

**EPISODE 12**

## [INTRODUCTION]

**[00:00:11] TF:** Welcome to Job Search Strategies with Tiffany Franklin I'm here to help you market yourself into a better career and open up new possibilities for your life.

Be sure to go to my website at [www.tjfcareercoach.com](http://www.tjfcareercoach.com) if you would like to sign up for an individual coaching session to help you with your career questions and also your resume.

Today, I'm happy to welcome Courtney Whitmore the founder of pizzazzerie.com. This episode will focus on how to create your dream job just like Courtney did. Courtney left her full-time job as a career counselor at our alma mater, Vanderbilt, to launch pizzazzerie.com in 2010 and share entertaining inspiration and ideas with her readers.

Now, she's a published cookbook author and utilizes her talent in entertaining and food styling to share daily party inspiration with her readers. Courtney has been the author of five cookbooks and her expertise has been seen in Southern Living, Better Homes and Gardens, HGTV, Access Hollywood, and MarthaStewart.com.

Before every episode I like to start with a quick tip to help you with your job search. My quick tip for today is to create an inspiration folder with stories of how other entrepreneurs or other top people in your field got their start. Hearing the challenges that others have overcome and mistakes that they made during their successful journey can provide you both inspiration and perspective for your own journey. Remember, no two career paths are alike of those who succeeded. Look for patterns to find the commonalities among these success stories and what you can emulate on your own path. One book I really like with this is Tony Robbins, *Money, Mastering the Game*. A big portion of that book is dedicated to all these successful entrepreneurs, and it shows how reading their stories can give you inspiration for your own life.

## [INTERVIEW]

**[00:01:51] TF:** Well, today I am so excited to have Courtney Whitmore who is the Founder of Pizzazzerie and who is such an incredible entrepreneur and content creator and, of course, inspiration to many party planners and people for entertaining and author of multiple books. This is a really special episode for me because

Courtney and I used to work together at the Vanderbilt Career Center over 10 years ago, and I was in the office right next to hers when she was coming up with the whole idea for Pizzazzerie.

I have to say she's one of the ones that inspired me to want to be an entrepreneur and even though I went the career coaching route, just seeing her take this idea from nothing and then make it happen and then turn it into her career. That's why immediately when I was starting this podcast, I thought Courtney is perfect to talk to because, A, she's one of the sweetest people I've ever known, and she's got that great combination of ambition and making it happen. I think she brings so much to the table.

**[00:02:55] CW:** Well, Tiffany, I am excited to be here. I remember those days working together, and they were so fun, and I loved getting to know you. I'm excited to talk to you today.

**[00:03:06] TF:** Well, thank you. Courtney, what's the best career advice you've ever been given over the years?

**[00:03:12] CW:** The best career advice is absolutely to be able to move out of your comfort zone. So just because you have a degree in one thing does not mean you have to use that degree for the rest of your life in one career that you don't love. You have to be able to bend and be flexible. Careers are ever changing, so I think it's important every year to sort of take a deep dive and reevaluate what you're doing. Do you love what you're doing? Because if you don't, you don't have to stay in it. That's my biggest piece of advice I love to give back out that was given to me, is make sure that you're okay being flexible and okay being a little uncomfortable, because sometimes it's those moments that lead you to something even greater and your passion and what you really love doing.

**[00:03:51] TF:** What did you study at Vanderbilt? Because I think it's helpful, even though you were saying that you don't have to do what you studied, just to hear your background and how that helped you get ready for Pizzazzerie.

**[00:04:02] CW:** Definitely. I still definitely use parts of my degree. My undergrad is in communication studies, and my master's is an organizational leadership. I definitely use a lot of the skills and things I learned and especially organizing and leadership. That's probably all I do all day is organize and try to kind of keep things moving and fluctuating. My business is always ever changing, and so I really think I use a lot of what I learned, and it was a great background and foundation for me.

**[00:04:30] TF:** Awesome. How would you exactly describe Pizzazzerie for those who are new to the site and just your business model as a whole?

**[00:04:38] CW:** Yes. It is essentially a blog at the base. It is a food and entertaining blog. There you will find daily updates on everything from party planning to recipes and everything in between, a lot of tablescape. The website is my bread and butter. That's essentially what I launched about 11 years ago. Then kind of off-shooting from there are the cookbooks that I write and the brand partnerships that I do. It's kind of a triangle. There are three elements to it. But the website is the basis for everything, and it's just a blog, and that it's kind of grown from there so yeah.

**[00:05:14] TF:** That's exciting. When you say brand partnerships, what does that entail?

**[00:05:19] CW:** Yeah so companies when they have a new product, whether it be food or maybe it's a dishes line or anything in that category, a lot of times they'll come to me and want to partner. So, I will style their products in an entertaining setting. Maybe it's a tablescene or it's a new recipe. Then I will shoot those photos, and they will use them for marketing purposes. Or I will post them on my site and share those tips and where they can find those products. It's kind of a symbiotic relationship, getting their products out to an audience that will hopefully purchase those products and use them. Then it's marketing. A lot of times, they'll use the photos I take in email newsletters, social media. That's kind of how a brand partnership works in the online world.

**[00:06:03] TF:** That's exciting. Now, were you a professional photographer or was it a hobby or do you hire someone for that?

**[00:06:10] CW:** I am by no means a professional photographer and I just learned from the ground up. I bought the base level DSLR Canon camera when I started, and I took some online courses. There's a lot of free great content out there too, and then I kind of grew from there. I do shoot all of the content that I create, except for my cookbooks. Those I'm all hands-on deck styling, so those are shot by photographers and food photographers. But I shoot all the rest of the content. So you kind of learn as you go, and it definitely taps my creative side to be able to shoot the photography.

**[00:06:42] TF:** Courtney, one of the things that was really exciting when you were starting Pizzazzerie, you would have a lot of dinner parties where I think you were kind of practicing getting everything set up, and all of us at the career center and your friends were really benefiting from this because we got to dress up. Oh, my

gosh. Your tablescapes were amazing. They really looked like something out of a magazine and, of course, the food was amazing. I think I gained 15 pounds that year.

One question and, no, this isn't about careers or anything, but I just have to know, where do you keep all the table settings after photo shoots? Do you have a dish room somewhere? Because you have all these new and exciting ones, and I'm thinking your pantry or room just must be overflowing.

**[00:07:26] CW:** Yes. I'm often asked this question. I do indeed have a dish room. I call it the prop room, and my house has a back room. It's like an extra garage. Kind of like if I were to use it as a mother-in-law suite but we just don't use the house as such. That back room we painted all white. We lined it with container store shelving, and there you have it. There's like the cake stand wall and the napkin wall and the ribbon wall. It's kind of a party planner's dream come true. I did not have that at my first town home when I got going. I think there were dishes under the beds, in the closets. But slowly I've grown and yes indeed, I should start calling it the dish room. I like that, Tiffany. I'm going to start doing that.

**[00:08:05] TF:** It sounds like something from an episode of *The Home Edit* which, of course, I totally binged on Netflix.

**[00:08:11] CW:** Yes. I love that show. They're also Nashville girls, so quite popular.

**[00:08:15] TF:** Love the Nashville connection. How did you come up with the idea for Pizzazzerie? And also the name, which I remember you thinking about going over candidates for names.

**[00:08:26] CW:** Yes. You were there during the process. Gosh. Well, when I was throwing those dinner parties, I was obviously googling ideas and things like that. I came across a few party blogs back then like 2009. There were only a couple, and I thought, "Wow, I would like to share my pictures like they're sharing theirs." Just to show friends and family. Never did I dream that it would be a full-time job at the time, but every URL was taken, and it surely, so many are taken now. But even then, it was very hard to find a URL that was available, and so I kind of had to make something clever up.

I love the word pizzazz and I like the French word patisserie. If you combine them, you get Pizzazzerie. That is how it came to be and, yeah, I knew I wanted to have a space out there on the Internet to share these ideas,

created the URL, went from there, installed WordPress, and just Googled myself all the way to a full-time job in it I think.

**[00:09:22] TF:** That's incredible. What part of the business do you love the most?

**[00:09:27] CW:** I love the fact that I can be creative but still tap into my business analytical mindset. I'm kind of one of those people that kind of has a foot in both. I love the creative aspect but I also love kind of the business, the back end, the website stuff, all that kind of that side of things. When I was working at Vanderbilt, that creative side was just not being tapped. I was sitting in Word docs all day or editing resumes. It was just not where I was thriving. Despite having fabulous co-workers, it was not the best for me, and I think I wanted a foot in both. I wanted that creative side fulfilled.

I think that's my favorite thing, is that each day is different. Some days I'm shooting a recipe for a client and some days on the back end writing HTML code. I don't know many jobs that let someone flip that fast and the fact that I can do what I want on days. I really wanted that flexibility. I wanted to be able to work for myself. I think people who truly want to be entrepreneurs, you get that pull. You may not jump at it right away, but it'll keep coming back to you in life, and you can tell, "All right. I think I'm one of the people meant to work for yourself."

**[00:10:29] TF:** I hear you. That's been my last six months. Did you know HTML before or was that one of the many things you taught yourself through the process?

**[00:10:38] CW:** I knew nothing. I mean literally nothing. So, no, I did not know it, and thank goodness for Google because I would search piece by piece how do you bold something, how do you italicize something. Slowly but surely, you really truly can teach yourself almost anything. This was in 2009 and 2010. The resources out there now are by far better, and you don't have to do that much coding truly. I was kind of getting, going, and trying to learn it, but there are a lot more resources and plug-ins now where you don't have to get into that. But I'm kind of dorky in that way and enjoy it a little bit. But, yeah, I learned everything just on my own, on Google and YouTube.

**[00:11:11] TF:** I hear you on that. One time with my website, I think it took me an hour or two to do a search box and get it where I wanted. But I felt so good after that was done like – It was all about the YouTube videos and Googling.

**[00:11:24] CW:** I know that thrill. You're just like, "I did it. That search box is where I want it." Yes, I know that, and it's tricky, but there are great resources now out there.

**[00:11:31] TF:** Speaking of those, which resources on the technical side do you like the best? Are there any specific sites or?

**[00:11:39] CW:** Yeah. I really love the Genesis Framework for WordPress. They have a great blog and Yoast, Y-O-A-S-T. Yoast is a great SEO tool. They have a wonderful free blog with amazing content out there. There are paid courses that I've taken. There's a couple I'm in now. But truly, there is so much great free content out there about the best plugins, the best WordPress themes, the best SEO tools that it's almost too much. It's a little bit of analysis paralysis out there. But Yoast and the Genesis Framework are two great tools if you're getting a WordPress blog off the ground.

**[00:12:15] TF:** Great. Thank you. Now, one thing, many people have great ideas, but they get overwhelmed and don't know how to make it happen. Walk us through what your research strategy and process was when you turned this idea into reality.

**[00:12:29] CW:** Yeah. Like I was saying, it was a lot of Googling. All right, I want a website. You got to start from the bottom. Get the URL, get the framework in place, and don't be concerned with your online — so to speak, brick and mortar, online looking a lot like so-and-so's next door. It isn't going to look like that at first, and you're going to get there, but it won't be at first. So don't be so concerned with the right colors, the right this. Just get it off the ground, and then you'll be able to tailor all of that stuff later. Get the framework of the website going and don't get bogged down with all of those details, because they will come. Yeah. I mean, I think there are so many free resources. There are so many great resources. Just getting that website up, that's the hardest part. All you have to do is start, and then it's a lot easier after you get it up.

**[00:13:14] TF:** Okay. Did you hire someone to help you with that or was that all self-googling and —

**[00:13:19] CW:** I did hire someone, and this was 11 years ago. But it was a guy a local guy in Nashville that did a lot of WordPress set up, and he kind of walked me through and told me that was the best framework. I do think having someone who has a little bit of the tech side, and you can find people online that really specialize in WordPress. It's not a bad idea to have someone get you off the ground. Once it's going, you can usually

take it from there, but don't be afraid to see if you can find someone with WordPress tech experience to help you with that.

**[00:13:44] TF:** Okay. So places like Upwork or 99designs or other sites like that can be great resources.

**[00:13:50] CW:** Yes.

**[00:13:51] TF:** How many hours a week were you working on Pizzazzerie while balancing your full-time jobs? What can other new entrepreneurs expect in terms of a time commitment as, of course, they have to make money in one regard, but they want to start launching this?

**[00:14:05] CW:** Sure. Absolutely. That was tricky. In my side of things, I did not have a family and kids to take care of at the time, so I was able to devote a little more time than, say, I would be now. You kind of have to look at your current lifestyle. For me, I was able to devote almost every hour that I wasn't at the career center on Pizzazzerie, because I was so passionate about getting it off the ground. But I would say I was working, gosh, probably 45 hours at Vanderbilt. That's a guess. Tiffany, you could probably remember better than I can.

**[00:14:33] TF:** Yeah. About that.

**[00:14:34] CW:** I would say probably five hours an evening night a day, so probably 20 and then a lot on the weekends. Gosh. Probably 25 to 30 hours when I wasn't there, it was what I was doing. So that's quite a bit, but know that that's because that's the time I had. It absolutely could have been done if I only had 10 to 15. It just would have taken a little bit longer, but I just gave every hour that I did have to it.

**[00:14:59] TF:** Yeah. I mean, it was so inspiring because it was true. You were so passionate about it, and it was really something to see. Now, I remember it seemed like you were coming up with that idea at least that you were talking to us about. I think, what was that, fall of 2009?

**[00:15:14] CW:** Yes.

**[00:15:14] TF:** Then by spring of 2010, like around that March, you actually launched. Then by that summer, you went full time, which just as someone who had a side job for 10 years, I'm in awe of that. How did you know it was time to take the leap and go full time with your business?

**[00:15:32] CW:** Sure. Yeah. Well, first of all, when all I could think about was the business while I was at the other job, and I'm pretty sure I used lunch breaks and maybe some between meeting breaks on Pizzazzerie against what I probably should have done. Sorry to my former boss. But I would say that I was reaching out to local news stations, wanting to get my name out there and go on and do segments about party planning. I remember I went on to do a segment about setting up holiday tables or something like that. I think it might have been around Memorial Day. It was Memorial Day tablescapes or something, and I went out to the news station, and I had to call in sick that day to work, call out.

I remember thinking this is so bad. They're going to turn on the news station, and there I'm going to be styling a table with WSMV. Sorry, I'm not at work today. I knew then like, "Okay. I can't –" I was at that point where I knew I could – It had grown a little. It was like a small toddler website. It had only been a few months, but I had done a lot of pre-preparation. So it launched March 16th and this was May. But I knew I couldn't get going unless I had more time, so I knew that I had to quit when the time that I was spending at Vanderbilt was holding me back, and I knew I could get it going. It wasn't easy financial-wise, so I knew that I had to meet certain requirements. The bills had to get paid.

Back then, it was very different revenue-wise than it is now, but I knew I had to make sure that I could get all those basic bills paid. That is tricky, and it requires sitting there in a spreadsheet and crunching the numbers and figuring it out. But I was so stubborn at the time because I was young. I mean, I'm kind of glad I was stubborn, and you just kind of have to leap and you just hope you fly on the way down. It works. It does. When you're that passionate, you kind of are going to refuse to let it fail I think because I knew I did not want – I call it the Monday morning test and I am a night owl, so this works especially great if you're a night owl too. But if what you are doing does not get you up and out of the bed on Monday morning, then you shouldn't be doing it.

I remember my last day the career center was in July, and it was Friday afternoon. I walked out of there and I thought, "Gosh. I hope on Monday morning I don't just sleep in and then I end up back in an office job I hate because I didn't get going." That Monday morning, I'm pretty sure I didn't go to bed from Sunday night because I was still working. I think that's how you know that Monday morning test, are you doing what you're meant to be doing? I think it will work if you just put in the work and you put in the hours and you're passionate about it.

**[00:17:48] TF:** That is so true. When you're doing something you love, it's like that old with positive psychology and the state of flow where time just goes by. You're like, "Wait, four hours went. Wow. I was just so engrossed in it."

**[00:17:59] CW:** Yeah. It's not work when you love it.

**[00:18:01] TF:** Exactly. You kind of touched on this a little bit. How did you monetize your site? Did you select one main way or diversify your streams of income, and you kind of alluded to how that has changed over time?

**[00:18:14] CW:** Yeah. In the beginning, there were no ad networks, and brand partnerships were in their infancy. So, I had like sidebar banner ads that stores and companies would come to me and want to purchase. One by one, I would charge them each month. I remember they would say, "How much is it for a month on the side?" You just – I kind of had other little blogs that we would talk and say, "What do you charge?" You literally just came up with the number that you thought fit, the number of page views you were getting, and you went from there. Thankfully, I sold enough of those little sidebar ads that it got it going.

I also reached out to larger websites and asked if I could write for them. So, I kind of had that revenue stream on the side in the beginning and I highly recommend that. A lot of large conglomerate websites need writers and kind of just in a freelance type situation, and so that helped me kind of have a separate revenue stream. I highly recommend multiple revenue streams, especially when you work for yourself. It has evolved. There are now large ad networks where I don't have to sell those ads individually. It's all done automatically for me now, but I still recommend multiple revenue streams. Now, it's the ad networks. It's brand partnerships. It's the books. It's never making sure that all of your eggs are in one basket.

**[00:19:22] TF:** Well, that's great advice. How do you keep adapting and leveling up as technology shifts? For example, do Google algorithm updates impact your approach?

**[00:19:31] CW:** 100%. Google algorithm updates are kind of a scary thing that happened a few times a year, and you always just kind of cross your fingers and hope you don't get hit too hard. But for instance, they came out and said that they will be using the mobile version of websites to rank your keywords. What that meant was, "Hey, go take a look at your website on your phone." So most people are going to build a website on your desktop, and they're going to look at it every day when they log into their computer. You might go to it on your phone, but that's not where you're sitting there messing with the plugins and doing your website.

But guess what? Like 87% of your viewers are on mobile, and I think that I always forget that, because I want to go look at it as the pretty website on my large screen, and that's not where my audience is viewing it. I think that's an example of a Google algorithm saying, "Hey. Mobile is more important to us, and so checking to make

sure that your mobile site is mobile-friendly, and it looks good, and there's not pop-ups blocking everything.” They've come out and said, "Page speed matters." So then what did I do? I went and made sure that my page speed is fast. You do follow. Google's the giant. You got to kind of keep them happy but at the same time making sure that you love your website.

But things also have changed with brand partnerships. So video really, really matters, both in ad networks and brand partnerships. That's not a comfort zone for me. It's uncomfortable to figure out video and to be in a video, but you do have to keep adapting. Thankfully, I feel like I'm one of those lifelong learners. I love taking courses and researching things. But you have to be able to bend and flex, especially in this fast-paced kind of environment because things will change quickly.

**[00:21:04] TF:** That really goes back to the best career advice you said to make yourself uncomfortable and not be afraid to try new things.

**[00:21:11] CW:** Definitely.

**[00:21:12] TF:** Now, one quick question follow-up. For the Google algorithm updates, do you have a go-to resource that alerts you to the upcoming ones or do you kind of just Google it?

**[00:21:24] CW:** Yeah. What I do, and this is probably not very official, but a lot of the plugins I have, a lot of the groups that I'm in, all have these Facebook groups. I know that just sounds very juvenile, but that is where we share information. It's the best method for us to go back and forth. For instance, I mentioned Yoast SEO. They have a Facebook group. Sometimes, if you purchase the pro plugin – for a lot of these plugins, I have a recipe plugin, they have a pro option. It just gives you more features, but that also comes with a Facebook group. I have probably half a dozen that I leave over on the left side of Facebook as saved, and that is where you kind of hear the undercurrent, “Hey. There's a Google algorithm coming,” and, “Hey. Try this.”

That's a little bit — you don't have co-workers when you work for yourself, so to speak. If you're a sole proprietor, and I don't have someone telling me what's going to happen, so you kind of rely on everyone that's doing what you do. Other bloggers are my co-workers, and we kind of try to keep each other up to date. There might be a way to do a Google alert so that it alerts you in your email, but that I have yet to figure out, so I rely on those Facebook groups.

**[00:22:24] TF:** Well, that's a great point because that's one thing. I really like the Smart Passive Income site through Pat Flynn for a lot of advice. I joined a mastermind group through that, and it's just we meet once every three weeks. It's incredible because I learned so much from these other podcasters and what they're doing. So, yeah, I can't say enough about those groups either. Courtney, if you were starting from scratch today instead of back in 2009, where would you begin? What would you do the same and what would you do differently?

**[00:22:56] CW:** Essentially, it's the same. I was pleased with how fast I got the website going. It would just be a heck of a lot easier now because there's so many resources. One of my good friends, Julie Blanner, has a course called The Business of Blogging. In that course, she touches on everything from how do you get a URL, how do you get a website host, all the way to how do you share images appropriately and credit them intellectual property, all the way to ad networks, all the way to SEO. That course would be, "Hey, here's what took you three months to Google, we'll tell it to you very quickly."

I think that there's a few great business courses. Another one is a silly name, but it's called Stupid Simple SEO, and it is by far one of the industry standards on SEO research. I highly recommend those two courses and I think if you took both of those, you would know exactly what to do. That's kind of how it's changed, is nowadays it's just a whole lot easier. However, on the flip side, it is very saturated. But don't let that stop you. There is always room to grow, and a lot of the really successful bloggers are starting second websites and finding that those are actually surpassing in success their original ones that are 10 years old because there's just more resources out now. There's definitely still room at the table for people.

**[00:24:08] TF:** Well, that's good to know and very interesting about those second sites. Just for everybody to know, on the show notes page we will have links to all these resources to Pizzazzerie and to Courtney's books, which brings me to can you tell us about your books? I remember going to your signing at Barnes & Noble near Cool Springs when you had the, what was it, *Push-Up Pops*?

**[00:24:32] CW:** Yes. I was lucky to have a publisher reach out. I was actually hosting a giveaway on my website for a wedding book. In facilitating getting the book to the winner, the associate at the publisher said, "Hey, have you ever thought about writing a book?" I was – This was August, right after I'd quit in July, so I thought I am by no means able to do that. I would love to but I thought I can't do that now. They said, "Well, we have a topic, push-up pops, that we'd love a book written around, and we want you to do it," and so I did that one and then *Candy Making for Kids*.

Then after that, I said, “I want to come up with the topics.” They had those already in contract and needed an author but *Frostings* and *Entertain in Style* and then my latest, which is *The Southern Entertainer's Cookbook*. They are the five books that I've written, and they've been a dream come true, and it's a really fun way to kind of still create content but in a totally different setting than a updated daily blog.

**[00:25:23] TF:** Fantastic. What's the biggest piece of advice? For somebody, if they're deciding which one to get, which one would you say is the great one to start with of all your books?

**[00:25:33] CW:** Gosh. That's like picking my favorite child, but I have to say I think the latest one. There's a few tablescapes in there, but it also touches on all of my family's favorite recipes. I poured my heart and soul into this book, and blood sweat and tears, and I love it so much. Every page means so much to me. I've sprinkled in family memories, funny southern quotes. It's really truly southern entertaining to a tee. I love *Entertain in Style* too. If you really love throwing themed parties, you'll love that book. But *Southern Entertainer's Cookbook* has my heart right now, although it did just release, so I have a little bit of favoritism.

**[00:26:08] TF:** Of course. Well, and I mean they're all so good. I'm sure once somebody gets one, they're going to want more.

**[00:26:13] CW:** Thank you.

**[00:26:14] TF:** What's next for you and Pizzazzerie?

**[00:26:17] CW:** What's next? I worked on the book two years ago, which those take one solid year which is crazy. Then last this past fall it released, and I had a baby. I think those two – That happened in the same week, and I don't know about my timing on that right in the middle of the pandemic, but that's just the way things flow sometimes. I think, for me, I want to get back to that — this sounds crazy, but I want to get back to what I started doing. So the website, though I was updating it, not nearly as much as I was between these other books, and I want to get back to that bread and butter, what I love doing, which is creating content for the site.

I really want to grow the page views, which grows ad revenue, and that's passive income. You were talking about passive income. I'm a huge believer in that. I have two children. I work from home. It is wild. I need a revenue stream that's passive. The book, *The 4-Hour Work Week*, I still remember reading it on an airplane,

and I remember thinking this guy has got it right. I'm not a – Though I will work too many hours, I also fully believe in doing things that are new income. I think in my job, people will do things all the time just because it's fun and I will too. But at the end of the day, my business hat goes on. What is the ROI for me? Is this making me money? You have to keep doing that.

I think a lot of creatives get a little bit – They kind of get off venture. Something's fun, something shiny went by, and they go do it. You have to say I think it's something like a huge percentage of blogs never make it, and I think that's part of it. You have to keep looking at what is going to grow my income. How do I keep doing this? How do I prepare to keep doing this? There are a few blogs, food blogs, and other industries that publish income reports monthly. I think those are like hugely inspiring. Go find them, Google 'food blogger income report', and you can read through what is their breakdown like a pie chart. What is their breakdown for income? If you ever get down on yourself or you're like, "How do I keep doing this," that is what you go read those income reports.

For me, I love what I do, but it also has to maintain a business aspect for me. So it's rather than a hobby. I think, for me, it's getting back to that website and doing what I love and growing it successfully as well.

**[00:28:17] TF:** Well, it's so funny because that's what drew me to The Smart Passive Income with Pat Flynn. For years, he published the income reports. I don't think so anymore. But for at least 10 years, he did. Yes, you're right. It was really inspiring and just to see that the whole premise was work hard now and reap the benefits later, which I love. By the way, the multitasking I think is very impressive because I remember when you were getting engaged and getting married in the early days of Pizzazzerie and then, of course, having Ivy with this new book and, of course, having Ivy, with this new book, and then Blakely. Oh, my gosh. I think you were expecting Blakely when we last saw each other in person. It's been way too long.

**[00:28:59] CW:** I know.

**[00:29:01] TF:** Congratulations. I am so happy for you and Chris.

**[00:29:04] CW:** Thank you so, so much. I mean, my timing on everything is sort of wild. But I guess that's how it goes when things happened this past year. But I think you can multitask and you can do it, but that's when you have to be really black and white. Does this serve me and my audience, or is this just something that put those kind of things on the weekends that – You have to be kind of strict like, "What do I need to get done

today?” Because you are your own boss, and you don't have those people above you saying, “Here are your priorities.” So you have to kind of sometimes be strict on yourself. But I think those are easy things to do when you do what you love.

**[00:29:36] TF:** Yeah. And saying the strategic nos, so you can focus on what you really do love.

**[00:29:40] CW:** Absolutely. Not being afraid to say no, for sure.

**[00:29:43] TF:** As we wrap up here, because I don't want to take too much of your time, what advice would you give to people who are contemplating launching their own internet-based business, just that final piece of advice for them?

**[00:29:55] CW:** 100% do it. There are great resources out there. I would say I wish I had done it sooner but I would have been in college, so I'm an example of someone who says do it. Do it even if you don't feel like you're quite ready because you don't even have to share that URL with family and friends until you get it how you want it. Don't let anything stop you. You can do it, even if you have a full-time job. You'll just work a little bit outside of those hours till you feel like you've got enough income to make that leap or that more hours would bring that more income. I think the faster you do it, the happier you'll be. You'll never know what successes are out there, unless you just take that leap.

I mean, I was coming from a salary job out of grad school. My father that was quite proud that I had this nice little health insurance salary job and a little townhome, when I called him and said, “I'm going to quit it all and I'm going to start a blog.” This was in 2009 when blogs were not what they are now. He said, “You're going to do what?” I said, “I'm going to quit and I'm going to leave and I'm going to get my own private health insurance and I'm going to do this.” I think he probably – after he picked himself up off the ground and my mother too, I think they saw the determination.

You can indeed do it. Trust me. If I can do this, anybody can. You do have to wear a lot of hats, but it's fun and it's so rewarding. Just take the leap and do it. It will be a little tricky at first, and you'll not know what you're doing. But then you will get the hang of it and be so happy that you did. I hope that that's inspiring, and don't forget that Monday morning test. Obviously, make sure it's something that will get you up and going on Monday morning because that, to me, is that ultimate test because I am quite the night owl.

**[00:31:22] TF:** Well, thank you so much, Courtney. This has just been so fun to kind of relive that journey with you and also to hear some of the details that I didn't even know from before. So I really am grateful for you to share it with everyone, and you've been inspiring so many people for a long time now.

**[00:31:39] CW:** Thank you. I loved doing this with you, Tiffany.

**[00:31:41] TF:** Okay. Thanks, Courtney.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

**[00:31:44] TF:** Thank you so much for listening. I really appreciate you and I hope you have found this helpful. Please go to [tjfcareercoach.com](http://tjfcareercoach.com), my website, so you can get more advice to help you in your job search. I hope you'll check out more episodes of Job Search Strategies with Tiffany Franklin. Thank you again.

[END]