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Episode 38:

“Timing: How We Plan Out the Next Book”

Mike Michalowicz ([00:00](#)):

Welcome back to the Don't Write That book podcast where you can learn how to write your bestseller and own your authorship. Follow along with us as we give you an insider's view of the book industry. Now, here are your hosts. Myself, Mike Michalowicz and AJ Harper.

Mike Michalowicz ([00:16](#)):

So in our studio right now, it's, uh, it's a, it's a chilly <laugh>, I don't know, 64 degrees.

AJ Harper ([00:22](#)):

It's a walking, walk-in refrigerator

Mike Michalowicz ([00:24](#)):

When you sleep, do you cool your room or your bed?

AJ Harper ([00:29](#)):

I like a cool room. I just put the fan directly on me. (Okay.) I sleep with my wife, who is a "princess and the pea."

Mike Michalowicz ([00:38](#)):

Okay. Meaning she dresses the bed differently. Does she have like more blankets or,

AJ Harper ([00:43](#)):

She has very, very specific sleeping requirements. And I say that with love. I have no, (Yeah, no, I get it.) Yeah. It's, it's all good. So how do you, so does,

Mike Michalowicz ([00:51](#)):

Is she more covered than you?

AJ Harper ([00:53](#)):

She doesn't like the air conditioning, so Yeah. Who

Mike Michalowicz ([00:57](#)):

Doesn't like air conditioning? She does. Polly does Polly. She, Polly does Polly. If you're listening, what the hell?

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AJ Harper ([01:01](#)):

So it's cool. Like, I'll do anything for her to have a good night's sleep. It's all good. Um, yeah. So I have a fan pointed directly on me as opposed to on, on her,

Mike Michalowicz ([01:11](#)):

So she doesn't feel the fan.

AJ Harper ([01:12](#)):

And you know how hot it's been?

Mike Michalowicz ([01:13](#)):

Oh my gosh. We had some days that they approached a hundred. It was like 97.

AJ Harper ([01:18](#)):

So she's under the covers on one side of the bed. Yeah. I, because it's so hot and no covers. No, yeah. And a fan blasting directly on me. That's funny. Yeah. But it's fine. I'm, we, we got it down to a science.

Mike Michalowicz ([01:33](#)):

So Krista and I are similar. I have just a sheet over me that'll kind of take off her on, during the night with a room really cold. We drop it to like 67, even 66 <laugh> air conditioning. And she loves breathing in. But then she'll wrap up just, just her noses peeking out. But she loves the cold air, but she'll have Pea in the Pod blankets over. She also has you ever hear of these weighted blankets?

AJ Harper ([01:57](#)):

Yes. My wife has one of those, too.

Mike Michalowicz ([01:59](#)):

Okay. So she has a weighted blanket and it gives her such comfort. She sleeps so much more deeply. Yeah. We have a sleep rating app, Uhhuh, and at the end, it's so funny. Each morning, including this morning, how'd you sleep? I think it always starts off with, I think good. Let me see what the app says.

AJ Harper ([02:17](#)):

Wait, you need the app to tell you how you slept?

Mike Michalowicz ([02:19](#)):

Yeah. It's a total placebo. Come on. So if the app says bad, I'm like, oh my God. I, I feel horrible. If it says, well, I'm like, okay.

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AJ Harper ([02:26](#)):

So you believe the app.

Mike Michalowicz ([02:27](#)):

I believe the app more than I do my intuition (Yourself?) Yeah. That's what apps are doing to us. We're gonna talk about timing and scheduling today. When it comes to books, how we plan it out. We have a new book deal, uh, that we're gonna commit to, uh, anytime now. Um, but it's, it's in the works. It's the book. Uh, but before we do that, I wanna introduce my colleague AJ Harper. The thing I love about you is, um, your focus on the fundamentals of the book process and resisting my default to, to just go, <laugh>, let's just go. And you, you bring back the structure. We gotta get the timing, we gotta get the chapters. We, we have an agenda. And even in an email communication, I'll say, oh, can you, can you get this back? Oh, no, no, you already committed to Monday. I'm like, oh. It just, it's out my mind. But you keep us on pace, which is powerful. You can't race. You gotta pace

AJ Harper ([03:33](#)):

<laugh>. Thanks. Uh, yeah, you, I mean, I don't think you're, I I think in, I think we've talked about this in the episode where we talk about our worst book, which if you're trying to get to know us a little bit, you might backtrack. I, it's one of the first five episodes,

Mike Michalowicz ([03:49](#)):

One of our most popular.

AJ Harper ([03:51](#)):

Maybe not the whole time. It might be episode three. Yeah. I, I, I might be wrong. Um, but it was, it, our, the way we handle getting a book done has evolved over time and we have so much respect for each other's approaches. And we have a blend now of how to how that works. And so, while I'm trying to keep pace, you're also trying to push us forward. And now I think we have a good healthy tension with that.

Mike Michalowicz ([04:15](#)):

I think so too. Yeah.

AJ Harper ([04:16](#)):

Yeah. Because I've always admired about you. Just, just throw it out. Just, just see what happens. Yeah. Let's just, it's good. Yeah. Let's go. And I think, you know, I, I really needed need more of that in my life. So I think now we have a good, healthy tension.

Mike Michalowicz ([04:30](#)):

I agree. I think, I think that's where it's come to. I think unequivocally our best book is All In.

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AJ Harper ([04:36](#)):

I love that book.

Mike Michalowicz ([04:37](#)):

So effing good.

AJ Harper ([04:38](#)):

But this next one I will probably love more.

Mike Michalowicz ([04:41](#)):

Yeah, me too. I, every book I love more. But I really do think the quality of our work represents it. And we do get the reader feedback.

AJ Harper ([04:50](#)):

Oh yeah? Should gimme one right now. Because I-- You haven't sent me anything lately.

Mike Michalowicz ([04:53](#)):

Um, yeah. For All In, I'm just going to, you know, summarize, just paraphrase. But, but the, there has been some fan readers who read the whole suite Yeah. And say, All In is the best storytelling All In, uh, is the most motivational, All In is the most human. Just, it's, it's, and I've heard specifically, this is your best work.

AJ Harper ([05:16](#)):

So that's interesting in the context of talking about timing, because we, we didn't push, we didn't turn in. We turned in only what we felt was the best

Mike Michalowicz ([05:30](#)):

With all in. Yeah, yeah.

AJ Harper ([05:32](#)):

Yeah. We didn't, we didn't turn anything in before it was ready. Yeah. And yeah, we, we spent a lot of time in development on that book.

Mike Michalowicz ([05:41](#)):

All In, selling. Well, second strongest seller currently, uh, you know, it's not in Backless status yet. It's still the first year. Uh, we're seven months in now. But it continues to be the second bestseller Profit First is the best.

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AJ Harper ([05:56](#)):

Still. And yet here we are with, you know, free agents. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz ([06:00](#)):

And we, God, we gotta get, I've used this analogy maybe too many times, but like bands like, we have our hit song. We have some good B-Sides <laugh>. I want another hit.

AJ Harper ([06:13](#)):

Okay. This is it. This will be the one.

Mike Michalowicz ([06:15](#)):

Okay. So lemme tell you what the new book is.

AJ Harper ([06:18](#)):

Are you gonna really tell them what the new book is? We're--

Mike Michalowicz ([06:20](#)):

No, I don't think it's should share its title yet.

AJ Harper ([06:21](#)):

No, don't share the title. This is, okay. This is tricky because if it were, because it's, I don't wanna talk too much about it. Okay. You can share what it is, but I don't wanna get into too much of the, too many of the details because it's ha I'm not in, that takes my mojo away. Okay.

Mike Michalowicz ([06:41](#)):

So I'll say a few things. It was inspired by Profit First because there are a lot of readers of the business finance, cash management book Profit First who say, I don't have this working in my personal finance. So this is a personal finance book. Um, that it's based upon some of the core, same core principles,

AJ Harper ([06:59](#)):

But it's, but it's also completely different and accessible in different ways.

Mike Michalowicz ([07:04](#)):

Yeah. We have a deployment going on right now with a company with the beta of 25 employees that's gonna convert to 900 people we're teaching on this within the next three months. But we already have it in beta there. It's so interesting. There are some very significant, uh, changes to the, the system because in individual income and a business income, it's different. Business income is as, you know, volatile. Yeah. There's good times and they're shitty times, when they're shitty times, they're shitty times. Personal income generally is more static. It's more consistent. If you're, you're an entrepreneur,

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it's more variable. But for the vast majority of our population, it's a more consistent income. And uh, one of the core arguments I make is that every being human being is already wired for money. Like we're, we're already inherently wired properly for it. We accumulate ever since the Neanderthal days, you hunt, you collect, you store, you don't constantly just live without accumulating, because then you can't survive. So we're wired to accumulate, including wealth. We just need to tap into those, those elements.

AJ Harper ([08:14](#)):

Well and also wired in terms of our behavior and natural ways of doing things. Yeah. Not just wired from caveman times, but...

Mike Michalowicz ([08:22](#)):

No, or... Yeah. Yeah. It's a behavioral.

AJ Harper ([08:23](#)):

Behavioral.

Mike Michalowicz ([08:25](#)):

It's integral to humanity is we are wired for wealth, which is not the title by the way.

AJ Harper ([08:30](#)):

But that is a good title.

Mike Michalowicz ([08:31](#)):

Yeah. And it's used and abused.

AJ Harper ([08:32](#)):

Sorry, somebody. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz ([08:33](#)):

It's so abused and used and abused. Okay. So here's where we stand right now. Oh

AJ Harper ([08:39](#)):

Wait, I wanna say one thing about that. For listeners who are really are Big Mike fans, this, one of the big things that we tried to decide is, is this, does this still fit in with Mike's mission to eradicate entrepreneurial poverty? So I do, I do wanna say it does because so many entrepreneurs apply profit first to their business and then their personal finances are just in shambles. Correct. Uh, and then they have employees.

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Mike Michalowicz ([09:06](#)):

Correct.

AJ Harper ([09:07](#)):

Who are need the benefit from it. So yes, it absolutely falls into that mission.

Mike Michalowicz ([09:12](#)):

And that was the bigger lesson. I met with a company and the owner said, Profit First has transformed this business's finances that the owner happened to be a male. He is more comfortable financially than ever before, but he fears for his company financially. And I said, I don't, it doesn't compute. He goes, because I don't think my colleagues, my team here is financially secure and therefore they have to do what it takes to survive. They may leave me, this organization, that may go to other places 'cause they're not financially secure.

AJ Harper ([09:42](#)):

Oh, that's so interesting. So their perspective is, it's not just to the benefit of the employees, it's to also help him retain employees and get good performance out of employees.

Mike Michalowicz ([09:51](#)):

Correct. So in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the foundational need is what's called physiological needs. You and I need to drink liquids, water, and we need food for base of rightful sleep. Right. Above that is safety. The next level. And safety is physical safety, a roof overhead, financial safety, meaning we have the ability to get access to things we need. It's, it's in the foundation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs financial security. And yet it's not, it's not addressed in our schools. It's not addressed by organizations. It's just assumed. It's, you gotta figure it out, dude. So this guy said, no, no, I gotta help my team with it. And it's not by giving people more money, that's not the solution. Just because you make more doesn't mean you take more it, you know, it could in one hand out the other. It's, it's learning how we're wired to accumulate store and save how we naturally can squirrel for the winter sessions. So winter season,

AJ Harper ([10:46](#)):

Incidentally, we do talk about financial safety in All In it is something that we say is important. Yeah. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz ([10:52](#)):

Oh, that's what triggered it, by the way. Now it's coming back to me. Tommy, this guy read All In. Oh. He's--

AJ Harper ([10:58](#)):

Like, I didn't get this part of the story.

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Mike Michalowicz ([10:59](#)):

Yes. So his name is Tommy and he, he said, I, I read All In. He goes, uh, I love it, best book you've written. He, he's said that and he goes, uh, prop first change our business around. We gotta hire you because my team doesn't have financial security. Yeah. And he goes, I get, I get it now. Yeah. That's what turned him onto it.

AJ Harper ([11:13](#)):

Okay. Well I'm jazzed about the book. So you, uh, you put together a proposal. Right? So how we're gonna talk about timing is in the context of us actually working out the timing. And we decided to just have (Yeah.) our timing meeting...

Mike Michalowicz ([11:27](#)):

Here,.

AJ Harper ([11:27](#)):

Here. We--

Mike Michalowicz ([11:28](#)):

Were gonna do it yesterday on the phone. And I'm like, don't say anything!

AJ Harper ([11:31](#)):

Because I was, I, I spent the weekend kind of looking at, you know, I, I usually am booked, you know, a year ahead. But I try to block off time to write. And I was looking at, in the book proposal, it says the book will be completed by November 1st. I signed off on that. I was like, yeah, that's fine. And then I went through and did my whole system that I do to see if I can do it. Yeah. It's like, oh...

Mike Michalowicz ([11:56](#)):

Yeah.

AJ Harper ([11:57](#)):

I don't know. Yeah. So that's when I was like, do you have a few minutes to chat <laugh>? Yeah. Yeah. And we decided to just do it here. So you all can see how we make these decisions. Yeah. Because I think this is really confusing for people.

Mike Michalowicz ([12:10](#)):

And I think we always start at the end, right? When do we want to end market? Is that the starting point?

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AJ Harper ([12:14](#)):

Well, no, we start at, I'm okay, let's be real. You are looking at in a whole, my job is done when I send <laugh>. Right? That's right. My job is done when I turn in the last corrections on pass pages. And pass pages are the typeset version of your book. Now you just get it in digital. They used to FedEx access copy. Now we make them FedEx as hard copies. Yeah. They used to do it, uh, on just as the norm. But now it's usually they just wanna give you the digital. Yeah. I, when I turn in that last correction, I'm out. Unless you're asking me to do something to support the book. But I don't have any idea what's next. You on the other hand, are looking at the full scope in terms of this is, you know, this is one the launch and the writing of the book. Correct. So when I say I'm looking at, right now, I'm looking at November one. Yeah,

Mike Michalowicz ([13:12](#)):

Yeah, yeah.

AJ Harper ([13:13](#)):

And November one, to be clear, is when we would have to turn in a manuscript and to be further more, to be more clear, clearer. I'm, I'm really selling the writer in me right now. We have to turn in a great manuscript. Yes. So let's be really clear. We're not turning in, oh, here's a, here's a little scribble, first draft. No, we're turning in. This is the best we can do at this point. And now it's ready for the editors and the feedback from Advanced readers.

Mike Michalowicz ([13:44](#)):

I wanna emphasize this is the best we can do up to this point, because it is our literal best. It's not like, oh, I didn't have any more in me. We're exhausted at that point. <laugh>.

AJ Harper ([13:54](#)):

But the publishers know, I mean, that's one of the things we're known for at Penguin Random House, is that we turn in excellent manuscripts.

Mike Michalowicz ([14:02](#)):

I remember the with All In, Noah, when he came back with his edits, it was very little. And the problem is then there's this fear that builds up. It's like, did we write a, like, did we write a crappy book?

AJ Harper ([14:12](#)):

That's you. I'm good .

Mike Michalowicz ([14:14](#)):

<laugh>.

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AJ Harper ([14:15](#)):

No, that's your fear.

Mike Michalowicz ([14:16](#)):

And he wrote in his comments, he wrote, holy cow, this is a great book. Like somewhere in there. And, uh, this was part of the conversation and we, we shared it on air too. He's like, you write, you got, I mean, the collective view, you write the best books. He goes, they're profoundly insightful, actionable, and they, um, they're different than what exists in the market. Yeah. How come they're not selling like one of these Instagram heroes, you know,

AJ Harper ([14:43](#)):

Publisher's, man.

Mike Michalowicz ([14:44](#)):

Yeah. But he's right.

AJ Harper ([14:46](#)):

He's right. But also they're obsessed with whatever is the latest.

Mike Michalowicz ([14:49](#)):

Well, they, but they are measuring the volume of books sold. Um, and, you know, someone launches Launch Week sells 50,000 books, and we're selling 10,000 books. 50,000 is a lot.

AJ Harper ([14:59](#)):

Fair. Yeah. I'm just, you know, I'm just, just the writer person back here.

Mike Michalowicz ([15:03](#)):

Okay. So look, can we start with when I'm, I'm looking at is... (Go ahead. Yeah.) So we, we have a, an offer from Page Two. Um, Trena and Jesse really have made an effort to support our interest to ensure a collaborative arrangement where Page Two is winning and where we're winning. I gotta tell you, maybe their listing may or not, it's been the most remarkable business discussion in this arena that I've ever had. It's not author pitching, publisher, publisher saying me, me. It's collaborative. Really makes me feel good. They've made some, um, adjustments to the proposal that address a long-term relationship. And I'm like, Hmm, that's pretty remarkable. I did tell them, I'm very above the board. We just have to go through our due diligence. I gotta go to the other players in the market. The other big three or four, (five) well penguins out. So the remainder, well, okay,

AJ Harper ([16:03](#)):

It's still the big five, but okay, you're gonna do the rest of that.

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Mike Michalowicz ([16:06](#)):

Well, the other, the other big, the others Big Four. Yeah. The others. Because one of them may say, oh, we will pay a \$10 million advance for this <laugh>. And I don't know what the number is. I've obviously, that's totally hyperbole.

AJ Harper ([16:20](#)):

It's not happening ever.

Mike Michalowicz ([16:21](#)):

Yeah, I know. But there could be a number that you and I sit down and say we, it's too remarkable to pass up on.

AJ Harper ([16:29](#)):

It could happen. I do. I do think it's smart, given your success that you do that. Yeah. So, and just so we're clear, Page Two is also my publisher and, uh, publish many of my students. They are a top tier hybrid, meaning that they're very selective, just like a traditional publisher. Yes. They do not automatically publish anyone. They have, they're very tight on their seasons. And, um, the thing that I think you're responding to that you like is that they're very focused on authors who are entrepreneurs. And so the book is part of a bigger picture. Yes. And they know how to support that. Yes. So it's a very different experience than working with a traditional publisher where you try to do creative things. Yes. And they just say no. Yes. And, uh, Page Two is always gonna say, well, let's figure that out.

Mike Michalowicz ([17:29](#)):

Yes.

AJ Harper ([17:30](#)):

And that, that alone is worth a lot. I, I'm personally massive fan of Page Two. And not just for, because they published my book, but, and I chose them because I've talked about this on an earlier episode. I chose them because they're excellent. Because they employ traditional publishing standards. They come from traditional publishing. So you're getting excellent editorial support, excellent design. And they understand how to position a book and they bring their whole team to it. And they care about backlist, which is another thing that I love about them. And they also, frankly have Big five distribution through McMillan.

Mike Michalowicz ([18:07](#)):

Yep. And they're just good people.

AJ Harper ([18:09](#)):

They're great people.

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Mike Michalowicz ([18:10](#)):

Right. I think that's such an overlooked element, is that rapport and the fact that Jesse initially, she and I were having the conversations over years now, was willing to keep coming back. Yeah. I was very candid about what I'm doing. Uh, Penguin made a offer we couldn't resist. It was a mid-six figure that was for--

AJ Harper ([18:27](#)):

Get Different.

Mike Michalowicz ([18:28](#)):

For Get Different. And, uh, I was seriously considering going with them. And, uh, I just said, I, I gotta honor what, what was offered. And she said, come back next time. And we came back.

AJ Harper ([18:38](#)):

They're, they're the best.

Mike Michalowicz ([18:39](#)):

And came back again.

AJ Harper ([18:40](#)):

And when I had to talk with them about not going forward with the contract I had for my second book, which we talked about this year. They couldn't have been more supportive and understanding and accepting of the fact that I didn't wanna write it. <Laugh>

Mike Michalowicz ([18:56](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. I have an immutable law. No dicks allowed, um, the reverse of--

AJ Harper ([19:01](#)):

You've changed that since.

Mike Michalowicz ([19:03](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. That was my, it still is my value. The collectively it's be the Ted Lasso. So our company is like, is is, is seek out the good people and always be the good person regardless of circumstances. And that is my assessment of Jesse and Trena. So, um, what we're, we're still considering, but it, uh, they are a top runner. And the timeframe, and it's in this proposal I have here, it's kind of red-lined and I've marked it up subsequently is, um, a fall. So we're recording this on July 1st, 2024. Um, I'm not sure when this is coming out, I think in August, but, uh, we're looking at a fall 2025 release.

AJ Harper ([19:46](#)):

Okay.

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Mike Michalowicz ([19:46](#)):

They say that in this agreement saying we can get you in the schedule.

AJ Harper ([19:50](#)):

That's pretty fast.

Mike Michalowicz ([19:51](#)):

Yeah. It's a November deadline. So when we come back, but

AJ Harper ([19:54](#)):

That's, but that's, has I had a fall 25 release? Well, no, I had an August release for the book that was due in June, which I decided not to finish. Yeah. So they're moving quickly to get you into next year.

Mike Michalowicz ([20:07](#)):

Correct. So the question is, if we can't reasonably get to November, I don't want to bend over backwards and and try to squeeze something out. It's gotta be our best.

AJ Harper ([20:19](#)):

So that is a drop dead is what you're telling me.

Mike Michalowicz ([20:21](#)):

It's gonna, it's gonna become a drop dead. So I, and listen, I know you'll find a way to accommodate it, but I'm saying let, let's not do that. Let's find a way to write the world's best effing book.

AJ Harper ([20:29](#)):

Well, that's interesting because that means that you won't have a new book this year. No, you do January. Oh, but still, yeah, still. It's the beginning. It was the beginning of 24. It was a 24.

Mike Michalowicz ([20:41](#)):

Yeah.

AJ Harper ([20:42](#)):

And then you won't have one next year, Mike.

Mike Michalowicz ([20:44](#)):

Well, maybe December 31st.

AJ Harper ([20:46](#)):

Don't do that.

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Mike Michalowicz ([20:47](#)):

No?

AJ Harper ([20:47](#)):

No. I know. Never ever do that, everyone. Do not release a book on December 31st.

Mike Michalowicz ([20:51](#)):

No, we, we launched one on, uh, on January 1st, so the day after. And it...

AJ Harper ([20:55](#)):

I still don't think that was a good idea.

Mike Michalowicz ([20:58](#)):

The numbers show indifference. Not better, not worse.

AJ Harper ([21:05](#)):

I still don't think it was a good idea.

Mike Michalowicz ([21:06](#)):

<laugh> We had a guy launch on Christmas, Sean Van. Yeah. Which I know you're not, uh, you didn't work with him.

AJ Harper ([21:12](#)):

No.

Mike Michalowicz ([21:13](#)):

He's got the bestselling book. And that was the best launch of all the authors ever, Christmas Day. So, because

AJ Harper ([21:19](#)):

It went to his community.

Mike Michalowicz ([21:21](#)):

Totally.

AJ Harper ([21:21](#)):

It went, I'm talking about like a wide, I mean, you have to remember that you're moving into a--

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Mike Michalowicz ([21:26](#)):

New community.

AJ Harper ([21:26](#)):

You are taking your readership with you. And you're opening to a brand new readership that's not entrepreneurs.

Mike Michalowicz ([21:34](#)):

Right.

AJ Harper ([21:34](#)):

In addition to the entrepreneurs. And that requires a lot of work to get at that community. And it can't just, so you've got to be more out front than you normally would. I mean, now you need to be thinking about broadcast television. You need to be thinking about high profile radio. You need to be thinking about high profile podcasts. Again, you, you've got a lot to do. Yeah. And you have to go into spaces that you've not been in.

Mike Michalowicz ([22:07](#)):

Yep. I'm jotting this stuff down. <laugh>, I'm literally jotting it down.

AJ Harper ([22:10](#)):

I mean, you

Mike Michalowicz ([22:11](#)):

Can't, that's why you hear me typing

AJ Harper ([22:12](#)):

It that. So I would never, ever, ever say to do a personal finance book on December 31st when you're just trying to get into the genre.

Mike Michalowicz ([22:23](#)):

I agree. I when it comes to personal finance, I wonder if the start of the year, because people make their reconciliations or what they, what they call that, what you make your new commitments to yourself. What's the word? (Resolutions.) Resolutions. Reconciliation. Resolutions. But

AJ Harper ([22:40](#)):

Do you, are you the one on, perimenopause or <laugh> because you drop words in perimenopause. Right?

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Mike Michalowicz ([22:47](#)):

Something's going on with me. I may be.

AJ Harper ([22:48](#)):

That's probably what's happening.

Mike Michalowicz ([22:50](#)):

So let <laugh> let's, um, pick a launch date and let's work our way back. So let's say this is a, it's gonna be a spring 2026 then.

AJ Harper ([23:00](#)):

Okay. I mean, why are we do, so we're doing that instead of talking through if we can do November or not.

Mike Michalowicz ([23:08](#)):

Well, I, I have a sense that November is a stretch and--

AJ Harper ([23:12](#)):

I just wanted to talk it out. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz ([23:14](#)):

Let's do that.

AJ Harper ([23:14](#)):

Talk through it. Can we do that quick? Yeah. Because I think it's helpful to listeners to hear what the cons, what the problem might be. Yeah. All right. So listen, this is how I do it. I talk about it in my book. I really do write books this way. The first thing I do, once we know we have the deal, is I say, okay, how, what's the word count goal? Word count goal in this case would be 60,000.

Mike Michalowicz ([23:36](#)):

60,000. Yeah.

AJ Harper ([23:37](#)):

So I'm gonna add, I always add 10 to that number.

Mike Michalowicz ([23:40](#)):

Oh, I didn't know that. That's a little trick. So you counted 70.

AJ Harper ([23:44](#)):

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Well, because I'm gonna cut that many.

Mike Michalowicz ([23:47](#)):

You, you're gonna cut 10. So you cut roughly 20%, 15% of words. Not

AJ Harper ([23:51](#)):

Always, but it's a good, I, I don't like to be exact. I'm just like, okay, that's a safe, I like cushion, I like padding.

Mike Michalowicz ([23:57](#)):

Question for you. In the, in the dialogue with Jesse and Trena, I said it's probably 60,000 word count, probably 220 pages. And they said why two 20 pages? That doesn't necessarily translate.

AJ Harper ([24:07](#)):

It doesn't.

Mike Michalowicz ([24:08](#)):

But why does that matter so much?

AJ Harper ([24:12](#)):

Well, first of all, in publishing we don't think about page count. We think about word count. Yeah. And almost the whole way through. Okay. Secondly, Page Two's books have a design element that's different.

Mike Michalowicz ([24:24](#)):

Okay.

AJ Harper ([24:25](#)):

And so it would be more pages because of the way that they design the books.

Mike Michalowicz ([24:30](#)):

I understand now. Okay. And page count, um, it's maybe minor, but is there an additive cost to printing a book?

AJ Harper ([24:39](#)):

Yes. It's not minor.

Mike Michalowicz ([24:41](#)):

It's not minor. No.

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AJ Harper ([24:42](#)):

So

Mike Michalowicz ([24:42](#)):

A book--

AJ Harper ([24:43](#)):

I mean, it might be if you have your own printing facility,

Mike Michalowicz ([24:45](#)):

But a book between 200 pages, a book that's 200 pages versus 250. The 250. (It's a big difference.) It's a big difference. Okay. Yeah. All right. So we got word count 60,000.

AJ Harper ([24:53](#)):

And by the way, as publishers, we know we can, we know from the word count what we're looking at for page count. But we don't need an author to tell us page count. Yeah. And we don't, we care only about the word

Mike Michalowicz ([25:04](#)):

Count. I was trying to impress them. <laugh> and I messed it up. (Yeah.) 60,000 words, you know, 220.

AJ Harper ([25:09](#)):

You know, just leave out the page count. Okay.

Mike Michalowicz ([25:11](#)):

So now we got 60,000 words. What else do we need to know to determine?,

AJ Harper ([25:15](#)):

Okay, so I, what I do is I just get out my calculator.

Mike Michalowicz ([25:18](#)):

Okay.

AJ Harper ([25:19](#)):

Yeah. And I say, okay, it's gotta be by November 1st. And then I go on my calendar and I look and see, okay, what are realistically the weeks I'm writing this.

Mike Michalowicz ([25:27](#)):

Okay.

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AJ Harper ([25:28](#)):

So for example,

Mike Michalowicz ([25:29](#)):

So today's July. So I'm just,

AJ Harper ([25:31](#)):

I have a week, I'm doing an editing retreat. I, I'm not realistically writing during that week. So I'll go block off when am I out.

Mike Michalowicz ([25:41](#)):

Yep.

AJ Harper ([25:41](#)):

And then I figure out how many weeks I really have left between then and November. I also have a little mini vacation I'm taking for myself right before the first. So that's not a good thing.

Mike Michalowicz ([25:53](#)):

No. Especially the, yeah. The last week or two is a big crunch. There's a lot of volume.

AJ Harper ([25:57](#)):

That's a big crunch. That means I actually would have to back it up to say, October 25th for me. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. So that leaves me with, as far as I can figure, I think it's like 11 weeks . Or 10 weeks.

Mike Michalowicz ([26:10](#)):

O Yes. I had four months, uh, between July 1st and November 1st.

AJ Harper ([26:14](#)):

Yeah. I'm not starting until--

Mike Michalowicz ([26:15](#)):

No, I understand.

AJ Harper ([26:16](#)):

August 6th.

Mike Michalowicz ([26:17](#)):

So four months times four would be 16. Right? You're taking away Yeah.

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AJ Harper ([26:22](#)):

Still around 10. I have, I'm going on vacation. We have some preliminary work to do before I can start writing. And then I'm going on vacation. So it's just how this is all lining up.

Mike Michalowicz ([26:31](#)):

So say it's 10 months. Yeah. 60,000 words. 6,000. 6,000. I'm sorry. 10 weeks, not 10 months. 10 weeks.

AJ Harper ([26:37](#)):

10 weeks is 7,000 words a week.

Mike Michalowicz ([26:39](#)):

That's a lot.

AJ Harper ([26:41](#)):

It's, I mean, it's not if I didn't have a business and other things that I'm doing. Yeah. So then what I do is I figure out, so I only write typically Monday through Friday. So then I'll take 7,000. Let me look at it again.

Mike Michalowicz ([26:55](#)):

Yeah, let's do the, she's got our calculator out now.

AJ Harper ([26:56](#)):

7,000. This is literally how I do it, everybody.

Mike Michalowicz ([27:00](#)):

She pushed your Dunking Donuts coffee aside,

AJ Harper ([27:03](#)):

<laugh> 7,000 divided by five is 1,400 words a day.

Mike Michalowicz ([27:09](#)):

1,400 words a day.

AJ Harper ([27:11](#)):

So for me, I do, I'm very slow. Uh, so it's probably three to 400 words an hour.

Mike Michalowicz ([27:21](#)):

But when you write words, they are spot on.

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AJ Harper ([27:23](#)):

Well, thank you. But I, I am slow.

Mike Michalowicz ([27:27](#)):

Yeah.

AJ Harper ([27:27](#)):

So it's three to 400 words. So what is that now?

Mike Michalowicz ([27:31](#)):

I can write 600 words of junk an hour, and then you boil it down to three words.

AJ Harper ([27:36](#)):

So that's three and a half hours. Okay. I write two and a half hours in the morning. So it's possible I could do it.

Mike Michalowicz ([27:48](#)):

So let me throw a little monkey

AJ Harper ([27:50](#)):

Wrench. And then I also, okay. Hang on. Then I also, everybody, so I, that's what I do is I try to be consistent. I do the morning, I'm up at four when I'm actively writing. Yeah. I am up at four. I do four to six 30. I stop at six 30. So I have coffee with my wife. And so that four to six 30 is uninterrupted. And then, because it's just too hard for me to get writing done when the day starts. Yeah. Because I'm teaching, I have student work, business stuff, whatever, podcasts, all the things.

AJ Harper ([28:23](#)):

Uh, I also will build in though a couple of days that are blocked off writing days where I can just have a full day to kind of just think and putter around. And on those writing days, I'm not writing for eight hours, but I'm gonna write a little and then I'm, maybe I'm gonna organize a closet. And I'm thinking about Mike's book the whole time I'm doing it. And then I go back to writing. But I just need that full day to let my brain just kind of stay in the Mike zone. And so I did block off already a few of those, just the Mike days. So I could, that's also how I can pull some stuff together.

Mike Michalowicz ([29:06](#)):

So here's the other monkey wrenches, like life events.

AJ Harper ([29:09](#)):

Oh my God. That could keep happening.

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Mike Michalowicz ([29:11](#)):

Was it All In It was one book. It was clockwork revise and expanded. You had some shiitake going down.

AJ Harper ([29:20](#)):

Yeah. I took the IIII. Yeah. I was like, I was

Mike Michalowicz ([29:23](#)):

Cursed. It was not healthy. And you still met the deadline. I, but it was almost like you were writing just to get out of the life moments that were happening. You had so much.

AJ Harper ([29:36](#)):

I mean, I do that.

Mike Michalowicz ([29:37](#)):

Yeah. Uh, okay. But it, it also happens like, you know, my dad died during, while we were writing All In, you know, there are certain times I had to be all in with my father <laugh>, you know, as he was passing.

AJ Harper ([29:51](#)):

Yeah. I had stuff then, too. We both did.

Mike Michalowicz ([29:53](#)):

I'm just saying. And I just don't wanna share what you had going on in your life, but you had a lot. Um, and those are gonna happen. And it's, it's like, it's like an emergency fund in finance. The roof is gonna leak. You just don't know when.

AJ Harper ([30:05](#)):

That is. That is so true. So if we, yeah. So everything would have to be fine.

Mike Michalowicz ([30:13](#)):

Yeah. Everything would've to be fine. And I, you know, I know between us two, everything's not gonna be fine. Something's gonna happen. Well,

AJ Harper ([30:19](#)):

Part of it is our age now. That's sort of what happens. Totally.

Mike Michalowicz ([30:22](#)):

It's a sandwich generation.

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AJ Harper ([30:23](#)):

Yeah. Stuff happens with our folks. Stuff happens with friends. We love kids making adult dumb choices.

Mike Michalowicz ([30:30](#)):

I had a high school friend, she was a few years older, just passed away. Like Yeah. This is the age now.

AJ Harper ([30:35](#)):

Yeah. Okay. So, so that, you know, it's doable if nothing goes wrong.

Mike Michalowicz ([30:42](#)):

Yeah. So we should not bet--

AJ Harper ([30:43](#)):

On it. There's one more factor.

Mike Michalowicz ([30:44](#)):

What is that?

AJ Harper ([30:45](#)):

It doesn't actually, this is actually really important that does not account for whatever you discover in your three months of work.

Mike Michalowicz ([30:53](#)):

Let's talk about

AJ Harper ([30:54](#)):

That. This is so critical. Because this is, this is where I think you have this, I'm a benefit to you. Yeah. Because you'll go full steam ahead. And then remember how many times we've had to redo things because you had a big I revelation because we were moving too fast.

Mike Michalowicz ([31:10](#)):

You know, those calls are coming too. I'm like, uh,

AJ Harper ([31:12](#)):

Well, they always come.

Mike Michalowicz ([31:13](#)):

I'm like, AJ, I got something big. And I'm like, I know you're gonna hate me. Fix This Next.

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AJ Harper ([31:19](#)):

That's, that's what I'm thinking. That was exactly what I was thinking.

Mike Michalowicz ([31:21](#)):

Yeah. You're like, fix Mike's head. It should be called fix mike's head. So what we were doing is we were writing the book. I went to a group during that period and tested it. And they, they actually stopped doing the process and just drift off to other things. The, the response was, this is so bad, we can't even pay attention to it. It's so overwhelming.

AJ Harper ([31:41](#)):

It wasn't bad. It was just--

Mike Michalowicz ([31:42](#)):

Yeah.

AJ Harper ([31:42](#)):

Overwhelming. But they were hostile. Actually.

Mike Michalowicz ([31:44](#)):

They were hostile, but, but some people just stopped doing it. And, but that was the best feedback ever.

AJ Harper ([31:48](#)):

And then we, we made changes. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz ([31:51](#)):

Now we've renamed as the Business Priority Pyramid. Yeah. That book is now getting the best traction it's had since that rename of the, the, uh,

AJ Harper ([31:58](#)):

That's a much better.

Mike Michalowicz ([31:59](#)):

Much better. Yeah. Title or name.

AJ Harper ([32:02](#)):

So I, so just so we're clear, everybody, when we don't make space for creative bursts of yumminess, I don't know what to call it. It's just, it's this thing that happens when you're actively writing a book. And especially with Mike and I, we're back and forth when we're actively writing, it's, we're texting almost every day. We share stuff all the time, audio notes. Hey, look at this. And we realize things along the way

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that then needs a little more time to think. We need a little more time to think about it. How is this gonna go? And then sometimes it means, oh, we have to do five more interviews that we didn't think we were gonna need. And we, when we push forward toward an arbitrary deadline and we get so fixed on it and don't, don't leave space for the creativity to come in, it hurts the book.

Mike Michalowicz ([32:57](#)):

I agree. The nice thing about this book is we already have that system out there. So we have, well now another 25 people who've deployed the system as designed for this book. So we're gonna have some good interviews, which will help us tremendously.

AJ Harper ([33:12](#)):

So what does it feel like to you if you can't have a book out until 2026?

Mike Michalowicz ([33:17](#)):

Manic Mike is like freaking out. Yeah.

AJ Harper ([33:19](#)):

What are you gonna do?

Mike Michalowicz ([33:21](#)):

You don't have to put, put it that way. Now I wanna, like, now I wanna just like release your steady, like, for God's sake.

AJ Harper ([33:27](#)):

But let's talk. But no, I think this is important. What? Because actually I see it as positive because that would give you a chance to build up that other readership.

Mike Michalowicz ([33:37](#)):

Totally. It's, it's necessary. It's necessary. I have these arbitrary, they're, that's the word. They're arbitrary goals. So 25 books by the time I retire. I mean,

AJ Harper ([33:52](#)):

We're getting old.

Mike Michalowicz ([33:53](#)):

I know.

AJ Harper ([33:53](#)):

When are you retiring?

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Mike Michalowicz ([33:55](#)):

Well, that's the other thing. Never, never, never, never. No. It's, but slow, definitely slowing down. Like, I, I barely work Fridays. I shouldn't say barely work Fridays. Fridays. I have nothing scheduled. I will work and then I'll hit the orchard and start working on our orchard. And like, that's my thing. Now I'm just trying to slow down. To your point, that's when the greatest thinking happens. And so by slowing down concepts for this book, have already formulated that are would normally come out during the writing process, because that's when I'm slowing down a little bit.

AJ Harper ([34:25](#)):

I mean, think what you could do next year, you could do a pilot, uh, program for the general public that could be released for January. (Yeah.) And you could do all sorts of things.

Mike Michalowicz ([34:36](#)):

And to your point, the marketing has to start now for it. Uh, because it's an expansion on my community, uh, we are gonna do bulk sales. You won that first debate around bulk. Uh, so we're ready working and, and prepping that.

AJ Harper ([34:50](#)):

That we have not had that debate on air, but maybe Yeah, we did. No, we wasn't

Mike Michalowicz ([34:55](#)):

That like episode, like it was early on.

AJ Harper ([34:57](#)):

Oh, we did.

Mike Michalowicz ([34:58](#)):

And you won, and then you're like, oh, I can won two now. Like last week. <laugh>, you're like rubbing my face once we have the weeks scheduled.

AJ Harper ([35:05](#)):

Okay. So what, what are we doing then? So we, we're not doing November now.

Mike Michalowicz ([35:10](#)):

Right?

AJ Harper ([35:10](#)):

So what, let, what, what do you for me then? It's realistic to say end of the year.

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Mike Michalowicz ([35:17](#)):

Yeah. What I was gonna ask you next, I'm thinking December 31st. Now what happens for me is I take off December 7th to January 7th every year from any scheduled work. But I will write. Because I get the same thing. I get up at five 30 in the morning. 5, 5 30.

AJ Harper ([35:32](#)):

Are you gonna meet me on Zoom?

Mike Michalowicz ([35:34](#)):

Yeah. That's what we did last time. And then, um, I will work for, you know, two hours before anyone in the house is getting up. Gotta do it. Yeah. My son, he doesn't get up until ass-crack at three in the afternoon. Anyway, <laugh>, so I'm, I'm good, but my wife will get up, I'll make her coffee and then I'll come back. I think a December 31st submission is good. Do you agree?

AJ Harper ([35:57](#)):

Yeah. I mean, they're not gonna be there. <laugh> publishing isn't there on December. Let's look at the calendar. What, what's the first day in January?

Mike Michalowicz ([36:06](#)):

Um, I don't have the calendar on this

AJ Harper ([36:09](#)):

After. Hang on. I do, after the first,

Mike Michalowicz ([36:14](#)):

Actually I can scroll through it

AJ Harper ([36:15](#)):

Here. It would be January 2nd, which is a Thursday.

Mike Michalowicz ([36:19](#)):

Okay. So January 2nd submission.

AJ Harper ([36:23](#)):

And then find out from them what they can do. They're not gonna be able to do Fall. So it's either gonna be winter. They might be able to do winter.

Mike Michalowicz ([36:33](#)):

That's why I was thinking win.

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AJ Harper ([36:34](#)):

They might be able to do January.

Mike Michalowicz ([36:35](#)):

Are we going? Oh, I thought you mean like December? No, what's, what's winter winter's? January, February, March. Yeah. Okay. I just, well, December a part of me was praying you would say no, it's, no. Oh, they could do December 31st, 2025. <laugh>. I was hoping you come back and say that.

AJ Harper ([36:49](#)):

I mean, please don't release in December.

Mike Michalowicz ([36:52](#)):

Yeah. No. So January release, I, I think a January release--

AJ Harper ([36:55](#)):

March is not part of winter, but January and February is,

Mike Michalowicz ([37:00](#)):

I think January's perfect in part because people do make those, those, uh, commitments to themselves. The new year, new me.

AJ Harper ([37:08](#)):

So, I mean, technically they would normally release that in the early, before the new year,

Mike Michalowicz ([37:14](#)):

Right?

AJ Harper ([37:15](#)):

Yeah. Have a conversation with them. Yeah. Okay. Just see, just tell them what's up. Tell them, you know, we're trying to be realistic about not having to push back a deadline

Mike Michalowicz ([37:23](#)):

Once we have that deadline. So now we're saying December 31st. Are we agreed?

AJ Harper ([37:29](#)):

I can do so. I can do that. Gives me some cushion. (Okay.) That allows me to take that time.

Mike Michalowicz ([37:34](#)):

I'm doing the, the handshake, the, the visual handshake in the air. So because it's,

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AJ Harper ([37:39](#)):

So we're gonna turn it in January 2nd.

Mike Michalowicz ([37:42](#)):

Yes. And we're going to be reporting on our progress on future episodes of this.

AJ Harper ([37:47](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Okay. So we're,

Mike Michalowicz ([37:49](#)):

So the whole world knows now.

AJ Harper ([37:50](#)):

All right. So by the way, what we'll do is I'm actually starting when I get back from vacation. So in, in August, I'll start, we're started now. But the preliminary work here is filling in gaps. I'm asking Mike a bunch of questions. I sent him a bunch of questions. He writes little stories or he just down, he just talks sometimes it just kind depends on what's needed. Yeah. Sometimes I need you to break out and explain, take, gimme steps, bullet points and stuff. Yeah. There's a, just, it kind of depends.

Mike Michalowicz ([38:19](#)):

I just wanna proceed that with, we have the outline.

AJ Harper ([38:22](#)):

it will change. It's gonna change.

Mike Michalowicz ([38:23](#)):

But part of the proposal process was hitting the outline and it was interesting. And we had an outline. We're writing the proposal and you came back and said, these steps, the outline's not flowing. Right. Right. So it's already been adjusted once or twice.

AJ Harper ([38:35](#)):

Yes.

Mike Michalowicz ([38:36](#)):

Then you're gonna gimme questions for every section. And it's just this download of, it's like a vomit load for me. And my best writing time is on the airplane. Yes. Sometimes I'll write out full stories. Um, sometimes little vignettes, other times bullet points, other times voice downloads. And one thing I think our readers don't know is I use, uh, I used to use Evernote. I use OneNote. It's the same thing. It, it's a note storage. I have between 15 and a hundred entries. Probably more in Profit First for life. Maybe

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maybe 200 entries now of just thoughts that have come to me over the years since we wrote Profit First, just collecting ideas. I have probably 25 different book topics, maybe 30 book topics in OneNote. And I'll go and like, I have an idea like, oh, that's a good one. Let me go into the section for Profit First for Life or whatever. And insert this.

AJ Harper ([39:27](#)):

That's not the title.

Mike Michalowicz ([39:30](#)):

No. I'm not sharing

AJ Harper ([39:30](#)):

The title. Just no. Just telling everybody.

Mike Michalowicz ([39:32](#)):

I'm, I'm like ziggig and zagging. I'm not gonna reveal it yet. Do you like the title, by the way?

AJ Harper ([39:36](#)):

I do like the title. We have not shared it yet, everybody.

Mike Michalowicz ([39:40](#)):

It's, it is not used anywhere. And we have the domain, by the way. So.

AJ Harper ([39:42](#)):

Yeah. And it may change.

Mike Michalowicz ([39:43](#)):

And it may change. I have the subtitle too, as of right now, it needs a little tweak.

AJ Harper ([39:48](#)):

I'm, yeah. It's unusual for us to have that settled at this point.

Mike Michalowicz ([39:52](#)):

Yeah.

AJ Harper ([39:53](#)):

Which means we probably are gonna change <laugh>.

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Mike Michalowicz ([39:56](#)):

It's gonna be wired

AJ Harper ([39:57](#)):

For a while. I don't, I don't get to, I don't get to I unless it's, unless it's gonna influence the book greatly. Like the whole nightmare with Clockwork.

Mike Michalowicz ([40:06](#)):

Oh God.

AJ Harper ([40:07](#)):

But I don't, I don't pay. I'm, I don't, I'm even thinking about it right now. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz ([40:11](#)):

It doesn't put much, it doesn't do much for me either. Uh, but it's good to have a working title because you know what you're working on.

AJ Harper ([40:17](#)):

Can I talk about the, what you just said about planes? So how we work together is I will text Mike and I'll say, when are you flying? (When are you flying? Yeah.) <laugh>. Yeah. And then I know that's, I give myself the deadline to give him an in-progress. Something, even if it's not great. Yeah. Which is my, what I've learned to do, uh, thanks to Mike.

Mike Michalowicz ([40:38](#)):

So, yeah. Thank you. So this weekend I'm flying, I'm gonna see my daughter. We're, we're flying out to Seattle and we're, we're going hiking, camping. So two things will happen. One is I have the flight out and back. Second is when we're out camping and stuff like this. We have certain dead days where it's like, just read or chill. I'll use that for writing. And so I'll first insert all this stuff I have, that's the gobbledygook, the voice memos and so forth. And then anything else will generally be just, not always, but mostly me just writing. Sometimes I write full stories, like, oh, here's a full story. And I'll, I'll, I'll make it into like, you know, four paragraphs and then you'll summarize it in three words. And it sounds amazing. <laugh>.

AJ Harper ([41:17](#)):

Or sometimes I say, I don't think that goes here.

Mike Michalowicz ([41:20](#)):

Yeah. And that's fine too. <laugh> like, my ego's at the point where I real, I feel that the vast majority, 90% of what I'm writing will never be used or will be modified greatly. But I gotta get it out.

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AJ Harper ([41:32](#)):

But it also, it sparks ideas.

Mike Michalowicz ([41:34](#)):

It does.

AJ Harper ([41:34](#)):

Yeah. And then sometimes I'll come to you and say, Hey, what do you think? Should we do this? Should we do that? Yeah. And that's, that's, we do that. We're in almost constant communication.

Mike Michalowicz ([41:44](#)):

You also will highlight the type of story that's needed for the hero's journey. Um, the, the reader's the hero. Right. We're the, the guide. But we have to show, if we can, connection of that experience. I'm wondering, I'm just curious if you think this story would work because I'll, I'll work on it. When it came to personal finance, the business collapse. But then I, I personally had a personal finance collapse and it didn't happen on the same day. At least the realization didn't, it was the day when I started getting mail and phone calls from these debt consolidators. And I was getting, this is true like, like five to 10 letters in the mail a day. And I just ignore them. Ignore them. And then one day I sat there and said, oh my God. Like the world knows I'm, I'm Banco, I'm done. I wasn't bankrupt, but I, I never declared bankruptcy. But effectively I was, I had nothing. Like the world knows your financial situation is, this isn't something you can hold into yourself or hide from the public. Like it's reported and people are mailing and calling you about it.

AJ Harper ([42:48](#)):

Yeah. Your mail carrier knows what's up.

Mike Michalowicz ([42:50](#)):

Your mail carrier knows you're broke. <laugh>. Oh dude. That's a good, that's a save that for the book. Yeah, that's a good one.

AJ Harper ([42:56](#)):

Yeah. That's, that is a good story. And it will probably end up in the book,

Mike Michalowicz ([43:00](#)):

You know what, and what happened just in that interaction here is you consolidated down a story into three words, <laugh> or whatever. Five. But that's, but it's more poignant and powerful the way you just said it.

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AJ Harper ([43:13](#)):

Yeah. 'cause then that turns into a line like you're a male, you know, it's bad when your male carrier nose you broke.

Mike Michalowicz ([43:17](#)):

Yeah. Oh, that's so good.

AJ Harper ([43:19](#)):

That's the line. That's

Mike Michalowicz ([43:20](#)):

The freaking line. And those sometimes become the opening line because it's, that's

AJ Harper ([43:25](#)):

Probably the opening line.

Mike Michalowicz ([43:26](#)):

Yeah. People are like,

AJ Harper ([43:27](#)):

That's probably it right

Mike Michalowicz ([43:28](#)):

Now. I think that's it.

AJ Harper ([43:29](#)):

I'm gonna go write that down. Yeah,

Mike Michalowicz ([43:30](#)):

Please do. You're a mail carrier when you Yeah. That's it. And what's so interesting about a line like that is, is we just demonstrate how it comes about. I'll share a story. We'll, we'll iterate on it. You'll consolidate it, you'll phrase it like this. And then the reader, we will do reader feedback. People will highlight that and say, exactly. Or that's exactly. And--

AJ Harper ([43:53](#)):

See, that encompasses the whole experience. And then it doesn't mean you don't say more. Then the story comes from that. Like in All In the first line is, "There's busted and then there's busted."

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Mike Michalowicz ([44:04](#)):

<laugh>. Yeah. Yeah. That was so good on the italics. Yeah. Oh my God.

AJ Harper ([44:08](#)):

And that's, that's, and then the story flows from there. Yeah. That's the tease. Yeah. Um, yeah, I think that's the start of our book actually what we just said. Because that's the universal experience for anybody who struggles financially. Yeah. It's, maybe it's not debt collectors, but maybe it's, uh, you know, when they, they send you the cancellation for your utilities or whatever. It's, um, it's red <laugh>. Right? Like, so you have white male, white male, white envelope, white on red, big, you know, people, people know stuff. Yeah. Um, that's a universal experience in this country. Anyway. Yeah. So that's, that's what makes it instantly relatable

Mike Michalowicz ([44:52](#)):

Yeah. So juicy.

AJ Harper ([44:52](#)):

That's cool. Okay. I gotta write that down.

Mike Michalowicz ([44:55](#)):

Okay. She's writing it down right now. So, uh, (I, I actually am.) Let me go through our, our discussion notes here. See if I nailed everything. Uh, once. Oh, so should we talk about after the January 2nd deadline?

AJ Harper ([45:09](#)):

So yeah. Wait,

Mike Michalowicz ([45:10](#)):

I can, yeah. Finish that.

AJ Harper ([45:13](#)):

I got... I'm serious. I have, I, I do actually have perimenopause and I have found that I lose things.

Mike Michalowicz ([45:19](#)):

And I

AJ Harper ([45:19](#)):

Think I, you know, it's broke...

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Mike Michalowicz ([45:20](#)):

Perimenopause. Well, I'll share another story then. I, from All In, we also have the story about you fake killed your grandma. Like that busted line comes back and says there's busted and then there's busted. Like fake killed your grandma. When I'm doing speaking engagements on, um, actually that's from All In, not Clockwork. When do speaking engagements on Yeah. It's All In.

AJ Harper ([45:44](#)):

It's the busted line.

Mike Michalowicz ([45:45](#)):

Yeah. That it's interesting. Certain lines come up and people are like, fake hells your grandma? Like people will point to me. Yeah. There's a woman down the street. I think I told you she yells when I walked down the street. She's like, PROFIT FIRST!

AJ Harper ([45:55](#)):

Yeah, you said that.

Mike Michalowicz ([45:56](#)):

So I finally met her. Oh, you did meet her? Yeah. Her name is Liz. I, I was walking by and PROFIT FIRST! I, I just turned around and I said, I'm sorry, I don't know your name. <laugh>. She goes, I'm Liz. I love your book. It's transformed my business. Okay. So you wrote down that line. Let's talk about after the, um, the, the manuscript is submitted. So that's January 2nd. It's the, the--

AJ Harper ([46:18](#)):

We're going back and forth. I just wanna make sure everybody knows we're going back and forth. And eventually right before we turn it in, I'm, now we're officially, we have a full manuscript and we're tagging back and forth. So we don't actually, uh, we don't write in Google Docs. We use Word because that's what authors need to do. Just suck it up. Do it. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz ([46:40](#)):

Pay for it.

AJ Harper ([46:41](#)):

Um, so we play tag. Yep. Right. So when we're finally done, we submit it, but we also submit it at the same time. We submit it to the editor, we submit it out for reader feedback at least 25 people. Um, these are ideal readers. And so we're waiting for feedback from both SATs from the editor and their advanced readers at the same time.

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Mike Michalowicz ([47:05](#)):

What I found with the advanced readers, we did this recently. We gave them small, we used to give 'em the full manuscript. We gave some of 'em just certain chapters and they would actually get through it. When we gave the full manuscript, some people were just skipping off the end. They, you get feedback on the first one third and say, I'm sorry I ran outta time or whatever. So we started turning chapters over to people.

AJ Harper ([47:25](#)):

Did you not give the whole manuscript?

Mike Michalowicz ([47:28](#)):

With All In, we started doing the chapters. We, when we had a chapter done, we discussed this.

AJ Harper ([47:34](#)):

Well, yeah, no, we did early chapters, but I hope you'll give the whole manuscript. No,

Mike Michalowicz ([47:38](#)):

No. We Oh, we did. Okay. We did. So people could do, but what we used to just do was we'd say, you have two weeks to read the entire manuscript. Yeah. And which was interesting, the time constraints, some people would actually pull it off, but we had a substantial amount of people that said, I can't keep the pace or I can't get it done in time.

AJ Harper ([47:55](#)):

Yeah. But that's easy. That's easy. You just, you tell them two weeks and you plan for four.

Mike Michalowicz ([47:59](#)):

Yeah. And say, I can't afford

AJ Harper ([48:01](#)):

Your time. And then you say, okay, no, no, no problem. When can you turn it in? Yeah, yeah. No, just, well

Mike Michalowicz ([48:05](#)):

I found it with all in, we just gave people just a chapter. We said, here's the first chapter. Give us your feedback. Um, well

AJ Harper ([48:11](#)):

That's because we did that really early though.

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Mike Michalowicz ([48:13](#)):

We did, we did it very early before we started turning the manuscript, before we turned it into, uh, Penguin. But the feedback was interesting because people were, I think going into it more in depth.

AJ Harper ([48:22](#)):

Yeah. Okay. So anyway, we, we give the feedback, we do the feedback protocol. Yep. So that we have feedback from readers by the time we get editorial feedback, which is very helpful in managing editorial feedback.

Mike Michalowicz ([48:34](#)):

That's right.

AJ Harper ([48:35](#)):

<laugh>. So that's, that's an important step. We usually get feedback from an editor within, I would say two to five weeks. And it really just depends. Yeah. Uh, if they're pretty efficient, you'll get it back quickly. But if they're having a backlog and that's normal by the way, um, you won't Yeah. And you're going to get a, uh, once we deal with that first round of notes, then we usually have about a month to do that. To turn that to turn that around sometimes more.

Mike Michalowicz ([49:04](#)):

And it's very crunch time to me. (Yeah.) There's a lot of

AJ Harper ([49:07](#)):

Those are the big changes. Yeah. Then we turn it in again and we have line edits. Then we usually have about another month, sometimes less. And then it goes to copy edit, which is when your book is in production. And that's a major shift because you're not making any more major changes. Your book is on track. They are producing the book now. So copy edit depends on the publisher, but you could have another month and Mike and I are going playing tag back and forth and consolidating who's gonna do what and address which issue. We just never know till we get it. I will usually try to do most of the copy, edit and save stuff for you. And then finally we wait for the type set and then we have to do proofreading of pass pages. And Mike and I do something interesting. We both work on hard copies. Yeah. Separately. Yes. Then we schedule a two hour meeting. <laugh>. Yeah. Which we used to do in person and I miss doing that by the way, but

Mike Michalowicz ([50:05](#)):

Oh, we should do it that way again. I'll come up to you.

AJ Harper ([50:07](#)):

Okay. So we would then we bring and we share and it's like a game.

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Mike Michalowicz ([50:12](#)):

It's funny, right?

AJ Harper ([50:13](#)):

It's a game because who? Oh, who catch? I didn't catch that one. Oh

Mike Michalowicz ([50:18](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. We keep a score. Actually I kept a score on the last one, what we call, and then when we both catch the same thing, we kind of celebrate again. Woo.

AJ Harper ([50:25](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. It's just, uh, we're weird. We're geeks like that.

Mike Michalowicz ([50:28](#)):

It's surprising how many things by doing that way that I miss that you caught or vice versa. Um, and it also triggers discussion. So I'll say, I think this should be changed. What's your thoughts? Like No, no. That should stay as is or Oh yeah. Interesting insight. Um, I use a tool called Speechify. So Speechify will take a PDF and read it to you. I'm sure AI actually can do it better now. But what I do is I'll have the hard copy. I will listen to it through audio and read at the same time when I just read my eyes will see words that are or not there and finish the sentence properly. But when you hear it, I catch a lot of mistakes that way. I try to do it on like two x to race through it, and that's, that's no good. I gotta do it at one X. So use Speechify it's pretty cool. Uh, anything else on deadlines?

AJ Harper ([51:20](#)):

That's, that's kind of the run of it. And then meanwhile you're doing 80 million other things.

Mike Michalowicz ([51:24](#)):

Yeah. So we get the team going on the marketing. Um, we work on licensees. This, this book will be licensed to Profit First because it fall Profit First professionals because it falls in the Profit First financial domain.

AJ Harper ([51:35](#)):

That's easier actually. Oh yeah. I'm so excited about that actually, because

Mike Michalowicz ([51:39](#)):

Yeah,

AJ Harper ([51:40](#)):

We know everybody. There's not a, there's not a awkward learning curve there.

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Mike Michalowicz ([51:44](#)):

Exactly. And, uh, one thing I'm doing, I met with Ron, he's the co-founder with me of PR First Professionals and Bill Ann. I'm gonna continue to teach and workshop on the book up to the book launch, which has a monetization component. And I said, I, I wanna make sure this is okay with the company before, uh, I would ever consider proceeding with this, but the best way to prove out the book's concept is to keep deploying it. Plus we can raise some funds for book sale, uh, bulk sales. So the guys like Tom, Hey, pay X dollars and, uh, when the book gets released, we'll give that to your company or something. So there's ways to prepare that in the marketing. So, uh, Ron's like absolutely. And, and billion, and they supported that. Okay. I think we're good.

AJ Harper ([52:29](#)):

Yeah. So now we have a new, we have, we have a new date.

Mike Michalowicz ([52:33](#)):

January 2nd.

AJ Harper ([52:34](#)):

We're gonna push back

Mike Michalowicz ([52:35](#)):

January 2nd. It is. And then what I have to do now is call the publisher and say, here's what we'd like to do. How's it work on your agenda? Yeah. Next week we're gonna talk about negotiating publisher contracts. We're in the middle of it. And, um, I want to thank you for listening in. You can get all of the downloadable stuff, uh, and back episodes@dwtbpodcast.com. Also, AJ and I love hearing feedback, so if you have any topics you want us to talk about that we're not talking about, we had a guest, um, suggest something, which we're, I can't remember what it was now that we're doing. Um, plus you can just say hi, or you can cheer us along. That helps, too. Email us at hello@dwbpodcast.com. Thanks again for joining us for today's episode. We look forward to seeing you next week. And as always, don't write that book. Write the greatest book you can.