

Ep #238: My Best Advice on Podcasting

Full Episode Transcript



With Your Host

Simone Grace Seol

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Welcome to *Joyful Marketing*! I'm Simone Seol, and I teach you how to get your life coaching practice fully booked without having to pay for ads, buy Instagram followers, or complicated sales funnels. It's not rocket science, and you can do it, too. Listen on to find out how.

Hey, everybody, let's talk about podcasting and my top tips on podcasting, on my podcast. Feels a little meta, but I don't haven't really talked about it yet. And as my podcast is actually a big part of my platform and it's a big part of my marketing, I figured I should talk about it.

And especially, there are times when I'll be answering questions from people or my clients, and I am reminded of how much bullshit that's out there, in terms of ideas that people have about podcasting and marketing. Things that people teach about podcasting and marketing where I think is just so stupid and toxic, and I just vehemently disagree.

I was like, I should set the record straight on what I believe about podcasting, and how you should do it and how to make it work. So, I was like, I'm just going to get on my soapbox and tell you all my thoughts about podcasting, and my best advice for how to make it work.

So, just a little bit of a background on my podcast. I started it three years ago-ish. I think it's been very successful. And the way I measure success is that one, I have consistently had so much fun with it. I always have fun with it. The body of work that I built on my podcast really does feel like a genuine representation of who I am, and how my thoughts have evolved over time.

You know, there's some things I look back at, and I'm like, oh, if I were talking about that today, I'd talk about it differently, or I would say that differently. But whatever I said, whatever I taught at the time, was the best that I had to offer at the time. I really see the evolution of a mind of a coach, of a teacher, as a human being, and I'm like, I'm so proud of what I created. Not because everything was perfect, not because everything is the best, but because everything is me, and it feels really authentic to me.

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And that, to me, is the biggest measure of success. Of course, this podcast has gotten so much feedback from so many people saying that it is helping you so much, and it's changing lives. My favorite thing to hear, is that my free podcast has done more for people than lots of expensive courses they paid for. I love hearing that. That feels like a really big success to me.

And of course, there's a number of stuff I haven't checked in a really long time, but I do know that for a good while my podcast was consistently in the top 20 in the marketing category in the US. And for someone who never really aspired to that kind of thing, just because I didn't, it's not something that I was trying to go for. Because mostly, I didn't even know it was possible for me. That felt pretty cool.

So, I think I probably have some useful things to say about podcasting. And well, that was already too long of a prelude. Let's get right to it.

Here are my top tips on podcasting. Number one, there is no wrong time to start one. And don't start one to "get clients". Don't start it because you think it's a magical solution that's going to establish you as an authority in the field or thought leadership. And I mean, please. I think when you start off, I call it a transactional way. Like, I'm going to do this, I'm going to pump out a number of episodes in this amount of time. And then it's going to bring me this kind of business.

That is a transactional way of looking at it. And the number one reason I recommend against it is because it's not fun. Oh, my gosh, I think the number one reason... I keep saying number one reason. I think the number one reason that my podcast has been so successful over time, is because I have so much fun with it, that I'm able to do it consistently week after week for years, and it doesn't feel like work.

And the reason that it doesn't feel like work is because I'm not doing it with an agenda like, this needs to bring me clients. Right? That lightness of, 'I'm just doing this to express myself. I'm just doing this today, because I like

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getting on my soapbox and talking about ideas that are important to me.’ That internal reason is the reason that I’m able to show up again and again and again.

I have an ADHD brain. The minute you put an agenda to something like, ‘this thing I do must bring me clients and must meet a certain standard to establish me as an authority...’ Just talking about it makes me... It’s so much pressure. That pressure drains the fun, drains the creativity, and drains the kind of energy that comes from your heart that is necessary for you to be at it week after week after week after week.

Even when you’re tired. Even when you’re exhausted. All this stuff, like that kind of genuine, heartfelt consistency that comes from your heart is not created when there’s this pressure of ‘this podcast must produce something’. Right?

It’s reminding me of the part in my one of my favorite books of all time, *Big Magic* by Elizabeth Gilbert. I’m going to butcher the way she said it because the way she said it was so funny, brilliant, and beautiful. But it’s basically asking your art, she’s saying asking your art to pay the bills and to take care of you is terrible, and the goddess of art gets offended, right?

She’s talking about in the context of writing and any other creative pursuit. And I think podcasting is a very creative pursuit. And I agree, the goddess of creativity, the creativity that it takes to create, produce a podcast, the goddess of creativity gets offended when you are like, “Okay, now pay the bills, please.” Right? I really believe that.

And so, doing it to get clients is a horrible reason to start a podcast. Mostly because it’s going to make it hard for you to stay with it when it’s not bringing you clients right away. Or for a long time, which mine didn’t at first, either. You’ve got to do it for internal reasons that aren’t going to go away when you have a bad week or a bad month.

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It has to be internal reasons that matter to you, that are resonant, no matter what. That's what's going to make you resilient and consistent. And, you know being resilient, consistent, with it is what builds a body of work. It's what creates success, right?

So, I think the best reasons to start a podcast are, as I said before, because you have an itch to express yourself. You have a desire as a human being to express yourself, because you have ideas that are worth sharing. Did you hear me? I'm going to repeat that.

You, my friend, have ideas worth sharing. You, my friend, your thoughts are valuable. Your voice is valuable. You deserve to take up space in the world with your voice. Your voice deserves to be out there. Your thoughts matter. Your ideas matter. And let's get them out there.

We can, we have this incredible technology that makes it super easy to get your voice out there, to get your thoughts out there, and it's called podcasting. Right? I think that is the best reason to do a podcast, because it feels good for humans to express themselves. And because your ideas matter, and your thoughts are valuable.

I'm kind of repeating these sentences because I want to embed them deeply in your subconscious mind. Your ideas matter, your thoughts are valuable. Your voice deserves to take up space in the world. Best reasons to start a podcast.

And of course, I always say the only way to find your voice is to use your voice. Podcasting is just another way to use your voice. Your voice isn't something that's out there lost in the woods, that you have to go out looking for it because it's missing. No. Your voice is something that you create by using it again and again and again.

So, if you podcast week after week after week, right? You put your ideas out there. You are literally using your voice. After a while, no matter what,

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you're going to have cultivated your voice; you're going to be a better communicator, you're going to be a better storyteller, you're going to be a better teacher of ideas. And that's very worthwhile.

These are the internal reasons that I think are the best reasons to start a podcast. If you resonate with these reasons, please go start a podcast. Your ideas are worth sharing. You, your voice is valuable. Your voice deserves to take up space in the world. Your thoughts are valuable. Let us hear them.

Okay? I'm repeating them for a reason. I want to be a broken record in your brain reminding you of these important truths about the value of your voice. So, that's tip number one. Don't do it to get clients, do it for internal reasons.

Number two, please don't overthink the topic, the title. Don't worry about having to position it just perfectly. Don't worry about any of it. Lower the stakes for yourself. Okay? I'm going to teach you my trick for how I was able to get this podcast started and how I'm able to get it going, despite my massively ADHD brain.

The way I thought about my podcast, the only way I could have gotten started from the beginning, is here's my thought: I'm like, "You know what? There are so many things that I could talk about for five to 10 minutes. There are so many things. I have thoughts, I have opinions, I have takes on things. Whatever it is, there's so many things I could just talk about for five to 10 minutes." And boom, that's a podcast episode.

You find things you can talk about for five minutes, 10 minutes; it's a podcast episode. And that is, you see, my attitude about it. That lightness is what got me creating a lot in the beginning. And it's still what gets me crazy. If I had this expectation, 'I'm going to pull together a podcast that has incredibly valuable, life changing ideas that are going to position me as an

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authority in my field, and also be a client generating blah, blah, blah,' I would have never ever, ever, ever started this podcast in a million years.

And I even if I did somehow, I would never have been able to keep it up because my brain hates pressure. All of that, this podcast must be threaded through that. The best way to get me to *not* do something is to create the pressure for me to have to do it. Right?

Under that, those high standards and expectations, I would have never found the creativity, the energy, the lightness, the desire, to just get in front of a mic to hit Record. No, I guess you should hit Record before you talk. And then hit Publish. Right.

So, this is my attitude in the beginning; it's still my attitude. When I think about podcasting, I'm like, "You know what? There are so many things I could talk about for five minutes, 10 minutes, I'm going to talk about it. And then I'm going to hit Post." And you're like, "but Simone, your episodes aren't 5, 10 minutes, they're long."

And what I say to that, it's true. That's because once I start talking, you can't shut me up. Turns out, I'm always like, "Oh, yeah, this is a five-minute thing I want to talk about," and then it ends up being like an hour. But that's just because I'm long winded and unconcise. Okay?

Let me tell you something, there's no rule that says you've got to do long podcasts. In fact, a lot of people prefer very short podcasts. For every person who enjoys listening to an hour-long podcast, there's probably like three more people who are "Who has the time? I'm on the go. I've got to do a million things. Can somebody just give me something to listen to that's short? That I can fit in between errands, that's like 10 minutes, three minutes, five minutes? Some of my favorite podcasts are five minutes long.

So, if you're feeling like, 'I could do that, I could talk about something, anything for five minutes. I could do that over and over,' you already, in real

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life, you talk about things topics for five minutes at a time, at least. The only difference is it's not recorded, right? You probably have, if you are thinking about podcasting, you probably have a general idea of what you want to talk about.

It could be something as general and open-ended as how to have a better life, or how to feel more inner peace, or whatever the topic is. I'm going to ask you to do this. Within that larger topic; it could be a very large, general topic. Right now, just think of, or jot down some things around that topic or whatever, that you could talk about for three minutes. That you could talk about for five minutes.

Like, a story you can tell for five minutes about some aspect of whatever it is, an idea and opinion you have. Whatever it is, where you're like, "Oh, I could talk about that for three minutes. I could talk about that for five minutes." If you have something nearby where you can write, jot down five ideas, each of which you can probably talk about for three to five minutes. There it is, there are your episodes. That's it, my friends, it is that simple. Okay?

And if you're like me, once you start talking, it can get long-winded. But please don't sit down and be like, "I have to produce a high value, professional podcast that's 30 minutes long, because that's what experts and..." Fuck that. Make it easy. Fuck the rules. Make it something where it feels like so low stakes that you can do it even on a bad day, even on a bad week. That's my secret for having gotten started and being so consistent with it.

Whenever my brain doesn't want to do it, and I'm like, "Naah," it always works. I remind myself, "Simone, it does not have to be brilliant. It does not have to be an hour long." There's something, there's always something where your mouth can run off for three to five minutes, go do it. I'm like, "Okay, that's something I can do." Right?

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That sounds low key, my friends, but it's actually a genius technique. And it's a genius frame to get your brain to do things that matter, to lower the stakes. Right?

Okay, so the next tip that I have is, please, go low tech. Please, be scrappy about it. Don't make it perfect, professional, and polished. Please, don't spend money on professional producing, production, whatever, unless you have cash to burn. If you have cash to burn, then who cares? Spend all the money, do all the things, who cares? But if you don't have cash to burn, and I definitely did not have cash to burn when I was starting this podcast, go low tech and go scrappy, like I did.

Here's what I mean by that. A lot of people are like, how do you start a podcast? What's the technology behind it? And listen, I'm terrible with technology. I googled how to start a podcast. I read what Google showed me for a few minutes, and I followed the instructions. I forget what the instructions were now, but it's actually pretty simple.

I had to learn how to do the most basic audio editing in the universe, right? Where I can kind of cut parts out and splice parts together. I taught myself the most rudimentary audio editing by googling 'how to do simple audio edit', something like that.

There were recommendations for the best kind of programs for it, I picked whatever was the most universal and simple. And it took me probably like 15, 20 minutes to learn how to do the most basic audio editing. That's how I got started. None of this shit is rocket science. None of this shit is fancy coding. All of it is so easy. Technical parts of podcasting, if I can Google it, follow instructions, and figure it out, so can you. You do not need professional production.

And listen, I'm saying this as somebody who has a professional producer and loves her professional production company; shout out to Digital Freedom Productions. I'm sorry, I just know them by their names, my

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producers who help me, Pavel and Devon. Thank you, I love you. You guys are amazing.

But guess what? I didn't hire them until, I don't remember exactly the number, but I was like 100 episodes in, maybe more, a buttload of episodes, and I didn't hire them until I was almost at a million dollars of annual revenue.

I had so much money, I was like, "Huh, it'll probably just be fun to invest in professional production." Even though I had a super successful podcast without it. Even though I was making boatloads of money without it. And you know what I was doing before I followed the instructions of my producer and bought a fancy mic and everything? I recorded everything on my iPhone. I did everything that probably experts will tell you not to do.

I recorded shitty audio quality. Well, it's not that shitty. Like, whatever. You know the voice notes app on your iPhone that gets you the most basic recording that comes built into the iPhone? I used that for dozens of my earliest episodes. And guess what? Nobody complained. Nobody was like, "Oh, my God, your voice quality is so terrible. I can't listen to it."

Until I mentioned it, a lot of people were like, "Wow, I would have never I never noticed it. I would have never thought it was bad quality." It gets the job done. Phones are very sophisticated nowadays. You do not... Like, "Oh, I need a fancy mic and I need a whatever, blah, blah, blah to..." as a reason to procrastinate.

You have an incredible piece of technology in your hands, it's called your phone, and it can record your voice. Use that. That's what I mean by low tech and scrappy. Again, if you have lots of money, you have cash to burn, go hire production, hire a designer.

I made my own podcasts cover, all the art, all the design around it, on Canva. And I'm not particularly a great designer. It just had to have my face

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on it and letters that say what it was. In the beginning, I think my podcast was called Fearless on Social Media or something. I don't even remember, it feels like so long ago, even though it's not really.

That brings me to another point, is that your podcast is allowed to evolve. I change the name of my podcast like twice, I think. My voice, my style, has evolved a lot. And that's how it should be. So, don't put the pressure on yourself to figure out the perfect angle, the perfect title, the perfect whatever. You can always change it; people do it all the time. Even very established "successful" people.

In fact, I am going to be doing another major podcast rebrand pretty soon. So, that's coming. You're allowed to change your mind. Some of the most interesting, creative people do it all the time. So, just pick something that's all going under the umbrella of 'make it easy, make it low tech, make it simple, be scrappy about it.' You don't need anything fancy. And know that you can grow into having more complicated stuff if you want, but it's never necessary.

People forget that the most important part of podcasting is your thoughts meeting the world. Your voice meeting the world, going into the ears of people who value hearing what you have to say. And everything outside of that, professional design, professional production, marketing, strategy, whatever, it's just extra; completely unnecessary extra.

So, focus on the quality of the communication. Focus on just using your voice and making your voice heard in the world. Everything else is gravy. All right?

Okay, so the last bit of insight, unless you think of something else, that I'm going to give you is how to grow followers. I mean, listeners, I should say. I get lots of questions on this. Actually, that's not sure. Do I get lots of questions on this? Well, I think I see lots of people talking about it, and then I have opinions in my head, like, "That's stupid." But I don't say it out loud.

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But I'm going to say it out loud. A lot of advice out there about how you need to market your podcast, is simply untrue. And here's what I think has been the number one secret weapon for the amount of attention that my podcast has received.

The success that it's created for my business is this: I focus on making this podcasting experience fun and meaningful for me. That's how I grow listeners week after week. That's how I turned my podcast into probably one of my top marketing channels. I did that by creating very high-quality content, consistently, week after week after week.

Where people can really get a sense of who I am. People get really useful ideas. My listeners feel like they have a true connection with me. And I feel like I have a true connection with them. And guess how all of that is created? Guess what makes all of that possible? The only reason, the only way that can be possible is because I do my podcasting in a way that's fun and meaningful for me.

If there is a “best practice” about podcasting, that makes it not fun for me, that I find annoying, and trust me, there's a lot of things that people say I need to do, I have to do, I should do, that'll be better for my business. I don't even know, there's a whole list of things that I see being recommended all the time.

I have had coaches tell me that I should do XYZ with my podcast. I always use my body as a compass. If I feel a pull towards it, if that sounds fun, if it sparks my curiosity, and if I'm like, “Eeeh, that sounds fun, I want to do that,” then, I do that. And if it has the opposite effect, if it feels weird in my body, if I feel like that wouldn't be fun, if it feels artificial, I don't do it.

And because it's fun for me, because I intentionally make decisions... I almost want to say I have a discipline of fun. Meaning, I ruthlessly say no to everything that people want me to do that doesn't sound fun to me. Even

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when it's hard to say no. Even it's hard to trust my own instinct over what some expert told me. Right? That's what I mean by a discipline of fun.

To put it simply, I keep the podcasting experience fun for me. And because it's fun I consistently show up with a kind of energy and creativity that creates great material, that gets people listening again and again, and pulling in their friends, recommending to their friends, sending it to their friends, "Hey, you've got to listen to Simone's podcast."

I think it's 100% about the energy that I come from. And yeah, sure, there's such a thing as quality. Like, I think ideas I share are really high quality. They're good ideas. But you have really high quality, good ideas, too. And the only reason that I'm able to share my great valuable ideas again and again and again, is that I insist that this be a fun experience for me.

So, the way I make it fun is a lot of the stuff I already talked about, right? I keep my expectations really low. To me, it's always like, you know what? My podcast exists for me to just be able to talk about something for three to five minutes, whatever.

The reason I do it is because I like expressing myself. It's not to use it as a marketing funnel for my business. It's not to whatever, it's not for any of those reasons. I just like expressing myself. I just like sharing my ideas, and I always have ideas to share. Those are the reasons that keep me going. That's what makes it fun for me.

So, what makes it fun for you? What reasons to do it? What ways of doing it? What kind of low standards creates that feeling in your body of like you're being pulled forward; you're drawn to it? What compels you? What makes you want to get up out of your couch and want to do it? What are those things? What brings the ease, what brings the joy, what brings the lightness?

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Think about those things when you're thinking about how to do your podcast; what to talk about, how to do it. And please, ignore everyone's advice, even the most expert whatever podcasts, whatever, ignore everyone's advice about how things should be or how you should do it to capitalize on the whatever the fuck blah, blah, blah, right?

I have never done an intentional campaign to draw attention to my podcast. I don't intentionally try to go on other podcasts to get more attention. I just have fun with it, week after week after week. And I think that is the number one key to getting a lot of listeners who really resonate with you and get value out of listening to you and with whom you can create great relationships. And to me, that is what it is all about.

Make it light, make it fun, make it meaningful, and the quality that you're looking for, the consistency you're looking for, the creativity and the brilliance you're looking for, will automatically follow when you are having fun.

So, my friends, I think that's a pretty good list of my top insights on how to do a great podcast. Wherever you are in your entrepreneurial journey, I hope if you have the tug inside of you, feel that tug inside to express yourself through this medium, do it. You have not just my encouragement, you have my blessing.

Fuck everyone who says, "Oh, you have to be at this stage of business to do a podcast. You shouldn't start a podcast..." Fuck, fuck all of them. Fuck all of them to hell. Okay? You don't need a reason. You don't need guidelines. You don't need rules that get in the way of you expressing your creativity. Go make your voice heard because your voice is valuable. Your thoughts are valuable, and your ideas are worth sharing.

Alright my friends, I'll talk to you next time.

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Hey, if you want a shot of fresh inspiration and actionable tips to improve your marketing every single week in your inbox, you better get on my email list. Sign up to receive my free e-book called *20 Unsolicited Copy Tips*. It's been known to get people to come out of the woodwork and ask to work with you. So, get on that link in the show notes, and I'll see you in your inbox next time.