

Episode 61: Dreaming Big with a Business Minded Physical Therapist

Meet Jamey Schrier, a physical therapist, private practice owner, and career coach who helps aspiring business owners build a long-term mindset and a solid foundation for their dream life. He shares why students and recent grads need to begin their careers with the end in mind, how to reverse engineer the life they want, what to do to ensure their goals align with a company's, and much more.

Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself and why you're on this podcast.
2. Can you share what it means to have a business mindset and how new grads and clinical fellows can adopt that moving forward?
3. What is reverse engineering in terms of career goals, and how does one go about enacting that?
4. You have a lot of passion and drive for what you do. Can you tell us where that comes from?
5. How can aspiring SLPs ensure that their values and goals align with the core values of a company?
6. What is some advice you'd give to new professionals searching for jobs?
7. What words of advice do you have for the new speech pathologists or anybody else who's listening to this as they start their career?

Quote of the Conversation

"Two words: Dream big. You spent a lot of time, a lot of money, [and] a lot of sacrifice getting into this awesome profession to help so many people. Keep developing and expanding yourself — not just your clinical skills, but your communication skills, you know, all of it that makes you a great professional. Keep reaching. You're going to fail. You're going to have some setbacks and all that. That's all part of life."

-Jamey Schrier, P.T.

Jamey Schrier, P.T.

Physical Therapist and Founder of Practice Freedom U



Hi, I'm Jamey Schrier. Welcome... If you're here, I imagine that you may be a bit frustrated or worried... or both.... Frustrated with • the inconsistency of new patient • the unreliability of visits • the shock of declining reimbursements • the utter ridiculousness of third party payors. Worried about • money • competition • employees • the long hours • [Read More »](#)

Keep the Conversation Going

You can find Jamey Schier at:

www.practicefreedomu.com

Free e-book: www.practicefreedomu.com/slp

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The Missing Link for SLPs Podcast Show Notes

Mattie Murrey

Today's guest is definitely somebody we've not heard from before because he's not a speech pathologist. I'm going to be talking with Jamey Schrier, who is a physical therapist by trade and passionate business person by design. Welcome, Jamey.

Mattie Murrey

Welcome to this episode of The Missing Link for SLPs podcast. I'm so glad you're here. This episode is part of the series of Real Talk, and the series highlights real conversations with real SLPs about real topics of conversation in our field that are honest, open, raw, and very authentic. We are glad you're here. Be sure to visit our website at freshslp.com. You will find more podcasts and more blogs. And leave a comment. We'd love to hear your feedback about what you're hearing, what you're listening to, and what your thoughts are. Glad you're here.

Mattie Murrey

So, welcome Jamey Schrier of Practice Freedom U. So, [you're a] physical therapist. What's it like being the first physical therapist on the SLPs podcast?

Jamey Schrier

Well, I am so honored, Mattie, to be here. And I don't know. It's exciting. You know, I love sharing this message and just can't wait to dive in and help some of your listeners.

Mattie Murrey

We were chatting before the podcast — before I hit the record button — and I'm like, "You know, Jamey, I just need to hit record because you were saying so many things that I want to capture in this podcast." So, we are going to start capturing some of those now with our conversation. Tell me who you are and why you're on this podcast.

Jamey Schrier

Well, I'm a physical therapist by trade. And, like most business owners [or] practice owners, I had that bug to want to do it on my own — to not have to listen to my boss[and to treat patients the way I want. So, I started my practice in the early 2000s. And the practice started to grow. You know, you work hard. You grow. You do what you have to do. And then you start hiring people. So, I started hiring people. Well, you start hiring people to kind of help you with a lot of the stuff that you're doing on your own. But instead of my hours going down, I actually worked even more hours because I was doing my job and some of their jobs. And I was really struggling. And it took an emotional toll. And although a lot of people in our businesses — in the private practice world — smile and say everything is good (which of course I did), inside it wasn't so good.



So, I started to learn and take it upon myself: How do I build a business? Because I don't know. I wasn't taught in school how to do this. And nobody really talks about it. So, fast forward, I put a lot of time, a lot of effort, a lot of money, and a heck of a lot of mistakes. But I learned a few things along the way of actually how to build a business and become a real owner versus just a clinician. So, I ended up, you know, growing my practices. And then I started sharing my story. And that led me into coaching and helping other business owners create the business that they love. And so, I guess that's why I'm here: to share some of that.

Mattie Murrey

So, our audience is largely students and brand new clinical fellow SLPs. And when you and I were talking beforehand, you know, I originally thought, "What message is he going to share with us that's going to be appropriate for this listening audience?" But the more I talk to you, the more I realize that your passion, your company, and what you do with coaching really is setting an important mindset from the very, very, very beginning. So, the conversation that we're going to have moving forward, with what you do and where you really shine, is having that business mindset. And having that from the very beginning of our careers is very important.

Jamey Schrier

Yeah, absolutely.

Mattie Murrey

So, tell me where you shine with your business.

Jamey Schrier

Well, I think the important thing for people that either want to go into private practice — or maybe you're partnering up with somebody, or you're currently in your business — I think it always comes down to this one thing that we teach at Practice Freedom U: You always want to begin with the end in mind. Stephen Covey says that in his book, "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People." And I think [with] everything we do, if we start with the end, it kind of creates where we're trying to head. So, we all did this at school. We had a vision. We had a goal: "I want to be a speech-language pathologist." So, you have that vision, and then you do the steps to get there. But a lot of times in our businesses, or sometimes just in our lives, it's kind of the Home Depot model. It's, "Do it yourself. Busy is better." Right?

You know, a mentor of mine a long time ago, Mattie, said something really cool. He goes, "Busy? So too are the ants. The question is, what are you busy about?" And I think it's important for us to always look at what we are trying to accomplish. What is our goal? What is our vision? And in business, it's no different. Instead of just going in there and just putting your head down and start working, get clear on what you want. And it's not that easy, sometimes, to be clear on, "Well, what do I want?" Because a lot of times we get caught up with the whole thinking, "Well, can I do it? Can I achieve it?" We start hyper-analyzing everything. So, that's kind of a first step to really think about what you want. And even if it's not business related. You know, be clear on



what you want as a professional. Where do you want to go? It's okay if you don't necessarily achieve it or achieve it exactly when you want. But I think it's really important to always start with that perspective first.

Mattie Murrey

So, you start with the end and work backwards.

Jamey Schrier

Yeah, you start with the end and then you reverse engineer — you know, fancy word that basically says, you kind of move backwards from that. So, we're clear on what we want. So, let's say you're just starting your business and you have a vision. You know the type of people you want to help. You know that you want the business to create this type of lifestyle, whether it's revenue or flexibility. Let's say, you want to have three offices one day versus someone that wants to have just a solo practice and maybe work three days a week with a few clients and a cash base. Those are all very different visions. And what you have to do today to start moving your business toward that is going to be different. So yes, you reverse engineer that, and you start to break it into chunks. This is how I learned it in my years and years and years of going through this myself.

From a time management standpoint, if you look so far out in the future and try to say, "Okay, in three years, I want to have three locations," and you just start working now to get there, it's going to be very difficult because there's no plan and organization. But if you break it into, let's say, three month chunks or quarterly chunks — kind of like the stock market, it's all done in quarters — then in that 90-day period (we call it doing a 90-day sprint), you can start writing down, "Okay, in the next 90 days, what do I want to achieve? What's my goal? What's the milestone I want to achieve?" So, you take this big one-year, two-year, three-year goal, and you start breaking it down to 90 day chunks. Then you can break that down even further to 30-day chunks. So, by chunking your time, you start to get more clear on what has to be done, all the way up to, "What do I want to do and accomplish this week?" And that helps you become much more efficient than just doing, doing, doing, doing, doing, and feeling busy, but you're not really productive.

Mattie Murrey

And being an ant.

Jamey Schrier

Being an ant. The ants are busy, too. Everyone's busy. It's like the badge of honor these days, Mattie, being busy.

Mattie Murrey

So, you mentioned something earlier about — I've got to get this right — not working harder, but working smarter.

Jamey Schrier



Yeah, it's something that you hear about. And you know, there's all kinds of different phrases. So, I dove in to figure out, well, what the heck does that mean, not working hard? Because I know how to work hard. That's what I know how to do. We've all worked hard to get where we want. Well, we all have 24 hours in a day. You take a third of that away for sleeping. The billionaires and the thousandaires both have the same number of hours. So, how do you work this idea of smarter? Well, I look at "smarter" as in this word "strategic." How are you more strategic in where you focus your time? So, in the world of business and having your practice, your time is the most important time. So, there's this really cool thing I wanted to share with you. Have you ever heard of this thing called "Have To, Should Do, Like To Do"?

Mattie Murrey

No.

Jamey Schrier

Okay. So, this kind of goes along with where you put your time. How do you manage yourself? So, you create a list. You grab a piece of paper, and you put three columns on there. The first one is "Have To." And you can do this for your business, and you can do this personally. These are all the things in a given week that you have to do. All the activities you have to do. That's the first column. The next column are all the things, all the activities, [and] all the tasks that you should do. You say the words, "Well, I really should do this," but you don't have to do it. And then the third column are all the things that you're doing in a given week that you'd like to do. And here's what I bet happens. Your "Have To Dos," okay, you've got your list. Your "Should Dos" are going to be massive. It's going to be a huge list. It's going to be bigger than all the other lists combined. And then your "Like To Dos" is going to be very, very small.

And what we teach people and tell people is that, if you are only doing the things you like a very small amount of time, and you're doing all these things "you should do," that's what actually causes the stress and frustration in your life. Because this "should do" is this idea of... Maybe it's a story you have in your head. Maybe it's a guilt thing. Whatever the case is. But if your day is taken up by "Should Do," that is not working smarter. That's just working and being busy and doing stuff. But you're not being strategic in where you're putting your time. And that increases stress. And when your stress is increased, it actually affects how you think about things. So, we've all said it. We've all been in fights and we said something which we regret. You know, when emotion is high, intelligence is low. What causes the emotion is all these things that we should be doing. So, as a business owner, what you should be doing is focusing on the things that serve your company and you the best. Because how you handle things... You know, I look at it as a gas tank. We need to keep your gas tank full, your energy high. And when your energy's high, your creativity [is high]. You make less bad decisions, and you move things forward. And that sometimes is hard to do, especially nowadays, when there's so much being thrown at us. So, that "Have To Do," "Should Do," and "Like To Do" is just a good exercise to kind of see, "What are all these Should Dos and how do we start reducing them?"

Mattie Murrey



You really have something. Listening to you, I feel just like, wow, I can catch a tail of this, of what you're talking about. Where does that passion, that drive, and that clarity come from?

Jamey Schrier

That's a great question. No one's ever asked me that. I think I've always been a passionate person. But I guess that, when I find something that I truly believe in, and I find that my values are aligned with my actions — and in this case, my livelihood — I just wake up every day just loving what I'm doing. Appreciating what I'm doing. Appreciating the fact that we're here today. And it just is a positive feedback loop. That doesn't mean every day is perfect and it's, you know, rainbows and pink bunnies. You know, there are bad times. My wife, her life might be like that, which I think it is. But that's okay. I want her to have that kind of life. But I think that I'm so passionate about this, because I know what it was like really being miserable. It's spending all this time and energy and money to become a physical therapist, and then spending even more time and energy and money to open up a business to try to help people, which is what I love to do, and just getting kicked around. You know? Like, waking up at two o'clock in the morning in a cold sweat because payroll was due. Or trying to do everything for my staff and they just quit and give me no notice, and it's like they don't really care. Or patients, you know, complaining about a \$10 copay when I was with them for an hour and a half. It was just struggle after struggle after struggle, and I was working my butt off and not moving forward.

So, when I went through this learning and this understanding of actually how to build a business and become an owner, I just felt that it's my mission and duty to help other people who want to build their business and build their life and use this vehicle — their business — to help them create a better life. Because that's what I believe business is for. Your business is what you do to help you to have a better life. You're not supposed to, then, use your life for your business. I just don't subscribe to that. So, I guess my passion is about knowing that people are in some difficult situations and giving some hope and some guidance and some really tangible things that it doesn't have to be that way. It can be everything you want it to be, especially now. Because a lot of your people are brand new, and you have that excitement. You have that energy. And, you know, don't lose that. And it's easy to lose that when you get beaten up a little bit in the business world.

Mattie Murrey

Absolutely. Most of the guests, other than you, when they first come on, I ask them their SLP story of origin: Why did you become a speech pathologist? And so many of them can clearly tell me this is why. But then when — because Fresh SLP also has coaching for the speech pathologists who are transitioning back into the field or they're burned out, or they want to start their private practice — and I pull them back to, "What is your story of origin? Why are you doing what you're doing?" You are absolutely correct. We do get kicked around a lot. And because we are compassionate, I call it the sandwich effect. We give to the companies. We give it to the corporate. We give to the productivity rates that are sometimes unreasonable. And we



give to our patients and our clients and their caregivers. Because that's who we are. That's what we do. And there's sometimes very little left for us in the middle.

Jamey Schrier

Exactly, Mattie. And that's the first mind shift that we have to understand and accept. You don't strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. We're the strong. Sacrificing your life, healing yourself but believing the story, "yeah, but I'm doing it for others," that's not good. We need you at your highest, most powerful creative level. We need you there. So, anything that takes you down, we have got to address it. That's why you "Should Do." That's why, you know, a lot of times in our business or even our life, we do things that we don't like to do that really zap our energy — that we're not even really good at, but we do it. Why? Because we make up some story. Of course, we believe it. But we make up some story about why we have to do that, or why we should do that. Like, if you don't like cutting your lawn, then hire someone to cut the lawn if you don't really get enjoyment. So, if you don't like doing payroll, hire a payroll company. It is about focusing more on...whether you call it unique ability, your superpower, your natural gift. Whatever you call it, it's something that you do well, that other people look at you and say, "How do you do that, Mattie?" And you're like, "Do what?" It's just so natural. Like, we want to harness that. We all have that. We all have that unique gift. And we want to spend as much of our day doing that. So, if your gift is you're just an amazing clinician and it's easy for you, then harness that and continue to do that. And try to move these other things off your plate. In business, if there's certain things you want to do, and you don't like doing — you know, answering the phones or dealing with insurance or payroll or billing, or whatever the case is — there are other people, where that's their unique gift. They love doing that stuff. So, you know, that's how I began to organize my life. And I continued to this day. My goal is to wake up every day, and —100% I don't think is realistic for me — 95% of my day is in line with the things that I love to do. Right now, I know you can't tell, but this is one of the things I love to do.

Mattie Murrey

Me too. Me too.

Jamey Schrier

I love to talk. I love to share. I love to create. I love to coach and guide people. So, I've organized my team so I can do those things and do them well. So, you can take this to anything in your life. But that's what then increases your energy, sees opportunities everywhere, helps you create and develop relationships. It's really that simple. But it's not simple to do that because of all this other stuff we have.

Mattie Murrey

So, real question here. I'm looking for total authenticity, and I think you're going to give it to me. There are so many companies out there who promise the rainbows and the pink bunnies. And yet they're a way to take people's money, deliver dreams, and then not always deliver them. I feel you are different.



Jamey Schrier

Well, I can't not be... really great English. And you were a writer, I know, so you know that's not good English. I can't not be who I am. I can't not be genuine. I can't not be authentic. And I think all of us have that authenticity and genuineness. And when our actions don't align, it creates conflict within us. And I think, you know, for those companies that you're talking about, yes, there's always bad companies. There's always bad stuff out there. I think sometimes... You know, it's easy to take a course to learn how to market, to learn how to sell, to learn how to get you to think the way I want you to. I mean, social media is doing that right now, not to go into that whole world. And sometimes, it's not aligned with maybe their values, and it becomes a little inauthentic. They say to do this. They say this. They say that. They promise that you're going to do this, but they don't do it themselves. Unfortunately, that's a lot of people. That's a lot of businesses.

And that's one of the things that I tell my team: Hold me accountable. Like, this is what we're doing. This is our vision for Practice Freedom U. These are the people we want to help. This is what we want to create. And we need to walk the talk. We can't not do that. But it's easy not to go. It's much easier for me to tell you, Mattie, what you should be doing, while I do all this other stuff. It's easy for me to be an overweight person and tell you you need to lose weight. But obviously, I don't take my own advice. And I think that, when that aligns, you become that much more powerful and you stand out. Your credibility is higher. You stand out more. Because people know, especially nowadays. I think people are much more in tune. Like, you just said that because I was talking. I never told you anything about that. You just sensed it. You feel it. People know. And I think the more we can align with being who we are in our business and our life, the more attractive that is to the right people.

Mattie Murrey

That is such a critically important message and lesson to learn for students and new speech pathologists heading into their careers. Because it's like, you have Point A and Point B. Point B might be your North Star. It might be where you want your career to go using this reverse engineering. If you don't have that practice, where you're aligning with your values, that mindset, you may go off on a lot of different rabbit trails and take totally different journeys and not end up where you want to be. Then you're burned out and you're not enjoying your career. You're wanting to leave after you've gone through graduate school. And you're not living the dream vision that you first started.

Jamey Schrier

Can I provide some insights for some of the people that might be looking for jobs?

Mattie Murrey

Please.

Jamey Schrier



This goes both ways. So, one of the things that you should do, if you're relatively new and you're looking for a position, is write down your values. What are your core values? Just as a person. What do you believe in? That's what your core values are. It's your beliefs. You know, one of my core values is authenticity. It's written down. The next thing you want to do, and you don't need to write down 50 million of them. Write down three. Write down five. The next thing you should do is write down why that core value [and] why that belief is important to you. Core values. Why it's important. Now, here's how you use it. When you go to interview companies, practices, people, I want you to ask them two questions. The first question is, "What's the vision of the company? What's the vision and mission of the company?" Because having done this, just coaching other practice owners for eight years — so I've coached hundreds and hundreds of practice owners — it's amazing how many don't have any. And when you have a business that doesn't have a vision, how do you know whether this business is in line with where you want to go as a professional rather than just having a job? People don't want to just have a job. They want to be a part of something.

Number two, ask them, "What are the company's core values?" I guarantee you, you're going to get some blank looks. This doesn't mean you say no to the company. But what it does mean is that you are the kind of person that wants to align what your beliefs are with what the company's beliefs are. When I say company, it's always the owner. Because the company is the owner, and the owner is the company. So, when you say that, you're then using this idea of alignment to see that you don't have to have 100%, one to one. But there should be shared beliefs, shared values, between that company and what you believe. And this is the problem that happens. You get a job, and you start working. And then after a while, — after the initial honeymoon phase is over — it's just not fulfilling you. It's not aligning. Like you said before, they're just pushing productivity. They just care about more productivity and more money. And I mean, you understand that it's a business, but it's not aligning with what you believe. This can happen before you accept the position. You can avoid a lot of this. But imagine this. Imagine you saying that: "Hey, Jamey, so I'm glad we came in on the interview. I'm interested in becoming a part of your team. Can you tell me a little bit about... Why did you open up Schrier Physical Therapy, and where is it going? What do you see for it?" And then all of a sudden, I share that story with you. You're going to get excited, like, "Wow, that's a good story." And you say, "Well what are some of the values that you guys hold dear here?" "Well, we believe in this, we believe in that, and we believe in that." Just by having that, you're now having a company that, wow. Now, of course, it's [the question of] do they actually follow it? You know, because anyone can have a rock outside of their place that says, "These are our core values," and the owner is going to jail. I mean, we've seen that in lots of different situations. But you start to see, is this company aligned with you and do you feel that they're being genuine? Do you feel like this could help you further your career? Because every job you have needs to be furthering you as a professional. It needs to be adding value. Of course you're adding value to the company, but the company needs to be adding value to you. So if you're new and you're looking at that... If you don't take anything away, I think they really can help you do that. Because what I'm trying to do is teach owners to make sure they have these things. Because if you don't have a vision,



you don't have a mission, you don't have these values, they align how you make decisions in your company [and] how you build your company. If you don't have that, then you're just kind of making it up off the cuff. And here's the great thing: People don't leave a job. People leave a boss. They leave a manager. They leave a director. They leave a subordinate.

Mattie Murrey

So true. You just brought me back to thinking of jobs where I've left, and I'm like, you are spot on with that.

Jamey Schrier

Yeah. So, by understanding what the company is really about, and the people and all that, that can really save you some difficult situations, perhaps.

Mattie Murrey

So, I know your business is about teaching and building businesses, but so much of what we're talking about today is also holding true for the new graduate. By starting their careers with these mindsets in place.

Jamey Schrier

Yeah. We're human beings. This is a human-being world. I mean, business is just a different word for, you know, human being. The only thing really in business, which is what I love about business, is you're in control. Like you can blame, like, you know, "This is the reason why this is what's going on in my business," or, "This is the reason I'm blaming insurance companies, blaming this," but at the end of the day, you're in control. And if that excites you, and you want that accountability and that responsibility to control your own livelihood, then business is the way to do it. So, that's what I love about it. You get to create. You know, when you're working for someone else, you don't choose the relationships. They're choosing the relationships. They're choosing who to hire. You just have to make the best of it. When it's your business, you get to choose who you hire. You get to choose the type of patients you want to treat and take care of. So, you know, it's not for everyone and I realize that, but how we think about things is how we think about things. We're human beings. So, whatever we're doing, there's always the relation between doing it for your business and doing it for yourself.

Mattie Murrey

Yeah. You know, it's interesting you say that about somebody else's deciding because it's kind of a well-known fact that I'm not super keen on pediatric patients. And I mean, my goodness, give me a dysphasia client, give me a voice client, give me a cognitive client, I just love it. When I see a pediatric [client], I'm like, "Okay, here we go." I enjoy them. They're just not my cup of tea. And with me doing the work that I'm doing on my own, I do get to choose who I want to work with and all of that. Well, we are out of time. And it has been such a refreshing conversation with you today. What words of advice do you have for the new speech pathologists or anybody else who's listening to this as they start their career? What words of advice do you have for them?



Jamey Schrier

Two words: Dream big. You spent a lot of time, a lot of money, [and] a lot of sacrifice getting into this awesome profession to help so many people. Keep developing and expanding yourself — not just your clinical skills, but your communication skills, you know, all of it that makes you a great professional. Keep reaching. You know, you're going to fail. You're going to have some setbacks and all that. That's all part of life. That's kind of what we do. But, you know, so many times, we kind of trap ourselves into what we think is possible. And I think when you start expanding, like, I don't know, 10 years ago, you thought you'd be hosting a podcast on your own. And look at what you're doing. I mean, make your mark however you want to make it, but that takes thinking bigger, pushing yourself, and continuing to do that. There's one thing I'd love to offer your audience if they're interested: I wrote a book called "The Practice Freedom Method." And it's not really just about business. It's a book about my life and struggles and all that kind of stuff, and I'd love to give them a copy of it.

Mattie Murrey

Excellent. How do they get it?

Jamey Schrier

You just go to practicefreedomu.com/slp. And they can download a free copy immediately.

Mattie Murrey

Thank you. Thank you. So, we take all of our episodes and we transcribe them, and for ADA. And we also create beautifully written show notes. So, all of your information is going to be in a show note. All of your contact information is going to be there. And we will put that link that you just gave us, so people can follow that link to get their free copy. This has been just a treat today connecting with you. Anything else to add that you'd like to share with us?

Jamey Schrier

Oh, well, there's so much. We could talk all day. And like I've been your first, you're my first, Mattie. This is the first SLP podcast I've been on. I'm anticipating it's not my last!

Mattie Murrey

Let's do this again!

Jamey Schrier

I'd love to.

Mattie Murrey

This would be great.

