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[00:00:00] **Heidi:** Welcome to another episode of the successful fashion freelancer podcast. I am your host, Heidi. And today we have a strategy session with, uh, one of our freelance accelerator students, Kayla, um, as a part of the Lance accelerator program, Kayla got the opportunity to hop on a live one-on-one strategy session with me and get personalized advice on where she's feeling stuck in her freelance career.

Now, Kayla is starting her freelance career. Out any true industry experience, she didn't go to fashion school. She's totally self taught. She has some has quite a bit of experience doing sewing home projects. She sews a lot for her two young daughters, and she has a small alterations business that she runs on the side and she knows how to draft patterns.

But again, this is all home sewing type of stuff. And so she's trying to learn the more production side of the industry and learn how she can transfer her skills. And gain more skills so she can start offering freelance services. She's working [00:01:00] on tech packs and fashion flats, learning Adobe illustrator, and she ultimately wants to offer pattern making services.

So Kayla and I talk through various different strategies that she can use to learn different skills and become confident enough to reach out. She's very, um, She has a lot of reservations about when is she actually ready? And when is she actually good enough to start reaching out for the pattern making services, um, which is what she ultimately wants to do.

And so we talk about different strategies that she can use to work with clients and to gain those skills and to make it a win-win for her client and herself, um, and make sure that she's doing a great job with those production ready patterns. Um, we talk a little bit about the nuances of tech packs and how that all works, how you manage that project with the client, what you can.

Them to give you and what you need them, what sort of questions you might need to ask? And we talk a lot about, uh, the POM chart, the points of measure chart, [00:02:00] and, and grading and creating a pattern and kind of what comes first. If you don't have a garment, how do you do this? Or do you start with a garment and sort of chicken and egg thing?

And so we talk through all the nuances of that, which I think you're gonna find really, really interest. So, if you are kickstarting your career without experience,

or you're just feeling like you're lacking a little bit of confidence to go out there and get your first few clients, this is a great conversation to listen in on.

And if you are also interested in, you know, doing pattern making services, but you've never done production ready patterns, then the tips that I'm gonna share, I think are gonna be really, really insight. For you. So again, um, so much stuff, great stuff to learn in this conversation with Kayla. And I'll remind you, this is a strategy session that she gets as part of being inside a freelance accelerator.

If you are interested in the opportunity to get a one-on-one strategy session with myself, uh, to get personalized advice on your freelance career, um, the only way to get it is inside a freelance accelerator. Um, you can learn more about our program by heading over. So [00:03:00] heidi.com/fast F a S T we will link that below.

And if you wanna kickstart with some of my free resources, which I totally get, um, we have all of those available, our freelance success pack, which can get you kickstarted and just give you an idea of what you need to do and all the different steps you can head on over to. So heidi.com/freelance to grab that, all right, we'll link to everything below.

And now let's jump into my conversation and strategy session with Kayla. All right, Kayla, I'm super excited to have a strategy session with you. Um, I have some notes from you from before we got on the call, but I, yeah. And so I'm happy to kind of start with that or sure. If you wanna just kick off and just start talking about where you are, where you're stuck, what you would like support with.

I either direct. ,

[00:03:51] **Kayla:** um, it doesn't matter. I, so I have skills as far as like sewing, some drafting, um, some pattern work [00:04:00] and stuff like that, but it's all personal. I don't have any experience as far as like the industry goes mm-hmm , um, other than like alterations and that kind of thing. Mm-hmm um, so I've just been kind of trying to work on skills that I can use to actually start freelancing.

Um, so I did submit a question into the Q and a, um, and you had recommended going through the masterclass with the Adobe mm-hmm so I've been doing that okay. On the side. Okay. Um, and that's kind of where I'm at now. Okay.

[00:04:27] **Heidi:** So let's dig into this a little bit. Cuz one of the things you said is, um, I feel like I don't have any skills to.

Offers if for the answer yet. And then beyond that you made a comment of, I just don't know what level of skill is required to be acceptable enough to start offering services. And I think maybe you're referencing specifically like pattern drafting. Um, yeah. Since you do have home pattern drafting experience.

Yes. But maybe not, you know, production. Yeah. Uh, you know, factory type. So, um, [00:05:00] I always recommend for freelancers who are starting without any like true or formal industry experience that fashion flats and tech packs is a great place to start, which I know is what you're planning on. Yeah. Yeah. That

was

[00:05:13] **Kayla:** kind of the goal at the right now.

[00:05:15] **Heidi:** Yeah. So, I mean, we have freelancers who are exclusively offering flats and, and maybe technical flats as well, but really flats. Right. So that is gonna be the first easiest. Uh, point of entry is flats and then going to technical flats and then getting to tech packs and then ultimately getting to pattern drafting, which I think is where you, you do want to, you know, sort of grow into.

Yeah. So where are you at with the fashion flats and, and how are you feeling about potentially offering that as a service at what point in the future?

[00:05:54] **Kayla:** um, so I feel, I think pretty good about it. I've never really done Adobe illustrator. Like I don't have any experience in [00:06:00] that program itself. Okay. So running through the masterclass, I'm still, I think on the first big module, maybe the beginning of the second.

Okay. So I'm go, I'm working through it as. Um, as I can, yeah. I've got two little ones and stuff like that in a full-time job. So it's life, you know? Yeah. Time. Right. um, but I feel good about it. I think it's pretty straightforward. And I think that if I do just jump in, I can probably get comfortable with it pretty quickly.

Okay. Um, so that I think I should be able to do within the next month. Okay. Probably or so. Okay. Maybe, yeah. Start at least, and then kind of work on a, a portfolio. Um, cause obviously I don't have anything like that yet either. Yeah. Um, but yeah, so yeah, no, I think I feel pretty good about it. I've kind of gone through stuff with the tech packs and I understand the gist of it and like I understand garment construction and that sort of thing.

Mm-hmm so that I think has helped quite a bit as far as the understanding of the tech packs. Yeah. Um, I [00:07:00] I'm quite familiar with all of that and then kind of what goes into it, so okay. That part I think should be okay, but yeah, no. Okay. It's just learning the programs. I'm finding. it's overwhelming. Yeah, it's a

[00:07:10] **Heidi:** lot.

Well, I wanna be mindful. I mean, you, you work a nine to five full-time job and you have two small girls, three and five. I do.

[00:07:19] **Kayla:** Yeah. And I do alterations on the side and this is coming into the busy season cuz it's wedding season. Oh yeah. Okay. And then, um, I also have a commute as well. We live about a half hour outside of where I work.

So. Yeah, so it's

[00:07:33] **Heidi:** busy. I mean, so like the first, I mean, I remember when I read your, your form for this call, it, it started with that. It was like, mm-hmm I work full-time I have two kids and I also have this small alter alterations business on the side. And then you just added a commute to that. I do. Yeah.

so, like, first of all, I want, I mean, I, it's pretty clear. You're very ambitious. Bit of an overachiever, I think, similar to myself. Yeah. [00:08:00] um, which is a great attribute. Um, on many levels it can also mean that like, you know, we're like, oh, just gimme the next thing and I can keep adding that and like, I'll just get it all done.

Um, so I first want you to be like really mindful that like you're already accomplishing and doing a lot. Um, so. you made the comment of like, feeling overwhelmed about the softwares. What are you feeling? O and I say softwares, cause I mentioned, I know you mentioned illustrator and CLO. I don't think if you said that yet, but CLO

[00:08:27] **Kayla:** I I've been learning CLO on the side as well, trying to teach myself.

Yeah. Um, Because that I really like the program a is 3d. So it's something that's kind of up and coming that not a ton of people do yet. Yeah. Which I really love. Um, and I feel like that will kind of lead me into the pattern drafting and all that. Yeah. A little bit more because you can do it 3d and see it on the form as well as C the 2d pattern, which yeah.

I'm quite familiar with both of, right. So it's just learning how the programs work and what you can and can't do. And you know, all of the little [00:09:00] stuff that. Is what I'm trying to kind of grasp before I jump right in. Right, right. Um, eventually like the alterations was never something that was intention, like intentional as far as like doing for a business.

Okay. Um, I actually started my business with the intention of starting my own brand. And that's how I found your podcast. Cause I was trying to learn all I could about the industry. And then, oh, kind of realized that I don't know if I have the time. to put into starting an entire brand. Okay. Um, just with everything else.

Yeah. Going on. Um, so, and then I kind of started looking into the back end of things. And I kind of like that a little bit more than starting my own brand and putting it out there that way. Yeah. Um, so yeah, the, the alterations is just kind of a, I started a business, people found out I could sew and then I got like all of the bridesmaid dresses and all of the, getting.

You know, wedding robes and making [00:10:00] dresses for bridal showers and that sort of thing. And so that's just kind of taken off on its own, but that was never intended.

[00:10:06] **Heidi:** Okay. Okay. So let's and I wanna talk, we will, we, we will, we will talk specifically about the pattern drafting and like, you know, that aspect of things.

So we'll get to that. But first I wanna like zoom out a little bit. On where you're at and what you're doing. Um, so, so my first question is you mentioned you were feeling overwhelmed, I think was the exact word that you used in regards to the software illustrator and CLO. What are you feeling overwhelmed about?

Is it the software itself? When you get in there, you feel overwhelmed. Are you feel overwhelmed about like, just trying to learn two new softwares?

[00:10:44] **Kayla:** I think it's trying to learn two new softwares. I've kind of taken CLO off of the table just for a little while, while I'm I was gonna suggest comfortable with Adobe illustrator.

Okay. and as far as illustrator goes, I haven't actually signed up for the subscription. So I'm trying to learn all of I can, all I [00:11:00] can through the, the course. Okay. About the program before I jump in to go and actually. start

doing my own stuff through there. So I'm trying to, okay. I kind of did the same thing with fast.

I, I listened through everything even though I'm still technically on like the first stage with the portfolio. Sure. So I just to get a, kind of a grasp of the whole picture before I start focusing in on the details. Okay. Totally

[00:11:24] **Heidi:** fair. If that makes sense. Totally makes sense. And listen, you know, your learning style best.

So if it makes the most sense for you to. Watch it or consume it first and then go back and take action as you yeah. Redo it a second time. Great. Then I kind of know

[00:11:38] **Kayla:** what to expect and know what the next steps are and it just, I, I find it helps my process. Great.

[00:11:43] **Heidi:** A little bit. Yeah. Okay, great. So I think that's really great insight to have about your own learning style.

Um, so totally, you know, take advantage of that. Um, and I was gonna suggest putting CLO off because here's the thing. [00:12:00] And maybe I'm putting, I could be putting words in your mouth or dreams in your mind, but like, what I would love to see is for you to like start getting a client or two and like start getting some of those wins and the, the path of least resistance, the fastest way to get there is gonna be by like focusing on one thing.

Right. Which is yes, which. I think we both know is gonna be flats, which is gonna be illustrator. Right. So we can set close aside. Um, so you made a comment about a ne uh, something in the next month or so, does that mean, like, you feel, you think you'll feel confident, like drawing flats and maybe starting to do some outreach to get your first clients?

Is that yeah.

[00:12:40] **Kayla:** Um, actually I've got a couple of clients, one that I've technically actually talked to. Oh, um, In person. Yeah. Um, there's a small shop. That's in my home. Like my town that I live in here. Yeah. That, um, it's just a clothing store, but I didn't realize that she actually has her own brand. Oh, she's a designer herself.

Yeah. [00:13:00] So we chatted a little bit. So, um, I offered help with things like even sourcing or if she needs help with the tech packs, that sort of thing. So, um, she's somebody that I've known for a few years. She works in one of. The other businesses in town as well, so, okay. Um, I've already kind of pitched a little bit

[00:13:19] **Heidi:** and you like have a client, like, have you done the work or like, not yet.

[00:13:23] **Kayla:** She doesn't need help with anything yet. Okay. Um, but I know she did mention that she doesn't like. The like she's a designer, but she doesn't like the actual sewing and that sort of thing. So there's the other opportunity that possibly, if she's not interested in doing that for herself yeah. That I could possibly do some of the production stuff for her.

Okay. Um, since it is such a small thing. Yeah. Um, it's there not sure whether I wanna go that direction or not, but sure. You have to decide. Yeah. The opportunity could be out there. Yeah. Um, the other one, there is a girl that I. Used to work with. And then I also used to work [00:14:00] with her sister, so I know her we're acquaintances, but I'm, I'm closer with her younger sister.

Um, but her and her friends just actually started their own brand. Like. Within the last month. Okay. And they've launched and it's doing really well. Oh, wow. Um, so I possibly could have an in there as well. I'm kind of holding that one. I'm not pitching to them quite yet until I've got some of the skills built up a little bit.

Yeah. But that one is there kind of ready to go. Okay. Um, at least for a first pitch, cuz I do know her personally, so I might be able to help in other ways with the, the startup. .

[00:14:35] **Heidi:** Yeah, so, okay. So you've got two very warm leads, possibly um, you're working on your illustrator skills to get comfortable and confident with flats, which I think is great.

You can grow into tech packs from there. So, and, and I agree. It's good to put CLO on the side for now. Yeah. So as far as that space goes, [00:15:00] It sounds like you feel pretty good. Are you stuck on anything? Do you have any specific questions about that part of your, your journey? Not,

[00:15:08] **Kayla:** not really. Um, after your suggestion in the Q and a, I kind of went back and was looking through the master class and started really like diving into that.

Okay. So I'm really trying to like, do a deep dive into Adobe illustrator and understand all of the tools and the functions and what they do. Yeah. Um, so that's just kind of where I'm focused right now. Okay. But as I was working through the design to development course as well, Uhhuh before I started the master class.

Okay. And, um, so that one, I was looking into tech packs. I'm I'm work with, um, Excel during my day job, like okay. All day, every day. So I'm quite familiar with Excel. Like that program itself is. As far as doing the tech packs in there. I think

[00:15:50] **Heidi:** that's, that's, I'm sure you know, everything it does. It's nothing that complicated.

Yeah,

[00:15:53] **Kayla:** no, exactly. So the only thing that I was concerned about at first, when I was looking at the tech packs was how to [00:16:00] know, like what information the, um, Uh, clients or whatever would give you to put into those tech packs, like, ah, what do they supply you? Is it a list of specs? Is it just, here's a couple of colors.

This is what we want. Like, here's kind of a picture. I, cause I don't know yeah. What to expect as far as their end. Yeah.

[00:16:21] **Heidi:** Um, it really depends on the client. I mean, you know, some clients are gonna give you. a napkin sketch, you know, like a really rough sketch and okay. Here's what I wanna make. Like I, blah, right.

Yeah. And so you're gonna have to ask a lot of questions and yeah. Perhaps make some suggestions. Um, People get really stuck on, well, how do I know how to make it? I mean, you have a lot of knowledge on garment construction, which is great. Um, [00:17:00] you know, I always recommend too, like, just look in the market, like, okay, well they're doing something active.

Okay. Well, go see how a competitor is doing a similar type of construction and then take pictures of that. And like that's the stitch type or, and et cetera. Yeah. Um, , you know, they're gonna have to provide you with some content as far as

like materials and trims, unless you've been hired to source, which is a whole different.

Like ball game. Yes. I've,

[00:17:27] **Kayla:** I've been sourcing for myself. Yeah. When I went to go start my brand. So yeah. I've looked into that as

[00:17:32] **Heidi:** well, so yeah. And it's not only a different ball game that as well. Yeah. It's not only a different ball game though. It's just, it's something well above and beyond the scope of tech pack project.

Yeah. Right. Yeah, absolutely. Um, so I think you just need to be mindful of that. Mm-hmm um, and so it really comes down to just kind of asking a lot of questions of like, okay, well, You know, do you want it like this? Or do you want it like that? Or what kind of information do you have for me on this or that?

Or like, okay, well what's the fabric. Um, and then if they [00:18:00] don't know the fabric, then it's kind of like, okay, well maybe you're not ready for the tech pack quite yet. Like you gotta find all your things and all that, right.

[00:18:07] **Kayla:** Yeah. And that's yeah. That's that's okay. I just wasn't sure if they were gonna like, provide a ton of information, it just

[00:18:13] **Heidi:** depends on the client.

yeah.

[00:18:15] **Kayla:** And, and being familiar with the garment construction I'm okay with asking those sorts of questions. Okay. Like I understand fabrics. I understand. Yeah. Stitches, the types of stitches that you would use sort of thing. Totally. So that's okay. That makes me feel a lot better. Cause I, you know, going in blind, I don't know if I'm gonna be completely under prepared and they're asking me all these questions that I won't be able to give them the answers for kind of thing.

Right.

[00:18:37] **Heidi:** I think that you're probably way more prepared than you think that you are. Okay, good. um, yeah, and I think that

at some point, if they have so many questions mm-hmm and they don't know all these various details, um, it. You know, it, it could be something like turn [00:19:00] into a consulting project. It could be, maybe you're just not ready for the tech pack because you don't even have all your trims and findings and fabrics figured out, like, you don't even know what kind of button you want or what have you.

Right. Um, at which point, if you're capable of helping them then great. And if you're not, then Hey, maybe you can refer them to somebody else inside of fast or, or, you know, just say, you know, once you have all this stuff figured out, then you can come back and we can do it type back. So I think there's always.

Like you can just toss that out there. Like, you know, that's actually not part of the services that I offer. Um, and then, you know, there's, there's brands that will come with, to you, like really prepared and they'll have, um, and they may, it might not even be brands that are established. Like it could just be.

you know, a startup brand, but someone that's maybe a little bit more overachiever detail orientated. Like I think both you and I are. Yeah. And they're, they've done all the research themselves and they're like, okay, I've got this and this and this and this, and, and I'm gonna give it to you. And it might be some photos and it might be some drawings and it might be, [00:20:00] you know, what have you.

Um, so just really varies.

[00:20:05] **Kayla:** Yeah. And that, that I'm okay with. I just didn't wanna go into it completely blind, pitching to a client and then realize that I. Not at the level that I should have been going into it,

[00:20:15] **Heidi:** like what's was specifically, are you concerned about like, like give me an example of something in your head that like they might bring up and say that they need done that you're like, oh, actually I'm not prepared for that when it comes, as far as it like in relation to tech packs,

[00:20:31] **Kayla:** I honestly, I'm not sure now, like now I feel okay about it.

Like with all that I think. Okay. I'd be fine. Okay. Um, but beforehand, I didn't know what to expect. Right. So I didn't know if they were gonna throw something at me that I just didn't know what, like, maybe like specs, that sort of thing. Like, was that something that I was supposed to provide? Cuz I don't know how to do that kind of thing.

Right? Yeah. That, that sort of thing is what I was worried about that they would expect from me. And then not be able to deliver to

[00:20:59] **Heidi:** them. [00:21:00] Okay. So I think that also comes with being really clear and transparent. Initially, when you are talking to them about the project and what you services you do and don't offer.

I mean, I say this, I mean, I probably have said this on every single strategy session, is it. Like so much of freelancing boils down to clear communication and setting really, really clear expectations for the client. Yes. And so if you are not going to be offering the graded specs, the points of measure mm-hmm , then you just have to set that expectation from the beginning, say, you know, um, this is not something I offer, you know, it's.

It's a little bit more of a fine tuned skill. And I have experience in, you know, garment construction and sewing and alterations and pattern drafting, but more from a home perspective. And so I'm just not offering this right now because I don't think I'm the best qualified person for you to do that. Um, and maybe working with a pattern maker will [00:22:00] be better.

Alternatively. You know, there's opportunities. Um, you know, so I think this kind of leads us right into the next part of the conversation where you say, I just don't know what level of skills required us to be accept, to be acceptable enough to start offering services that's in regards to pattern making mm-hmm , which would also, we could also put the, the points of measure into that bucket as well.

Right? Yeah. So, you know, at the end of the day, we all started out not knowing something. And then ultimately we know it. And, um, that was probably the most obvious statement in the world, but , um, I think that's overlooked a lot though. yeah, that's true. Right. We all start out at zero. Um, yeah, and I think there is something to be said for being.

[00:23:00] Open and humble and transparent about your learning curve as a freelancer with clients. So what do I mean by that? Um,

let's say you're working with a brand and you're doing flats and some tech pack stuff. And you feel you're starting to feel like comfortable with them as a client and as a person, as like a working relationship. Um, and you know, they need the poms and they need some pattern making. Um, it could be an opportunity for you to sort of pitch to them and say, listen, this is a skill I'm working on learning.

Um, I don't have experience in production patterns, but I do have all this other experience and I would love to work with you on a trial [00:24:00] rate to. it would be, it would be a win-win like, first of all, it would be a learning opportunity for me. Um, and it might mean, you know, you might wanna be really upfront.

Like, it might mean like one or two extra prototypes because as, as you, the freelancer are learning, you know, maybe I didn't do the pattern quite right here. What have you, um, and, and maybe even getting the opportunity to work a little bit more closely with the factory or the sewer, like whoever's cutting and making the pattern, right?

Yeah. Um, I mean, at the end of the day, like that's how any skill is learned, right? Like for sure. Um, trying to kinda get your foot in the door somewhere and then being really humble and, and kind of asking for the opportunity. .
Yeah. Um, and so I think there's opportunities for you to springboard off of what, you [00:25:00] know, from home sewing and garment construction.

Yeah. Which I, I just know you're very savvy. Um, into that with some of the clients, once you get that foundation built with them on the flats and the tech packs, because what's gonna happen is you're gonna land those first few projects. You're gonna do an exceptional job, right. Because cuz that's what you learned in fast, right?

You're gonna do some extra credit. You're gonna make them love you. and I can just tell again, I think I've said like four times now. I know we're both kind of overachiever type. Yeah. You're gonna do a great job. They're gonna love you. And then you're gonna be really honest with them again. Right.

Communication and setting expectations. You're gonna be honest with them. Um, and you know, I think I never suggest it's a good idea to do any of this for free. but you could do it at like a really reduced rate. Say like, I'll, I'm willing to do the patterns, you know, the trial project rate, like at X rate, either hourly or per pattern or what have you.

Um, you know, I think it's important that they have some investment in the project. [00:26:00] They're still gonna be getting a great deal. Um, and they know that at, at, as a price for getting that great deal, that they are. there might be some extra cost involved in that, which is probably gonna be like a little bit of time and maybe a few extra prototypes.

Right.

[00:26:18] **Kayla:** For sure. Yeah. And I think with this brand that I've got kind of like on the side right now that I'm just kind of holding off on. I think knowing them, I would feel a little bit more comfortable reaching out and being like, Hey, do you need help with yeah. Some new designs or some new patterns? Like, I, I think I would feel a little bit more comfortable, especially being that I like know one of them personally.

Totally. you know, and I mean, what's the worst they can say is no, right. Yeah. That they're not looking or that they don't, but they could always keep me in the back of their mind for when they do maybe. Yeah. Um, so yeah, no, I think, I think that's absolutely fair and seems to be the, the best way to kind of getting my

[00:26:58] **Heidi:** foot in the door anyway.

[00:27:00] Totally. And I think that, um, you know, I think that. you'll start to feel when it's right. That you, like, as you put acceptable enough to start offering services I think you'll just get a feel, right? Like, so maybe you do that first project for like, you know, X rate and then the next one you like, raise it a little bit with a different client or maybe even with the same client.

Right. And then it's just gonna build and grow like that. The other thing I'll say too, um, and I'll say this really blindly, because I don't know, but, you know, I imagine there's some great online resources specifically for production pattern making.

[00:27:45] **Kayla:** And I think there are actually in the fast, um, Facebook group somebody had, I think it was actually Daniel maybe had put a link for the points of measure.

Yeah. Uh, YouTube and stuff. So I've been looking into her and she's Natalie.

[00:27:58] **Heidi:** She's amazing. Fantastic. Yeah.

[00:27:59] **Kayla:** She's amazing. Yeah. [00:28:00] I've been, um, Learning all I can from her. And there's been a couple of resources that I've seen a few different people reference. So I am actually in the process of getting those yeah.

To my door so that I can really get through those. Yeah. And, and understand all of it. But I think, I think I'm doubting myself more than I should. Mm-hmm especially even with the pattern making, like I understand some of the great rules. I understand. Um, the D. You know, slopes that you need in different

places or that you can take a slope or like a basic block and how you turn that into a different pattern to do a different thing with the design kind of thing.

Yeah. Like I understand a lot as far as that goes. Yeah. I just, you know, don't know if I'm, I'm sure it's different in production selling as opposed to just, you know, kind of doing stuff for. home. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:28:58] **Heidi:** So, I mean, [00:29:00] yeah, there are, to be honest, like, I don't know the differences because I'm not a pattern maker either.

Yeah. But. Um, I just know that there are differences. And so I think that, you know, doing the self-directed learning like you're, you're doing, and I know points a measure. I know Natalie. Um, she's amazing. And yeah, she's got a ton of great resources and then there's some great books out there. So. I think, you know, if you supplement a little bit with that, and then you kickstart with a couple of these like trial projects, like you said, either with people that you're already comfortable with or clients that you become comfortable with once you've, you know, you've done those first initial projects with flats and tech packs, then just have that conversation.

And, you know, I think some of them will be very open to that. Um, because it can be a win-win for everybody. Right. Because they can like, be like, okay, I'm, I'm gonna save a little bit of money on this and I can afford the time. then it might take, you know, an extra round of prototypes or two. So, and I, I, I, I mean, I can say with the utmost confidence that I'm sure you are doubting yourself a [00:30:00] little bit more than you should be, because most of us do that.

We all do that. Yeah. Right. It's very common.

[00:30:08] **Kayla:** Yeah. It was the same thing with the alterations people, you know, it it's one thing to, to make something. And then it's another thing to take somebody's. Dress that they need for a wedding and then rip it apart and have to put it back together. It's it's a little, uh, it's a lot of pressure yeah, yeah.

That's a lot of pressure. Yeah.

[00:30:25] **Heidi:** So, but then you like do it and you're like, wait, now I, I think you're fine. I do know what I'm doing. Yeah. Right. Yep. And you know what, if you mess up, then you mess up and you own it. And you have an open and transparent conversation about that. And you do. In the best of your power, what you can do to resolve that.

Yeah. Um, and you learn and you do better next time. I mean, that's the case with again, everything in life, right?

[00:30:52] **Kayla:** Absolutely. Yeah. I've actually, I've had a few repeat clients as far as the alterations go with weddings last year and weddings this year and stuff, so yeah. [00:31:00] Yeah. Obviously I'm not doing

[00:31:01] **Heidi:** too bad.

no, I'm sure you're doing amazing. Yeah. Um, yeah. So I think that's how you kind of kickstart the pattern making stuff. And then I think you'll just know yeah. You'll feel it. And you'll you'll know. um, you know, when it's acceptable to start offering services, but I think you're, you're probably ready way earlier than you think probably.

And again, just be transparent with your client and really communicative, um, and set really fair expectations.

[00:31:28] **Kayla:** Yeah, I think that's fair. Okay. Um, I did have a question about, um, so as far as doing. Stuff as like the points of measure and that sort of thing. When they have the sample, is it something that they're sending to you remotely in order to measure and get the measurements you need to do, you know, to get, I don't know if I'm wording this right.

Is like, would they send a physical sample to you in order to [00:32:00] measure, to get all of the information you need to put it into the tech pack so that they can produce it or. Like, how does that work? As far as going from design to actually having the numbers that you need to give to the factory to be like, this is what you need to do to make

[00:32:15] **Heidi:** it right.

Um, so it really can vary depending on like the type of factory that they're working with. I mean, there's, mm-hmm, , um, you know, if you're working with an overseas factory, like larger production scale, then you. Yeah. Are not given a sample to get the measurements from. Yeah. Because where does the sample really come from?

If you're like? Yeah, for sure.

[00:32:40] **Kayla:** And right. It doesn't really make much sense as far as shipping and stuff like that goes, right? Like, well, not

[00:32:43] **Heidi:** even just shipping, but like how does the factory make that sample in the first place to give to you, to get, yeah. To give to you to then take the measurements from like, if they made it then.

And I it's totally a, it is a very common question because it's feels very much like a chicken and an egg thing, right? It

[00:32:59] **Kayla:** is. [00:33:00] Yeah. It, it does seem like that.

[00:33:01] **Heidi:** Yeah. So it can kind of depend, um, one really common route is to work off of something that already exists in the market, so. Okay. So what's really, really common is.

okay. You're making a, I mean, this is the most obvious example in the world leggings, but it could be anything, it could be a dress, it could be a jacket. It could be, you know, what have you find the most comparable item in the market that. Is created by a competitor who has a fit. That's like similar-ish to what you're going after.

Right. Similar demographic mm-hmm um, and you buy a size run. So basically you buy one of the garment. Okay. In every size, extra small, through extra large, zero through 14, whatever. Yeah. And then the. Technical designer or the pattern maker would define. Okay, well, here's all the, the key points of measure that, that we need to use for this garment, thumb those, and then you measure 'em [00:34:00] all and you kind of put 'em into Excel.

Yeah. And then you kind of like adjust them. Right. So that it starts to make sense as far as grading up and grading down. Yeah. Um, and of course, if you're like, well, we've found this sample, that's close in the market. So we bought the size run, but it, we want ours. Slimmer in the calf or we want it shorter.

We want it like, whatever. Right. Then you make those adjustments yeah. To the POS. Okay. That makes sense. Right. So, so often that's how it's done. Um, there are smaller factories in, um, in the states. Are you in the states or are you in Canada here? A little accent, Canada. You're in Canada. Okay, Canada. Yeah, I thought so.

um, but, but Canada, the states, or honestly, anywhere in the world, there's yeah. You know, smaller kind of more independent factories that. can lean a little bit more full service. Um, [00:35:00] meaning, you know, they've got team and staff that can help with various parts of like the design and the development process.

They're not just like, gimme the type pack and we'll make the production. Um, and , and so with that type of arrangement, sometimes they will start. The prototyping process before the tech pack process. So like the, the designer or the brand could go to them and say, here's an idea of what I want. Um, whether that's a napkin sketch or a magazine tear or a physical garment that they pulled outta their closet, whatever it is.

Um, and that factory will. do some rough pattern drafting and like sew up a sample, you know, they won't grade at all or anything. Right. They'll just kind of proof of concept the rough one to fit [00:36:00] from.

[00:36:00] **Kayla:** Yeah, yeah.

[00:36:01] **Heidi:** Yeah. And, and then once that is sort of a little more dialed in, then they will actually create the POM from that.

They'll start to grade it from there and put the tie pack together from there. So. it can be the chicken or the egg . Yeah. Right. No, that makes sense. Yeah. So it just kind depends on the type of factory. Um, because I've heard people argue of like, why do you create a tech pack before you like, have proven the prototype sample?

And I was like, mm-hmm well, how do you make the sample without the tech pack? The patterns, right? Yeah. But it just depends on how the factory is set up and, and what type of like team and, and resources they have. Um, so, and it. at any rate. That's good knowledge for you to know kind of going in that, oh, it can work this way or it can work that way, right.

Either way. Yeah, absolutely. And so if you're working with a brand and you get to the point of like, [00:37:00] okay, I'm comfortable now offering the points of measure and the pattern and stuff, then they might say to you, well, how do we put that all together? Or you say, okay, well, what brands do you like the way that they fit?

Do you like Nike? Yeah. Do you like Lululemon? Do you like whatever, right? Mm-hmm okay. Pick out the exact garment that you like, the way that it fits that similar to yours, let's buy all the sizes and give me the physical garments. Then you, as the technical designer measure all those, create the POM and, or create the pattern off of that.

Yeah. Right. I'm sure you know how to create a pattern from a garment. Yes. Um, yeah. yeah, right. Yeah. More than what I mean. That's actually, I know

that. I know that way more than anything, like I've cut apart my own garments and copied them, or, you know, I think that's actually, I've done very little pattern drafting from scratch, um, and just hobby stuff, but yeah, I think that's easier way personally, but yeah.

um, so those are kind of some of the [00:38:00] nuances of how that process works. Okay. How does that all sound?

[00:38:05] **Kayla:** It makes me feel a lot more comfortable with it all. Okay. Absolutely. . Yeah, I wasn't sure. Yeah. I just wasn't sure where like where the information came from. Right. Because yeah, like on, I understand how the construction and stuff goes, but you always have that stuff beforehand.

Yeah, right? Yeah. When you're home sewing. Yeah. And then as far as being on the other end of it, I like, I didn't go to fashion school or anything like that. So I have like zero as far as like being in the actual. Um, experience, cuz I mean we're out in the middle of nowhere here, you know, it's, it's the prairies, there's nothing around here.

Like as far as brands, usually like bigger brands, well or like places that you can work for

[00:38:46] **Heidi:** kind of things. Okay. But you know, that boutique a boutique owner that has their own brand. I mean, I, I point that out because there's still stuff

[00:38:53] **Kayla:** everywhere. I just found that out actually after I sent in the request for the strategy session and I think it was.

Maybe a week [00:39:00] later, I re I found out that she actually had her own brand. Yeah. Um, but yeah, everything's self self done. Yeah. For the most part, I think her and her husband, so okay. But still, which is what I had planned to do for

[00:39:10] **Heidi:** myself. yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. Um, okay, cool. So that feels a lot more clear to you not to put words in your mouth, but it sounds like, yeah.

Okay. Um, alright. What other questions do you have? Where else are you stuck? um,

[00:39:27] **Kayla:** what else can I help you? I don't think you have any, like, that was, that was pretty much it. I was, it was just more of the not knowing, right? Yeah. From the other end of things, going into a blind is what I was worried about.

Yeah. Um, but yeah, no, it makes me feel a lot better as far as my skills go and kind of where to focus everything and, uh, and kind of what the next steps are to. To take off.

[00:39:51] **Heidi:** Yeah. So on that note, what are the next steps? Like I wanna we'll, we'll get off this strategy session and then I wanna know, [00:40:00] like, and I know you have very limited time.

Um, but I also know you're very ambitious, so I am, what do you see? Um, like what do you wanna commit to over the next? Let's give you a.

[00:40:13] **Kayla:** so I obviously learning the Adobe illustrator. Okay. Um, I'm going to run through the masterclass and then I think I'm just gonna go, you know, download the program. I was actually, um, I've just got a, a laptop right now, so I was trying to get my hands on a bigger computer.

Cause I think, you know, it'd be easier to, to work on as far as illustrator, you know, bigger screens maybe, maybe

[00:40:36] **Heidi:** not, but okay. Maybe.

[00:40:38] **Kayla:** Um, but I think I'm just gonna go ahead. Start with the illustrator and try and get some, um, flats done. Um, just play around with it even just to get comfortable. And then from there, um, I might reach out to the couple of brands I know, and kind of see if they [00:41:00] need help with any of that sort of stuff or do some, some pitches maybe, um, and go from there.

But as far as the drafting goes and stuff like that, I feel. Pretty confident with where I can learn what I need to learn in order to go forward with that. Okay. Um, and then, yeah, as it's just, you know, getting comfortable with Adobe, I think is the, the big thing, but okay. I think I can have that kind of down and, uh, start doing some pitches in the next.

[00:41:36] **Heidi:** Yeah, or so, okay. Probably. Yeah, I think so. I think so too. So learning illustrator, getting a few flats drawn to put together a small portfolio and then starting to pitch, um,

[00:41:47] **Kayla:** yeah, I've been actually, as I've been going through social media and stuff like that, I've noticed brands popping up and I'm like, oh, you know, I like what they do.

Maybe they need help. So I kinda like save them. So I've kind of like got a list. [00:42:00] Started that I'm like, oh, okay. Like maybe I can help with that. Or they're saying they need help with this. So like, I'm, I'm kind of like mentally making notes. Okay. Um, for brands and stuff like that. Other than the two that I actually like know personally that I can speak to.

Yeah. Um, as far as pitching goes, so.

[00:42:18] **Heidi:** Okay. And what sort of like. so you're gonna do flats and tech packs to start what? Yeah. Or, or maybe just flats to start and then add tech packs on shortly after that. Um, but what sort of brands are you looking at as far as a

[00:42:32] **Kayla:** category? These, the, the one that is local here, she does.

It's it's I think it's mostly women's stuff. She's kind of geared towards like 50 style yeah. Garments. Okay. Um, the other one is just it's women. Fashion, that's kind of, they market to like all of their stuff. They photograph on younger people kind of middle aged. And then some of the older ones [00:43:00] like wearing all of their stuff to see the fits different body styles.

So I really like what they're doing. Um, as far as a niche, I, I don't know for sure. I'm still kind of humming and hawing on what I wanna like focus on. Um, I like trying to solve problems that I have myself. So like, and one of the ones that was like a big bus, small, small back or whatever. Oh yeah. Um, so looking into fit for maybe women's clothing that deals with those issues, whether it be like, you know, normal clothing or, or more of like the swimwear or lingerie, that kind of thing.

Yeah. Um, eventually, but I mean, that's a

[00:43:40] **Heidi:** little ways down the road. Okay. Have you heard my interview with Laurie van Johnson?

[00:43:46] **Kayla:** um, I I'm guessing, so she's

[00:43:48] **Heidi:** a lingerie designer who yes. Specializes in a little while ago, right? It was a while ago. Yeah. Large. Yeah. Large bus, small back. Have I've listened to that one a couple of times just cuz she's like what you just said.

That's what she

[00:43:59] **Kayla:** does. [00:44:00] Yeah, yeah, yeah. And I know like it's, it's a big problem for a lot of people. And then as far as like maybe plus size goes, I know they have a lot of problems with, um, getting styles that actually fit them well. Yeah. And. On trend. Yeah. Cause a lot of them are really awful. I know. And uh, so maybe looking into more stuff like that.

Yeah. Um, I've kind of got a couple ideas, like, okay. I'm just not a hundred percent sure where I want to go. When I started my business to, to start a brand, my sites were actually set on doing, um, like alternative bridal. So like more black wedding gowns and like, oh, Stuff. That's not quite mainstream, not white

[00:44:42] **Heidi:** dress.

Yeah. I wore a lime green dress at my wedding if that's worth anything. Yeah, that's perfect. Well, I mean, we kind of eloped, we had our family there, but it was kind of an elopement, so it was still very small and intimate, but I was like, I am not wearing white.

[00:44:56] **Kayla:** I firstly, if you can't like, this is with the lights down and I had to cover my [00:45:00] window.

Cause I glow. Yeah. In like white is not a good color so that was kind of, yeah, yeah. Kind of my thought. Yeah. So I was, that was my intention starting a brand itself. So my heart's always kind of to like, towards those things, but, um, as far as like the fashion industry and what I think I can help brands with, I, I understand these struggle.

Of some of that other stuff a little bit more personally. Yeah. So I think that maybe those might be a good, good start cuz you know, I, I understand what their clients need.

[00:45:33] **Heidi:** So, well, it sounds like you have some good ideas and like you said, you've already booked mark some things on Instagram. So it's not, I just wanted to be clear because I, I think that a lot of people can get into like one of two situations.

They can be like, I can't find brands and I'm like, there's a bajillion brands out there. And I think when you're searching for everything, it can be hard to find anything. Um, and then. [00:46:00] what was the other part of that statement? I was gonna say, I totally lost my train of thought, but um, too much or too little maybe.

Yeah, maybe too much or too little. Yeah. Yeah. But you you've already been finding some stuff. So clearly you've got a little bit of idea. I've been.

[00:46:14] **Kayla:** Yeah, I haven't actually been searching for me a bit. Like this is just things that I'm coming across on, like TikTok and that kind of thing. Sure. Cause I follow a lot of sewing, right?

Like that's and

[00:46:22] **Heidi:** then you click through and you click through and

[00:46:24] **Kayla:** yeah. And then yeah. So stuff starts popping up where it's like these small brands that are like, Hey, this is what we're doing or Hey, I'm making this for this problem. And so that kind. Comes up on my feet naturally. Anyway. Yeah. So some of the, the brands I'm kind of starting to follow and just kind of keep an eye on, and then as they're posting stuff that they're like, Hey, we need this.

Yeah. You know, you know, in whatever they're doing on their posts or whatever, I it's kind of like, okay, well maybe they need these as well. Yeah. So yeah, it's just always in the back of my mind now, as like, since. um, and going through all of the [00:47:00] stuff that you do in the program, like it's really changed my mindset, looking at that sort of things, even when I'm not like consciously trying to, to find stuff.

[00:47:09] **Heidi:** Yeah. So you're now starting to like see interesting opportunities everywhere. You're not even looking for them. Yes. I know exactly, exactly. I know exactly. Which is why I always get like a little bit stumped when people are like, I looked and I can't find any brands and I'm kind of like

how is

[00:47:32] **Kayla:** that? That sound probably, yeah, probably a lot more than I need to. And I haven't even started trying to look, so, yeah.

[00:47:38] **Heidi:** But, but again, then, you know, I've gotta be nice on that, in that if you don't just kind of browse Instagram for fun, then I could see how, like, maybe that feels a little bit. Yeah. Um, Just like, I don't know.

I spent 20 minutes on there and you, [00:48:00] and I know how you can

[00:48:01] **Kayla:** stack right. Trying to find something so specific that you would overlook all of the other stuff around. Yeah.

[00:48:05] **Heidi:** Yeah. Whereas like, it's just a different mindset. We know what it's like to just kind of like start clicking and then the next thing you know, you like discovered this thing.

You're like, I don't even know who I got here, but like cool. Here it is. yeah, pretty much. Yeah. So, um, amazing. Well, any, anything else that I can help you with Kayla? I

[00:48:22] **Kayla:** don't think so. I feel a lot more comfortable now and I'm a lot, you know, I've gotta, I know where I need to, to go as far as all of this goes, so, okay.

I'm just gonna kinda bunker down and, and try and focus on all of it as much as I can. Okay. Awesome. Um, with the time I have and yeah.

[00:48:41] **Heidi:** Okay. See where it goes. So in the next. finish the masterclass, put some flats together for a loose portfolio and start pitching. I love it. Yes. It's very concrete. Yeah. Um, so here's what I would love to, for you to do also is for you to hop into the, uh, private Facebook student group.

[00:49:00] And just write up a little bit about what you and I chat about today for other people out there in the group who might be struggling, just kind of like here's where I was. Here's some of the advice that Heidi and I talked about and here's my plan going forward. And here's some of the tips that maybe I, I learned to think about these things.

Um, can you do that? Absolutely. Okay. Yeah. Yeah. Cuz I know other students would find that really helpful as well. Uh, well thank you so much for hopping on this call and I'm really glad to help you feel more confident and, and unstuck so that you can keep making progress in kicking.

[00:49:29] **Kayla:** definitely. Yeah, no, it's helped a lot.

I, I really appreciate it.

[00:49:35] **Heidi:** Thank you so much for watching or listening in, or depending on where you're tuning in, uh, this episode of the successful fashion freelancer podcast. Um, and I hope that you gain some really valuable insights from my strategy session with Kayla. I will remind you that these sessions are available exclusively to students inside our freelance accelerator program.

Um, if that is something that interests you and you know that you want more tools and resources to kickstart or grow your [00:50:00] freelance career. As well as get the opportunity for live Q and a, and one-on-one strategy sessions with myself, you can head on over to. So heidi.com/fast to get more details on that.

It's so heidi.com/fast we will link that below. And if you wanna grab all my free resources to kickstart and just see what you can do with all of that, um, tons of people have been able to, I don't like that at all. Okay. New outro. Thank you so much for listening to this conversation on the successful fashion, freelancer podcast and tuning in for this strategy session, McKayla, I hope you enjoyed what you learned.

Uh, if you are interested in learning more about freelance accelerator and how the program works and getting an opportunity to have a live strategy session with myself, you can head to. So heidi.com/fast. We will link that below. I also have a ton of free resources that you can check out at. So heidi.com/freelance, we will link that as well.

Um, thank you so much for listening. I really appreciate you being here. I hope you're having an awesome day, whatever it is you're doing. I [00:51:00] also wanna give a big shout out as I do at the end of every episode to my two right hand people behind the scenes that make the show possible. My husband, mark, who does all the tech and editing as well as my right hand, Tara who makes this show happen on so many levels, coordinating guests.

Publishing all the little moving pieces and parts that go into a podcast. So thank you so much. And again, thank you to you for listening. If you enjoy this episode, make sure to subscribe on YouTube. If you're watching there or to follow on podcast or wherever you're tuning in. So you don't miss future episodes and, uh, we'll see you at the next episode.

Bye.