

Coaching Session #1 — May 17, 2025

Coach: Morgan (Executive Coach)

Client: Jamie Liu (CPO, NimbusFlow)

Session Theme: Navigating Conflicting Executive Priorities

Morgan: Let's start with what's most pressing for you right now.

Jamie: It's this constant tug-of-war between doing what I know is right for the product and caving to what the CEO and CRO want to promise to close deals. I feel like I'm walking a tightrope every day, trying to manage up, manage down, and still protect the team. The Lexan deal is the latest example. It's a whale, yes, but we've now committed to building features that have almost no utility for our broader market. I raised this, but Avery just said, "We'll figure out scale later."

Morgan: How did that land for you?

Jamie: Frustrating. It feels like I'm being gaslit. Like the only way to be seen as a team player is to nod along. But I know we're stacking up long-term debt. Brand debt, technical debt, decision debt. It's going to snap.

Morgan: You used the word "gaslit." That's strong. What's the emotional texture there?

Jamie: It's like... I feel invisible. Or worse, expendable. I know I bring strategic clarity, but it's like the room only hears what they want to hear. And Ravi—our CTO—he's technically brilliant but he's a yes-man to Avery. He won't push back. So I end up looking like the obstacle.

Morgan: What values are you trying to uphold in your role?

Jamie: Integrity. Long-term thinking. Protecting our product vision and our people. I want to build something durable, not just flashy.

Morgan: What happens when those values collide with the culture around you?

Jamie: That's the tension. It's like I have to choose between being respected and being effective. I don't want to be the one always saying "no," but I can't just go along with decisions I know are damaging.

Morgan: So let's shift from tension to agency. What would stepping fully into your role as a values-driven leader look like?

Jamie: I think it would mean leading with data. Framing trade-offs in terms of impact and loss, not just principle. And maybe taking more ownership of the narrative. Like, here's what Lexan buys us, and here's what it costs. In velocity, morale, retention, and roadmap integrity.

Morgan: What if your role isn't to win arguments, but to elevate the conversation?

Jamie: That's the shift. I don't want to be the friction. I want to be the person who helps the company make conscious, intentional trade-offs. Even if they choose short-term gains, at least it won't be accidental.

Morgan: What do you want to celebrate today?

Jamie: I did get Priya to back me on deferring one of the Lexan features. That felt like a win—first time someone else on the exec team voiced a similar concern in the room.

Morgan: That's progress. What's a goal you want to set for the next two weeks?

Jamie: I'm going to prep a decision brief for our next roadmap meeting. Not just what we're doing, but what we're not doing—and what that means. I'll socialize it with Priya first. She's data-driven and might back me up.

Morgan: Excellent. Let's see how that reclaims some traction.

Jamie: Thanks. I'm not here to fight the tide. I'm here to shape the current. And I can do that without losing myself in the noise.