strategic approach. I think that there was strategic elements in the beginning, but it was much more intuitive, where I had the opportunities, and I said, Oh, okay, well, you know, I'll take you as a client, I'll take another speaking opportunity. And then I even play the role of a social media manager for a few months, I just things fell in my lap, and I went with it until I went to the drawing board and understood what's more profitable, what can help me achieve X outcome? How do I need this to be structured, I don't have a business background. I'm not a clinician, right. I've got a master's and undergrad in nutrition. So for me, it was all very new to learn how to how to approach this from a KPI standpoint, and not from a feelings standpoint. Yeah,

**[13:47]**

it's interesting, I find that a lot of businesses kind of go through these cycles of kind of diverging and trying things experimenting and then converging of kind of filtering and prioritizing and sort of optimizing any kind of touristic that you used or kind of ways in which you kind of chose what to kind of explore when you're in that kind of expansive mode of, you know, all the things coming at you. How did you decide, okay, yeah, this one I'm going to pursue versus this one. I'm not to kind of experiment. And then how did you kind of filter? How did you decide which ones to kind of trim once you got some stuff going and decided you need to focus?

**[14:21]**

Yeah, I would say something that stands out to me. And that's a really great reflective question to think about. Often, I would say when I offered private coaching, and I had a course and and I also the demand was so high that I had looked at my different product offerings, and I had decided to take my private coaching even as my I had increased my rates and switch that model into a group coaching program. And that was a really special and important moment for me and my company, because at that moment, I started to make more money per hour, and I started to have a more sophisticated business model where I was able to support more people at one time I was able to serve the demand of my clients. And then I was quickly able to hire and have other

coaches under me teach my proprietary process to be able to serve all those clients. And that was really a pivotal moment for me when I switch the private coaching to the group model, and then have people under me serving those clients. And I made that decision because I lined up what makes more money and what can work long term. And I also filtered factored in the demand because I had a lot of people that wanted me and I was already charging what I thought was a pretty high rate per month for coaching. And I just there was I had to make that decision and to be able to serve the market.

**[15:34]**

And how, let me tell you a little bit of process of the process of coming up with the process. How did you kind of abstract or kind of codify like what you were doing into something that could be kind of taught, taught by you taught by others repeatable and optimized? Like how, like, how did that go for you?

**[15:53]**

Yeah, the process of the process, eight has been my goodness, I spend the most time on my methodology, and iterating, and getting feedback and re reviewing. And I get feedback in focus groups, written form video, audio, like I'm constantly getting feedback from my clients and making adjustments. I also worked with a coach that works with IP development, and she's got framework. So we've been able to work on together. And we've done intensives to review my framework and make sure that I'm appealing to multiple learning styles. So there's been a lot, a lot of work on my methodology and my process, I'd say, from the beginning, it was testing. And so I ran like live groups, and got feedback in real time. And then I tried to just doing a course, which was passive, which is a little harder to get feedback on. But then a lot of surveys, and I would say consistently running my program in different models, but specifically live with feedback. And evaluating that feedback has helped me make some changes. But it definitely has not been easy to figure out how and what it looks like to redevelop that process. But it's a work in progress.

**[16:58]**

Yeah. And how, tell me a little bit about how you structure the company at this point in terms of how you've leveraged people, like Where have you brought in kind of other folks, you know, either for sort of capacity or additional skill sets? Like what how is your kind of talent strategy evolved?

**[17:13]**

Yeah, so we have I have a COO, she's fantastic. So she's the director of operations. And her name is Sarah, she also provides minimal operations coaching, and she feels a really significant roll, her brain thinks very differently than I do, or opposite on disc tests and this profiling, so I'm a high D, I am 8986 18. And what that means is that without systems and processes, I'm not going to go very far. And so she's able to come in and really fill those voids. And it's been tremendously helpful. And we work well together, we go on conferences and communicate often. And she she provides management as well as just a little bit of client support. We have two coaches and administrator about several virtual assistants. And we have a small sales team. And then we have some, you know, we've got a team, lawyer and finance etc. So I would say having three coaches, and I come in and provide occasional, specialized coaching has helped us I do have specialist coaches, I have a content specialist, since we teach content. And she's a video editor. And so she's able to come in and really keep on trend with all of the changes with the algorithm, specifically Instagram. And so that's been really helpful. So we have her for content, one of our coaches. And then we also have my CEO who comes in and provides operation coaching for our higher level clients that need help with systems and processes. One of our strategies this coming year, is to continue with guests. So we have another guest who does speaking, and we had a past guests talk about SEO. So as we evolve, we will have more guests come in for specialized topics,

who will not be part of the core staff, but we'll have them come in and really provide that support for our clients to really add to our library as well.

**[18:55]**

Yeah, and how I'm always curious how you've had to kind of evolve, change your own kind of strategies mindsets to the business to how you lead tell you manage yourself, how you manage other people like what are the kind of transformations you've had to go through in order to be able to actually transform the business

**[19:14]**

that has been significant. And I will say that getting support from my network of peers from EEO. I'm in I've done the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Business scholarship. I'm in YTC, an entrepreneur Council and an EO and I also volunteered with these organizations, it's been significantly helpful to have a peer network and coaches as well. As far as me evolving. The company grew really fast. We have had over 200% growth from 2019 to 2020. And because of that, it was very chaotic in the sense of and I've been very open about this. I hired too fast and fire too slow. I've written about this and I know it's common, and it caused a lot of anxiety for me, for me of how to best lead and I got really insecure about retaining staff. So it took a lot of time to work on In my mindset to be okay with slowing down with the hiring process and to restock up in this past year, specifically this last two quarters. And I think what's helped me be a better leader is developing a strong culture and baking in the core values with the work that we do internally. And we've always been a virtual company. So it's not an it's not been any different that we're virtual since COVID. What's been hard is the fast growth during COVID. And making sure that we're building that culture as we're growing. And that's been challenging for me. And I think communication. And making sure as a CEO that I'm laying down the culture and reiterating it on a regular basis has helped me become a better leader. And the team has given me feedback, specifically our COO that she thinks that's one of the strongest aspects of the company, which to me is a great compliment.

**[20:48]**

Yeah, I'm curious on how you've kind of defined culture or what techniques you use to define culture, and then how you've used it in that hiring process. Because I think that's one of the biggest challenge that most leaders, particularly service companies have got to hire people to be able to scale the business. And it's not easy. It's it's easier, I guess, maybe to, to kind of look at skills and experience and kind of capabilities. And you know, the systems, you know, this technology, it's, it's, and it's because it's a little easier, I think it's that people tend to focus on that. But it is only kind of part of the equation in terms of understanding if someone is going to be a good fit. And just kind of curious how how you evaluate culture, when you're, you know, looking at candidates and and then how you continue to evaluate culture as you're onboarding people and doing professional reviews and deciding you look, as this person, you know, good fit here should be someone we should promote, you know, things like that. How does this actually play out for you?

**[21:42]**

Yeah. So it's a newer thing in the sense that I didn't I wish I would have done this sooner. I wish I would have thought about this question much sooner. In my company, I, the technique I used to develop our core values was in 2020, I had asked our team if they could share what they felt the values would be. And then we had various meetings, throughout the quarter, we dedicated an entire quarter to identifying what we all felt would be the top values. So I took their feedback together as a team. And then I asked everybody as homework to think of examples for each core value. So that was how we defined it and narrowed it down. And then the next so it was all input of the staff. And then the next step was I decided, and I learned this through that, actually, I had the idea because I took a scholarship through Goldman Sachs, 10,000 small businesses, and one of the

modules a very robust 100 hour program was talking about culture. And I knew it was an issue culture and hiring, were the the biggest struggles we had had. So I thought, what can I do to bake this in right after we have defined it for that staff that they could nominate the values and give examples? What can we do to continue that throughout the company, and I decided to send a quick internal newsletter, where I took each value, we have five, and then I asked each staff member to nominate somebody else based on that value, and to submit anything so that they could share how they're living up to those values. And I send that out either every week or every other week, depending on how busy we are in the company. And that's really helped us in it's a quick newsletter, it's video, and it's given everybody a chance to get to know each other a little bit better, and to really try to embrace those values. So those are small examples. And then when it comes to hiring, we have a very the, I wouldn't say complex, but it's a robust process. And my role is to be involved with hiring for culture, Sarah, our CEOs role is to hire for skill. So she brings in the top candidates for skill. And then when I interview, I ask questions based on culture. And we do use similar questions to be fair about how and I'm looking for how do they carry out our values? And how aligned would they be with our culture? And would they fit in? And do they say things or give examples that would align with what we do and then they get bonus points if they even mentioned our values, which are puts it on our website. So I'm really looking for that fit from the beginning. And then ideally, the next level would be that we're, we've got KPIs, and we're actually evaluating if they're living up to the culture in the company, we don't do that. But that would probably be the next step in this journey.

**[24:07]**

Yeah. You know, I'm curious in terms of your plans going forward and strategy like how, I guess, how do you see the business growing? You know, what is the competition look like? Where Where do you go next, in terms of, you know, scaling your business? Yeah. So

**[24:20]**

as far as competition what sets us apart differentiation, it's huge for me and I, you know, we teach that to our clients as well as we show dieticians how to start and grow their private practice, and I really believe, differentiate or die. And I would say one of our strongest value proposition and with our company, that we're the only company that serves just dieticians, and business coaching space, a lot of the competitors do wellness, which is a huge industry. I don't know how many people are in the wellness space, but there's it's very fast and I mean, everybody's a wellness business coach these days, right. So what I've done is I've focused solely on registered dieticians there's 100,000 of them in America and I have a proprietary process That's and I don't know anybody else, no other competition that does what we do. We are the only ones that we've I've got competitors that do you fit pros and you know, but they don't have a proprietary process and they don't have other people carrying out that process. And the goal that I've created with dietician boss is to create an organization that exists without me. And we scale through my methodology, not through people, but through the process and through how we've been able to support people through my framework and in the goal. And that's why I mentioned earlier, I spend so much time iterating on my process. So it's more clear, there's more visuals, the steps are broken down more so that we can really serve the goal is to serve every dietitian who wants to start and grow a business. And the mission is to create more private practice operators. And so we can do that by really focusing on the methodology.

**[25:45]**

Yeah, and I'm just kind of curious how you organize your time in terms of, you know, as the business has grown, as your kind of role has shifted, I would like on a weekly basis, like what's the core thing that you really



kind of focus on, you know, way of creating value? And then how do you see that evolving as a company continues to grow?

**[26:02]**

Yeah, really great questions, we've focused a lot on staffing up the last two quarters. So I would say more of my time, we were understaffed significantly. So we did have to fill in a little bit on the talent of this past year, which is not normal on that because of that, that was unfortunate, but part of life. And then there was a little more time with hiring and interviews, and then that process of being working with the CEO and deciding who would be a fit. So there was more time that went into that, because that was our project. And then we had to staff up significantly. So we don't mean one person, I'm talking for people. So that takes a significant amount of time, and we dedicated an entire quarter to that project, the next project is also pretty laborious. And that's we're rolling out a lower ticket offer that I'm going to be promoting soon for our audience. And so I'm iterating on the methodology and differentiating for different offers with how that looks. And so I've been spending a lot more time on that project for the first quarter of this year. So the answer depends on what projects we're working on. My day to day is based on what the company needs and the projects we we don't do any more than three per quarter. And some of the projects require less of me and then of course, there's always emergencies where I might have to come back in the goal is for me to work less hours in the company and then actually bring out my The goal is to take my proprietary process into other verticals so I've trademarked practice boss, nutrition boss therapy boss and be able to replicate the system I have in dietician boss into other markets with the success I've had here. And so the I'm pretty close to being able to do that. So the goal is next after a few more things are dialed in this this next staff members onboarding, we want to wait till the 90 days I'll be able to go and take my work and increase my you know, my body of work and to other markets and really focus on that differentiation by helping a specific market

**[27:55]**

Libby this has been a pleasure. If people want to find out more about you more about Dietitian Boss, what's the best way to get that information,

**[28:01]**

you can go to [Libbyrothschild.com](http://Libbyrothschild.com). And you can also connect with me on Instagram at dietitian boss. Great.

**[28:08]**

I'll make sure the links are in the show notes there. Libby, this has been a pleasure. Thank you so much for taking the time today.

**[28:12]**

Thank you, Bruce.

**[28:14]**

Thank you for tuning in to today's episode. Be sure to subscribe using your favorite podcast app, so you don't miss our future episodes. See you next time.

**[28:23]**

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