

# don't write *that* book!

## Episode 92:

### “Speaker Strategies for Authors”

**Mike Michalowicz:** 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, AJ Harper and AJ Harper.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh, you're right on top of that microphone. Look at you. Okay. This is the standing or one of us standing episode when I sit for, I mean, do you feel the same thing? When I sit for a long time, it hurts. Like the, my, my butt, but all the way down the back of my leg. Do you get that pain?

**AJ Harper:** No.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I wonder... I can't even sit on airplanes. I sit on the, uh, aisle because I, I need to stand every hour or so, at least for five or 10 minutes because

**AJ Harper:** Oh yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** It hurts so much. Yeah. Aw, I, I don't know if you ever knew this. I wear, uh, compression socks all the way up to here. So I'll show you like under there. Ooh, isn't that sexy? These black,

**AJ Harper:** they're, they're kind of like an, oh, they're underneath your Eddie Bauer socks.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. Or the Eddie Bauer, whatever. Yeah. So those black socks are called compression socks. When I go running, I wear compression socks. I have over the years, uh, my calves kill me. I mean, like this constant pain and, um, massage and stuff helps, but I need it constantly. Well, as my father was. His final like decade of life, his calves were very swollen.

**AJ Harper:** Hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** And so that's one indication of heart disease. He got his heart checked out every day it felt like, and they're like, no, heart's fine. Heart's fine. You just have the swelling in your calves. And I'm like, oh, well genetically, I probably had the same issue going on. I ran into John Lee Dumas, uh, he has the podcast Entrepreneur on Fire. EEOF. Entrepreneurs on Fire. Uh, I was at his house. He's, he has a house in Puerto Rico. I'm visiting him and he is wearing shorts and he is wearing compression socks, and I used to wear

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them for flights. They said it's very good for blood circulation. So I'm like, oh, I wear those flights. I'm like, how often you wear 'em?

He's like, I always wear 'em. I'm like, why? He's like, my calves used to hurt. He's like, no pain. I'm like, what? So I started wearing compression socks that would just wear in flights all the time. Now the pain is gone.

**AJ Harper:** Okay.

**Mike Michalowicz:** It's unbelievable.

**AJ Harper:** Now you've solved that problem for listeners.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. So if you have calf pain, try compression socks. Now these are running socks, so it doesn't, it doesn't go down your whole foot. It doesn't go around your foot, it just goes to your ankle. Um, but the other thing is I need to stand every so often. My desk at home, my desk at the office, all of 'em are standing, they're convertible, they lift lower. I would say I stand 70, 67% of the time at work and sit for the other. Difference. So boring information about it.

**AJ Harper:** I mean, slice of life.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Slice of life. Yep. Yeah. So we just lost every remaining listener we had. Yeah. Here's what I admire about my co-host. Um, I'm gonna think of something new. Uh, this is impromptu.

**AJ Harper:** Isn't it always impromptu or do you come, do you come prepared?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Well, I consider impromptu, I'm thinking of in this moment. I consider if I thought about it a moment ago, no longer impromptu,

**AJ Harper:** okay.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Your ability to keep a secret. You shared this, uh, was it yesterday? You're like, you're the most boring friend because people come to you like don't tell anyone, which means tell everyone. Don't tell anyone this. I got a secret for you. You're like, you just, you shut it down.

**AJ Harper:** No, no, no. What I shared with you is that no one comes to me.

**Mike Michalowicz:** No one comes to you because you're an iron trap. Yeah.

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**AJ Harper:** Yeah. Because

**Mike Michalowicz:** You're anti gossip.

**AJ Harper:** Well, right. So over the years I've been such a Fort Knox that people won't even tell me anything.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Isn't that amazing? So I admire your Fort Knox. You're, listen, we're writing partners. I have no idea what your next book is about.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** And you're like, I gotta keep this thing locked down. I'm like, I to, I get it. I have another friend who's not Fort Knox? And she sold a business and she's like, no one can know about this business sale. And she told everyone, everyone I knew. And she, she was the one saying, don't, you can't tell anyone. I'm like, rule number one, if you don't want anyone to know, don't tell me. I, I tell people that they hate when they, they hear that, don't tell me. Well, two is if it's really secret, why are you telling me in the first place and don't tell anyone else?

And she's like. Yeah, but I just wanna tell you, I'm like, I just gotta get off my chest. Well, she got off her chest a hundred or a thousand times over. Everyone. Like when, when it ultimately came out, she sold her business. Everyone's like, yeah, we knew about that years ago.

**AJ Harper:** Well, we talked about a business that sold yesterday that I knew about, that you didn't know about and I didn't tell you. The whole time I knew,

**Mike Michalowicz:** I never knew. I only knew when it became public. Mm-hmm. You know, the reasons why I sold their business. Mm-hmm. And I'm like, oh, there's reasons like can't tell you. That's awesome.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm. I also knew about it for a year

**Mike Michalowicz:** before you. Yeah. Good for that.

**AJ Harper:** You know what? Um, I'm just happier that way.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I prefer not to know stuff.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah, don't tell me.

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**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah, I just, yeah, exactly. And, but it really throws people off when I say that.

**AJ Harper:** I do get some, occasionally I get good gossip. I'm not gonna tell you what it is, but I'm gonna tell you the scenario. I was at an event and I won't tell you which event. Then you might be able to figure it out. Oh, and someone came up to me and this is a person who is kind of like on my level in terms of ghostwriting. So like, that's rare for me.

**Mike Michalowicz:** That's rare. Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. I was at, I was at this same event and someone was sitting next to someone who's also a ghost, and they said to me, you know, I was, um, really wanting to, you know, I hate it when they say pick your brain, but yeah, it bothers me. I just wanna understand how did you do it? And, uh, I said, do what? And she's like, well, you know, get to your level. And I was like, why do you wanna be on my, first of all, I don't know what you think my level is. And secondly, why do you wanna be here? Yeah. She said, I want to be able to walk into a room and people know who I am.

I was like, all right. I mean, that is the opposite for me.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. And that's not very ghost-like.

**AJ Harper:** No, it's the opposite for me. Um, but she's, she equated, she thought The reason that I have the success I do is because you've been out there promoting the heck outta me. And I said, no. I said, the only time Mike's been promoting the heck outta me is when we hit on this podcast for the last year.

But we got 17 years. And we've been writing together. I said he acknowledges me and he's supportive of me, but like that's not...

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. And I'm not on a, on a, a band.

**AJ Harper:** You're not on the AJ tour.

**Mike Michalowicz:** No.

**AJ Harper:** Um, I think you've probably sent like two emails for me over the course of the years. Maybe three.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. Yeah. I don't know how many.

**AJ Harper:** What I'm saying is it's not like, that's not why I have what I have. No,

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**Mike Michalowicz:** no way.

**AJ Harper:** So. Anyway, we're at this. So that bothered me, you know? Yes. I was like, okay,

**Mike Michalowicz:** yeah.

**AJ Harper:** Let me move on from this convo. And this other person came up to me who I won't say, and said, well, I think we have something in common. And shared a very significant book that they wrote. And I was like, oh, come sit by me. Because it's not that I wanted to gossip, but I did want to like, I don't have a lot of peers.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** And so just being able to be like, oh, you know what? This, you know, when you're behind, you're one of the people behind a pretty significant book.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Is there ghost code? Meaning?

**AJ Harper:** Oh yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Ghosts will share with ghosts what they've ghosted.

**AJ Harper:** Um, so I don't. This person only did because there was something out in the world about it already. But we had a little, um, convo and it was delicious.

**Mike Michalowicz:** That's cool.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. So I normally don't like to gossip, but in that case I was like, oh, we can be free here to communicate. And we didn't talk about our other books or anything.

**Mike Michalowicz:** That's cool.

**AJ Harper:** Um, it's just nice sometimes to have a peer to talk to once in a blue moon.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh, for sure. There's no, yeah.

**AJ Harper:** But most of the time I, I don't know anything. I have to actually seek information out because no one tells me anything

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**Mike Michalowicz:** before we kick into, uh, speaker strategies. What's the, uh, the book are books you're reading right now?

**AJ Harper:** What books am I reading right now?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah,

**AJ Harper:** Well there's, hang on, I gotta go away from the mic, so.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Alright then I'll, I'll share while you look up your books. I'm reading, I, I, I re-read Comfort Crisis. Which is fascinating. The two I read, it was interesting, I think both came out from Dan Heath at the exact same time.

There's one called Reset and there's another one called Upstream and I found, I wanna share with you, I was reading Reset. I was nodding my head yes, yes, yes. In the first 10 pages saying that's exactly how it works. That's exactly what's happening. I was so bought into that book, I binged it. I want, and that's clearly, and you talk about this, the connection with the reader.

You gotta connect with the reader. And it was on technical stuff around business, but it was spot on. And I said, I'm all in on this book. Um, so those, Reset and, um. And, uh, Upstream, but I think both are by same author and I think they came out at the same time. I gotta check that out. Which is an interesting marketing plot to release multiple books on the same day.

How about, what are you reading there?

**AJ Harper:** Um, it's Robert Gottlieb's, avid reader. Robert Gottlieb is a famous editor.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Isn't that so funny? You read about writing. I read about business. Like it's just, that's our passion.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. The next one I'm, I'm, I'm waiting to go pick it up from Honest Dog Books is Suleika Jaouad's new book I actually wanna look at. I am gonna get the name wrong. Hang on. She wrote Between Two Kingdoms. Okay. Um, hang on, go talk while...

**Mike Michalowicz:** I'll talk 'cause you're going off the mic. Um, I think what's also interesting is there's probably a ratio of what we need to consume versus what we need to produce. And my sense it's minimally a hundred to one, meaning I gotta read a hundred entrepreneurial books before I feel I can write an entrepreneurial book. And May, may, maybe it's a thousand to one, or maybe it's two to one. I don't know. But I definitely know we gotta be consuming a volume more than we're producing.

What, what's the book title?

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**AJ Harper:** Okay, so Suleika Jauoad, she wrote between Two Kingdoms and then her new book is called The Book of Alchemy.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Nice.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. And in it it's individual writing prompts and little stories from all sorts of creative people.

**Mike Michalowicz:** At the end of the day, someone who is an elite performer in whatever category it is, immerses themselves. So more than anyone else on that level. And that's how they become excellent.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** You know, the, the great golfer, she'll golf more than anyone else, of any of her contemporaries to become great. I, I, I don't think there's, yes, there's a natural gift, which I think is actually passion and interest, but there's just this aptitude and desire, thirst just keep consuming.

**AJ Harper:** So that's what I admire about you, that you're, you go deep.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh, thanks.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. You're gonna, you're gonna learn everything you possibly can and we've actually, I think I've said that before. That's one of the things I admire about you.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Did that tell you I'm getting into, uh, quantum physics?

**AJ Harper:** No, that's a big topic.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh my gosh.

**AJ Harper:** Why?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Well, I think that's the,

**AJ Harper:** you're just interested.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I think it's the answer to everything, to be honest. Okay. Think it sounds

**AJ Harper:** spoken like somebody who's into quantum visits. Yeah.

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**Mike Michalowicz:** And so I'm like studying entanglement and uh, super position and always things. And I'm starting to comprehend the theory now. Uh, I can't comprehend the math by any stretch, but I'm starting to comprehend some of the theory and it's starting to make a little bit of sense. Um, it's fascinating.

**AJ Harper:** Do you see up, if you look up on the top bookshelf on the right, that there's about 10 books, a dozen books that are about Cleopatra. And Mark Antony and Caesar.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. Oh, I mean, I don't have my glasses on, but Yes. Yeah. Okay.

**AJ Harper:** So those are my mom's books. Oh. When she moved into the nursing home, I went and picked up her books. And I saved these. So she's a, uh, her PhD is in ancient history and specifically in the Middle East.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Really?

**AJ Harper:** And this is her deep dive. Isn't that amazing? Yeah. So she can tell you. What her theory is on all the motivations for all of the Cleopatra's decisions. And also her theories about Cleopatra's children. And she actually wrote a novel about Cleopatra's children. But I save those to remind myself of her deep dive.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I love that. I love that that deserves the space it gets on that shelf. I, um, I think that's a perfect translation or transition into the topic today, which is speaking strategies. It too is an immersive activity to be world class at it. Um, you gotta be all in on it. I'll share a little story. I may have shared this before on DWTB. So if it's a repeat, maybe cut me off and I can maybe pivot to a different one.

The most important speaking gig I've ever done was at UCI, University of California Irvine. I flew out there on my own dime. This was very early in on speaking, and what I realized is I couldn't, as much as I aspired one day to do main stage, I wasn't gonna get it.

I didn't have the credentials, I didn't have the experience. What I did was I started reaching out to colleges and asking these schools if they wanted me to present. I have a very specific strategy I can outline and I've outlined it before. So I go to UCI, uh, I use the strategy to get in. There's no compensation.

I have to pay my own dime, but I want to get experience under my belt. I want the SEO of speaking at university, and so forth. And the organizer is a college kid. All of his fraternity buddies were coming to this. They were a business fraternity and some other folks, well, I show up and the only kid in the room is this organizer.

I go, where's everybody? We're starting, you know, in a half hour we're gonna start coming in. And he's like, uh, they're not coming, sir. I'm like, I'm not a sir. I'm like, they're not

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coming. He's, there's a fraternity party. He goes like, I'm sorry. Um, yeah, if you wanna head out, it's cool. And to me that was a precipice.

Like I had a choice. I could say I'm out. No one showed screw them, or I'm in, no one showed how badly do I want this? And I chose option two and it was not easy, and I was crying and pissed all internally. And I sat in front of a group of no one except for one kid who was on his phone going, well, how's the party?

How's the brew? You know, everyone getting wasted. Um. Talking literally to no one in this room. And, um, it was probably one of the best speeches I ever gave in my life. Not because it was a good speech because I wouldn't quit. That became its foundation for I will show up and I will give my absolute best. I was in Ireland, I came here from Ireland.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** And I went to that group and the speaker before me, it's all M and A topics and stuff. It's dry, heady stuff. And the group is. Not necessarily into it. They're on their phones. Some people are trying to stay in it, and it's tough. And I'm like, I have a choice here. I can give every ounce of what I got to a group that's already drained.

There's a rule in comedy. The comedian goes before you better be freaking good because if they're not laughing, you have to first of all, turn the dead into alive and alive into laughter is really hard. You want the speaker before you to be a good speaker.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yes. You wanna be the rock star. I get it. But you want them to have the group engaged.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I'm like, dude, this, just bring it. And I, I've been in the worst-case scenario now. It'll never be that bad again. So that's my speaking story. I think what I wanna talk about is the significance of speaking and why for authors, it's so important. I'm curious what your perspective is as a consumer and also a speaker.

**AJ Harper:** Me, a speaker?

**Mike Michalowicz:** I've seen you on stage, we've, we've co-sat on stage. To, when I say speaker, it can be a group of 10 people. It doesn't even have to be 10,000, or it can be, and you've been in front of the groups and you've given some of the most remarkable education and knowledge and impromptu stuff I've ever seen. Like you get people literally coming up afterwards going, oh my God, AJ changed my life today. That's an amazing speaker.

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**AJ Harper:** Huh? I don't think of myself as a speaker. I, I do speak when asked. Um, you asked me, and Michael and Amy Port asked me to do, well Heroic asked me to come speak later this summer.

**Mike Michalowicz:** You're going in front of those, that author meetup I'm doing.

**AJ Harper:** I mean, I, I'm try every day I,

**Mike Michalowicz:** there's gonna be 50 people in that room and these are

**AJ Harper:** every day I think, how can I get out of it?

**Mike Michalowicz:** [laughs] Yeah, I get it. But you're so good at it. What, what's the importance of it? You're saying I gotta get out of it, but you show up and do it. Why would you, what, what's the value in doing it?

**AJ Harper:** Um, well, you, I, I don't wanna say no to you. You know, I think it's an honor to do it and I think I should always challenge myself.

You know, the reason that I don't wanna do it is because, um, I have no aspiration to be a speaker-Speaker like you. Like you. I don't, I don't need to be on the circuit. I don't need to be gone speaking. It doesn't thrill me. I'm not that interested in it.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Right.

**AJ Harper:** Um, but I, I wanna push myself a little bit and the real reason I don't like showing up to that stuff is just because I'm nervous about my weight. So, but I, I try to make myself do it anyway.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. You, the first time you showed up in front of group was in Florida, I think. I, I invited you to come down Michael Port and I had done an event together the year prior for authors.

**AJ Harper:** No, no. I had, I'd been a speaker before that.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh, at least the first time I saw you speak was there. So Michael Port and I went to an event together. We hosted an event together the first year, and it was good. So we decided, let's do it again. And I said, I want to bring down AJ, she's my co-writer, my partner. And Michael said, okay, no idea who you were, what you are capable of. And he is like, yeah, we'll, we'll give her, you know, 15 minutes.

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I'm like, okay, okay. It's not gonna be 15 minutes. And you went and I saw, I just watched Michael and his mouth dropped it. That jaw of his smacked the ground. And I think that right after that, he's like, I gotta hire you.

**AJ Harper:** Was not quite how it went, but he... They did. Yeah, they did.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I bet you that decision was made in that moment, or at least the thought, maybe not the offer.

And I think part of the speaking is why it matters so much to authors is it's another way for you to monetize what you're doing. I don't, I don't think many authors will make enough money in their book to support the lifestyle that they desire. Just on book sales alone, there's some,

**AJ Harper:** yeah, I mean there's, that's, that's significant. For me though, it's because it moves books.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Right? Well that right, so Yeah, that's when

**AJ Harper:** So when you asked me why do I think it matters? I think it matters because it moves books.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. I think it does move books and I think it also gives you opportunities outside your books if you offer that and you do.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah, and, and also I think if you're trying to get a deal, it's good if you're a speaker because publishers know that it still moves books.

**Mike Michalowicz:** It moves books. I wonder what it on a dollar value and maybe that's determined by the author. Does it make more income through volume of books being moved? Does it make more in consulting income?

I guess it's all based upon your structure, but for you, I don't know how much income you generated over your lifetime working with Michael and Amy, but I bet you was substantial and that came out of one speech.

**AJ Harper:** That's true. Yeah, that's true. Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** I, you know, I probably should speak more.

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**Mike Michalowicz:** I think you will. I think you will. I think your weight loss journey that you're doing now will help address that concern you have.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Your content stands on its own. It is so good. We did, um, what was another event? Was it Michael Port? I remember John. Oh, no. Was John Jansen the room or Roger Dooley? There was something Where was Roger Dooley?

Was that also the Michael Port event? Okay. This guy's an established author. He writes to me remarkable stuff. I love his book. Friction, I think is the wrong title. Um, he wouldn't, I told him that before he wrote the book and he would not listen to me. And maybe he's right, but though I think the book is amazing and, uh.

You reinvigorated him. That was his exact words. He's like, I just, I lost my mojo. And then I heard from AJ and I'm back in, and then he wrote Friction. And it's a, it's an amazing book. So.

**AJ Harper:** I didn't know that.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh yeah, you didn't know that?

**AJ Harper:** No

**Mike Michalowicz:** Dooley.

**AJ Harper:** Really?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. You got him back into it. That's why he came to the event.

He wrote, uh, Brainfluence.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** And he had written some other stuff since and just, he wasn't landing anymore. He's like, I gotta get back into it. And he came. And then, you know, I'm talking Michael talk and he's like, then you start speaking and his eyes open up. And that's when he said, he goes like, I got it back now.

**AJ Harper:** Oh, I didn't know that.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

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**AJ Harper:** I love hearing of that. I actually quoted him in my own book.

**Mike Michalowicz:** He, there was a pool party afterwards, uh, and I was sitting with him. We're drinking. That's when I still, I still have a cocktail here and there. We were having a margarita together. And that's when he said that we toasted McKay.

Here's back to the Mojo, bro.

**AJ Harper:** Oh, I love it. I love to help people get back to their mojo.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I wonder how he's doing. I reached out to Roger. Um. A few times and I have not heard back. I'm a little bit concerned, um, not that I have an expectation that he could write back, but I, I haven't been able to get ahold of him. So there you go. Um, we did do, it was an episode 58, we talked about turning your book into a keynote.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. So you wanna go back and listen to that one where we break down how to do that.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I think this one, let's talk about how to get the career started,

**AJ Harper:** This is about strategies.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. And then how to elevate it.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I, I think the first, I I, I've shared this at some point before, so I know some of this stuff is redundant and I'm probably phrasing it differently and maybe the numbers are a little bit different, but the theme is there. I believe there's different types of speakers in independent authorship, just different types of speakers, but authorship has a big part of it.

I think the, the, if I say, can say lowest level, and that's not the appropriate word, but the base level is speakers who speak for nothing, meaning I get zero compensation and I have to pay my own way, and it's why a person would do that is specifically for exposure. I'll come to your community at my cost. I'll go to UCI at my cost to speak so I can get exposure, experience or something.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I think when you do that, if you're making that kind of investment, even if you're not. Get that material recorded so that you can use it for your own social media and

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other purposes. Don't let this be a one, one-time standing event where a few people, or a few dozen or maybe hundreds do see you, but you make all this effort and it's not captured to be reinvented, repurposed for other, other reasons.

There maybe there's a level even lower than that where people, speakers will pay to be on stage. And people do that often for these events that are pitched from the stage events, because then it's just purely a marketing piece. I'm gonna come there, I will pay you five or 10 or whatever thousand dollars it is to be on stage in front of this audience you brought here so I can sell my wares and make my money back, plus.

**AJ Harper:** mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I, I don't think that's speaking. Michael Port puts it.

**AJ Harper:** That's selling from the stage.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Correct. Michael Port says, if I'm a speaker, that means I have reverence for the stage. Mm-hmm. I was like, oh, that's, that's the phrasing to do. I think you can have reverence for a stage and get paid nothing. I think that's not relevant, but I think the first level is you don't get paid, um, but you better be ready to repurpose, I think.

Then there's the next level, and my magic number used to be 5,000. Now I think it's 7,500. Maybe it's even 10,000. There's this kind of first threshold. This is where you're getting paid that fee. And I think my experience indicates that people pay, meaning the event organizers pay you that money because you have expertise in a category that's relevant to their audience.

So I, I'm running an event for all these small businesses and I want to show them how to run their business more efficiently. I think that's gonna be relevant. So I say, is there any people that can speak on business efficiency and have credibility in this? But I think it's what I call a commoditized purchase is who I, I don't have much money that I want to spend or I'm able to spend.

Who can I get for this that will fill the bill, and how can I get them at the most reasonable price? I don't care who they are, as long as they can speak competently on the subject. I think that's the first level. The next level for me is that 7,500, maybe now 10,000, mark up to maybe 25,000. This is usually a category expert. The leading authority in that space. So I wanted someone to come to my event and speak on business efficiency, but who is the leading authority? Meaning I can put the credentials up here. And here's, here's the professor from Harvard who teaches on business efficiency. And 50 of her students now run the biggest corporations in America, like this credibility component.

Then you, you become decommoditized because you're, you're effectively a one of one. There's very few of you. The next level, which is 25,000 to about 50,000, and I'm very fortunate now, that's my current range. Mm-hmm. At the very top of that.

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**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I think what happens is now you are the category expert in that space and you are a draw, meaning that a portion of the audience comes specifically because you're on the bill.

**AJ Harper:** Hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Now you're bringing revenues. That event, and I'm again knocking on wood here, and this is, there's a lot of wood in this, this, this structure of yours. So it's pretty easy. Um, I would say. 1% to sometimes 20% of an audience is there specifically because I'm speaking there and there's, because I get approached by the event organizer or people that attended.

People say, oh, I drove two days across country or whatever to get here to see you speak. It's the minority of people, but there's people doing that. Yeah. The next level, 52 in unlimited sum is based upon your audience draw. And if you can bring the entire audience, that's when you dictate it. If in the business space, Simon Sinek is speaking, I would say 95% of the audience is coming specifically because Simon Sinek speaking, if former President Barack Obama is speaking in the room, I'm going, I don't care what the event is.

I'm going, I'm paying the ticket. I. 'cause I wanna see that that's the draw. And the more you can draw and the more people are willing to impart with money to see you, the greater your income's gonna be.

**AJ Harper:** Sure.

**Mike Michalowicz:** So, you know, Barack Obama will get a million dollars. Simon Sinek will get half a million to a million dollars.

Um, and that's what we have to, I think that's what we need to gauge. There's no wrong stage and you don't necessarily have to climb the ladder that way. Some people get to the higher levels very quickly. And others, um, have a very meaningful, expressive, extraordinary career as a \$7,500 speaker. And to support their defined lifestyle, may just do the volume of, of, you know, 50 or a hundred gigs a year and they're living like queens and kings, you know?

Um, but that's the categories that I see.

**AJ Harper:** Well, so. Where do you think some speakers go wrong then? So you've got probably have a lot of speakers listening right now. Where do you think speakers go wrong when they're trying to get gigs or trying to elevate beyond that whatever category they're in?

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**Mike Michalowicz:** I think some say I am worth more and their perceptions are worth more, and they're right to say that and they are.

But the consumer isn't convinced, the consumer is the event planner is not convinced of that. I've gotten gigs because the event planner knows my name, sees me as quote famous in their vision, and no one in the audience knows who the eff I am.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** And that event planner is willing to pay 25, 45, \$50,000 and I'm not bringing anybody. And conversely. I have, uh, had the opportunity to speak to some audiences where well over 50% of the audience is very aware of who I am in my work. And the event planner had to be coerced into getting me there 'cause I never heard this guy before. So the price you dictate I've, I've experienced, is determined by the perceived value of the person making that decision, not your perception of yourself.

So I see these speakers trying to leapfrog up. Just increase prices just because that's what I'm worth. That's my honorarium. I should be getting 25,000. And they get frustrated. They're not getting anything. So perception is reality.

**AJ Harper:** So what would you have them do?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Well, first of all, know who your target audience is, who the event planners are. Make sure that you're in their world. Most importantly, where do they see you circulating over and over? I've seen some speakers, I haven't done this, but I think it's a smart idea, is they have these basically performance shows where you go and you speak for five to 10 minutes on a stage and they have like 50 speakers back-to-back. Not that literal.

And there's event planners in the audience, specifically watching, and then you become, they become aware of you in that space. I believe a book is, can be leveraged very well. And when you sell a hell out of your book, you get a lot of money. I, I don't think I'm, I'm picking on James Clear, just, I dunno why it's popping my mind so much in this today.

Um, but, uh, I, I suspect he gets a big dollar amount because the awareness of his book. So if you sell the hell outta your book, um, that will probably dictate, um, a higher fee. Because event planner is aware of you. There's also committees behind these event organizers, um, and they can make recommendations. I, I have a gig.

Just, um, it's funny, my agent and I, and you don't need an agent, an a, there's a misnomer that agents will get you speaking gigs like a speaking agent. I don't have a literary agent. I do have a speaking agent. It's my sister. Um, and she got into this space because I said I don't like my current agent. I really didn't like them.

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I, I liked the, the representative, not the owner of the business. And, uh, I moved on and I told my sister, I was just kind of lamenting, saying, gosh, it's a shame how much these agents take, um, and how little they can do. And this person was actually proactively working against me. Meaning there's a really nefarious thing that some speaking agencies do is they will list all these people as speakers who are not their speakers, simply,

**AJ Harper:** oh, no.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah, it's, it's a Venus fly trap. And you're like, oh, you want. Now, Lou Ferigno came to mind because my sister re, my sister represented him for a gig. Lou Ferigno, the Hulk. She, she did a gig with him and someone's like, oh, I want Lou Ferigno. And they go on, say, Lou Reno speaking, and it says, oh, we represent Lou Ferigno.

They don't, what they do is you then call them and say, Hey, we're looking for Lou. And they say, oh, how's the dates? Uh, tell us everything. And I like, oh. Lou is not available that day.

**AJ Harper:** Oh, you're joking.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I swear to God. Oh my gosh. But, but, but we got great news. We have this speaker, that speaker, and while it's not Lou, they're gonna nail it and here's the price for them. So it's a trap. They're just getting you. And so Lou could be available and you're lied to. Um, so I told, I was lamenting about like what's happening and so people were reaching out to hire Mike Michalowicz. That wasn't represented by an organization, and my own agency was getting calls from Mike Michalowicz and redirecting to other people.

**AJ Harper:** Oh no.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Saying, oh, well we can get a little greater commission here. So, really creepy. So I, I, I, I disbanded with them. I called my, uh, my sister and she's like, you know, I've always wanted to start a business and, uh, I'm tired of the corporate world. I wouldn't mind being an agent. And so I was her first agent, first client, Jesse Cole, who's like world famous now, the founder of Savannah Van Bananas is a client of hers. I think she has, uh, 40 or 50 people. She represents she some TVs.

**AJ Harper:** That's so I always wondered how she got into that.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. Some TV celebrities. Um, she's crushing it and she, and she made a model that is ethical, um, that supports the, um, speaker and unlike any other speaking age. I know she's actively out seeking gigs and while she gets the minority of them, she boosts my bottom line by of quantity of by 10 to 15% of new gigs I would've never gotten. Nonetheless, a gig came through.

**AJ Harper:** You should say her name.

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**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh, Lee, we put it in the show notes. Yeah. Oh yeah. So

**AJ Harper:** Well, but she's super selective.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. That's she's selective. So her name is Li Hayes. Uh, and now you can find her. But, um. It's LI for Lee. And uh, one of the problems is she gets solicited all the time. She's not looking for more speakers. She's looking for a few great speakers to represent. Um, so you can, you can check her out, but, uh,

**AJ Harper:** So now you have her.

**Mike Michalowicz:** So I have her. But here's what I did is we've identified, uh, speaking engagements that I've had. Where I was received very well, and because I have multiple topics to rekindle those relationships. So this, today I was back and forth with her. Um, two gigs came in just between our break here, uh, one in Australia, one in Miami.

And we're just going back and forth like, oh, can you do this time? Can you do this date? How those came about was rapport with the event influencer or coordinator. Sometimes the, the host of the event, the person organizing the event is not the Decision Maker, sometimes there's a backer or these, it's a larger organ association.

I mean, they're pretty darn big. The president of the company though, is deciding who speaks and, and not, and, uh, I have a rapport with him 'cause Lisa, Li identified it and said, here who's who. Her name's Lisa, but she goes by Li. Here's who identified, um, build a relationship with them. So there, there's, it's like another sales process.

You have to have a rapport with, uh, with those individuals. So that's what I did and that's why I'm getting repeat. Speaking gigs now in some cases, and, you know, it adds up. It's like huge money for me.

**AJ Harper:** So what do you wish more authors did?

**Mike Michalowicz:** I wish more authors would not, um, try to jump, uh, to, to speed up the process.

Like put on a one and a half times speed and get to where I, I think we need to get the fundamentals down. I wish more speakers would understand that speaking is a performance. That I think I wish more speakers leaned into their natural tendencies. I've had people see me speak and say, I don't wanna speak like Mike does.

I'm like, no, you wanna speak like you do. Don't, don't try to copycat that. I actually saw a speaker try to do that there. Uh, one of my to do a mic? No. A mike speech. No, no. There's a

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guy named Jack Dailey. Um, he speaks on sales and stuff. He's actually, uh, slowing down and speaking. He doesn't want it anymore.

Uh, he's got other priorities in life, so he is kind of slowing down. Whenever I do a speaking gig and Jack Daley's on the ticket, I'm like, oh God, I'm about to get rolled over. But just take it like, I'm not even like I used to say, okay, bring it my best game. I don't care how good I am, he's 10 times better.

So, uh, Jack and I did a, a gig together in, um, uh, Montreal, and it just, it, it was a, a changing moment in my life of what he taught me after we were done at the event and upping my game. He had a, for a period of time, a partner who would go out and speak with him. He would talk about one subject and they would talk about a complimentary subject, but that partner was trying to replicate Jack.

**AJ Harper:** Mm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** And it was so inauthentic. It just like, dude, just be yourself. And he was trying to do the jack energy and the jack of motion and get jacked up and like, dude, do not do that. I see speakers try to emulate. Other speakers that they admire, and what they don't realize is what they're admiring is the authenticity of that speaker being themselves.

I saw Lou Holtz speak. I have a tendency to swallow my words and mumble. Lou Holtz has a tendency never to enunciate a single word, period. Like he's the ultimate mumblor, like incomprehensible at times. Probably one of the best speakers I've ever seen in my life because he leaned into who he was.

And, but how can you understand him? Because the emotion came across and the right elements. And he did like a magic trick. And he's not a the guy, that was it, it was the magic trick. He just, his little magic trick at that. That's what, that's what got you. Oh, like dude, like who does a magic?

**AJ Harper:** You were me. You were mesmerized.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I was mesmerized. And he says he, he was, he was telling these stories and. He, he looks and acts a little bit like an elf. The guy was magical 'cause he was so just him. And it was like you're sitting in a room, just you and yourself, even though it was 10,000 people with Lou Holtz and God, what is that great presentation?

And what a shame of someone's like, I gotta be Lou Holtz and I gotta learn how to mumble really well. You know, like they would destroy themselves. What people aren't seeing is when you admire another speaker, it's inevitably because that speaker is doubling down on who they naturally are.

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**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** So I wish people would do that.

**AJ Harper:** So if just some brass tacks, I mean, are you rolling? Just, I want us to ask a couple practical questions. Are you rolling your books into your fee?

**Mike Michalowicz:** I don't, I will with The Money Habit. To get the word in circulation. Here's my belief, and I don't know if this is right, AJ is, so just to be totally transparent, my speaking fee is \$45,000. That's my base fee. I have travel expenses. It's called a buyout. And uh, gosh, if you're listening here and you're speaker, do buyouts. I coached, um, oh, who was, I can't, I think it was Sarah. I, I'm not say the name because I'm not sure, but someone said, oh, they have a speaking opportunity and they're not a professional speaker.

And they said, uh, how do I get them to reimburse me for travel? And my tip was, you don't, you don't have 'em. Like, here's my receipts and stuff, because as a speaker, like I'm in Duluth. I think tomorrow I'm going home. Unless my agent Li calls up and says, Mike, I just landed you a gig in Australia on Monday.

You're getting \$45,000. I'll call my wife and say. Hey, I am rerouting through. I love,

**AJ Harper:** I love you very much. I love you.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I love you very much, but listen up. Um, and I'm gonna reroute to Australia. And that does happen. If I told, pretend this is a speaking gig here and you're paying for my return home to New Jersey, and now I'm like, well, I actually need a flight to Australia.

You be what? I'm not paying that.

**AJ Harper:** Okay. Yeah. Makes sense.

**Mike Michalowicz:** There's this constant shifting. So we do buyouts. My buyout, last time I saw it in the contract, it was \$2,500. What I wish speakers would do is just put a travel buyout saying, you pay me this above and beyond my honorarium, and I will use those funds to book my own travel and my own lodging and my own, uh, food.

I will take care of that. And the reason you wanna do that is so it offers you flexibility. Make sure the number is high enough that it covers you in 80 or 90% of the circumstances. Yeah, yeah. Sometimes you're gonna lose out, but in most cases you'll quote, win. And that's what we do. I think I told you when I, I spoke, um, uh, some event.

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It was at the Four Seasons. I Land. Um, I'm, I'm gonna go to the event and I just plug in Erin's, Erin's Beyond Amazing. Like she pre-orders the Uber. So I land, there's an Uber waiting and it's booked and we drive and I'm like, oh, there's four seasons we're driving by. I'm like, whoa. Uh, but I know, I know who Erin is.

I'm like, don't yell at the Uber driver. Look where we're going. And I look down and I'm going to a Motel eight. I'm like, oh, I, I know exactly what's happening now. And we went two miles down the road and he is like, oh, here you are. I'm like, thank you. Go into my Motel eight for \$80 a night or whatever it was.

And I called Erin, or I, I, Voxer is the tool we use. I I go, Hey Erin, um, I just wanna ask why, like, did they not have a room? And she's like, no, it, we had a buyout. And she goes, you can pay \$800 a night or \$80 a night. I think you're an \$80 a night guy and we're gonna save that 720 bucks and share that in profit in the organization.

I'm like, yes, yes. That's exactly what I want.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** We all benefit and share. We, we do profit shares.

**AJ Harper:** You don't have to be on site.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. I don't need to be on site and I, I'd rather have that extra money go into the bottom line of my organization. I benefit from that and my team members benefit from that.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. Buyout. That's a good tip.

**Mike Michalowicz:** So do a buyout. Um. So I wish more authors would do, I mean, more speakers would do that. I don't sell the books because when I do my speaking engagement, I don't do any slides. I don't believe in slides at all except for, for signups on your list, because it's the way to engage with the community.

So it throw a sign up there. I say, Hey, join my list and I'll give you a discount code for the book or whatever. I know people in the audience, if I move them, are gonna be compelled in that moment to buy the book.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** So why give them the book if they're gonna have a propensity to buy anyway? I want the purchase because then it gets the rankings, it gets the engine going. It does all those things, plus it makes a little more revenue. That's beautiful. But when people

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buy a book, the best part is they will read the book. If I gift you a book, it's gonna sit on the shelf.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah, this is, this is a, I still think it's good to make it part of the package.

**Mike Michalowicz:** And what's your argument for that?

**AJ Harper:** Move books; like just move books.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. Yeah. You're, you're about the quantity, not the consumption in that case. Is that fair? Fair?

**AJ Harper:** No, I think it will lead to the consumption. I think the same. Think about, okay, hear me out.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** You've moved them in with your speech and they got the book. Are they more likely to read it? Yes. So what did, so now you've got the guaranteed sale as opposed to some of the audience that maybe aren't gonna remember to pick it up or, uh, like they intend to do it, but maybe they don't get around to it, but they actually have it in their hands. And you move them, they're more likely to read it.

**Mike Michalowicz:** We should do a debate on this one, I think.

**AJ Harper:** But I mean, it's similar to the debate we had about bulk buys.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. No, you, and you won that solid.

**AJ Harper:** But that to me is a bulk buy

**Mike Michalowicz:** it. Yeah, I understand that. But I don't think it is more likely they're gonna read it. I think you're right on moving books. Here's the challenge I wanna put in front of you, AJ, is how many books have you been gifted that you've read, versus how many books have you purchased that you've read? And I of, you know, how are you gonna know by thinking instinctually, you know?

**AJ Harper:** Hmm. Yeah. I mean, that, that's a fair point. I just think, um, I'm always wanting authors to move books.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. And, and maybe, I guess the, the difference of opinion here is I want authors to get their books read.

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**AJ Harper:** I want that too. I want that too. But I, I still think, um. Can. Okay, I'll give you an example.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** I was at an event in Gen Chems event in October, and, hang on,

**Mike Michalowicz:** I'm just gonna do the play by play. Okay. She's looking at the shelf

**AJ Harper:** Sorry, I had to look at the shelf. And Terry Cole, uh, came to speak and she had written the book Too Much.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Okay.

**AJ Harper:** So, blew me away. Spoke for 15 minutes. I was gifted the book and I read that book. I love that book and I've recommended the book. In fact, I talked about it on this podcast a few episodes ago, and that was because she so moved me. But I'm gonna tell you, I forget to buy things, so I don't, I don't always remember.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah, it's interesting. I wonder if that's an anecdote or if that's actually the common?

**AJ Harper:** I don't know. But not only did I. Um, read it. I also talked about it in my author community and a bunch of other people read it and then

**Mike Michalowicz:** And now, right?

**AJ Harper:** And now, and I'm doing it right now. I'm just saying I, if I'm moved and you gave me the book, I'm definitely keeping it. I'm definitely gonna read it.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. That's interesting. I, um, yeah, that's, it's interesting. I don't know. I do instigate the purchase during a speech and regardless, I. I think of how our listeners go about speaking.

Um, there's an opportunity to get the purchase. I wonder even if the book is gifted to the entire audience, you can throw up on the screen and say, if you feel compelled, you're being gifted this book, you have an opportunity to gift it. To pay the, pay it forward.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. You could do a pay forward. Now you've got the double.

**Mike Michalowicz:** The double. I, I just know when people impart with money that there's higher engagement.

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**AJ Harper:** Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. Okay.

**AJ Harper:** But can I make one comment?

**Mike Michalowicz:** No! Yeah, Of course

**AJ Harper:** Lots of times I hear people setting if, especially if they're self-publishing. I. Trying to get books done in time for an event and then that becomes an arbitrary deadline.

Yeah. And they might be cutting corners with the book. Yeah, I don't like that. So what I recommend to people is to make sure they have a pre-order link that's ready to go.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** And you can do that same slide thing, or you could do postcards with a QR code and you can get drum up a whole bunch of pre-orders speaking.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah.

**AJ Harper:** That's one way to work on it for getting pre-orders.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I, yeah, I like that.

**AJ Harper:** Which you could do. For The Money Habit.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah, totally. Yeah, I like that. I think there's some myths, um, at least one that comes to mind about gigs and so forth. I think there's this belief that if we get on the one big TV show for our space, if we get on that one big podcast or whatever, the one big thing is that there's one thing that will give us the breakthrough.

I, at least I bought into that myth. I remember the first time I got on a, b, c news. And I was like, oh, I'm gonna watch the book sales role. And actually I was leaving the studio, I wanna say it was in New York. I wanna say it was a 30 Rockefeller. I don't know if ABC's there, but

**AJ Harper:** No, that's NBC.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. NBC. Exactly. NBC's definitely 30 Rock. It was somewhere in that area though. And I was walking outta the studio and I was just watching sales, you know, but just despite refreshing the Amazon rating for the next 12 hours, zero, zero, I'm like, what? Um, so I'm like, oh, the one big thing might be getting on.

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Someone's podcast, and at least for me it might have been Lewis. I was on Lewis Howe's podcast that may have moved the most books, um, on a podcast, but it wasn't like there was a sustained thing. It, it moved hundreds of books perhaps, but it didn't. It didn't continue it, and it's like, oh, maybe somewhere else.

There's no one thing. I was on TikTok. There's one, one TikTok video has moved 2000 books. We can attribute it to that one TikTok, but it doesn't build this sustainable momentum. It's the variability. It's, it's getting out there in all capacities. So I think the, the mistake is, oh, I, if I have that one piece of exposure or that one thing, I'm gonna get all the gigs in the world.

Now, I will tell you, there is one thing you can do that will get you every gig in the world. You can land the plane on the Hudson River, right? You can be the one survivor of an airplane crash. Um, and we don't have to play with airplanes. You can be the one person who's done the one thing for the first time ever.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm.

**Mike Michalowicz:** That may be it, but that's because now your story is so remarkable that it carries you across these outlets that are expressing the story and sharing the story. But when that the things happen, that person doesn't get on one TV show. They're on all the shows. You know, the, the media just blows up.

So it is still a quantity game. Like you gotta be out there in all capacities, but most of us won't have that one miraculous story where it's gonna have to do it out of at least how I'm doing it. Raw effort, yeah. Appear over and over and over again. Um, I think the other mistake about fees is your fee. Is negotiable.

And I think some people think that the, once the fee is set, it's set. So my fee is 45,000. I've gotten interestingly higher, 80,000, the most I've gotten and lower down to 30,000. There is a floor and uh, is rarely negotiated. Now my agent will do it under special circumstances, so I'm flying down to Sydney for an event.

I'm already doing that for an event. This other event we're negotiating. Uh, she's negotiating, she's working with him saying, Hey, listen, Mike's gonna be in Sydney in whatever in the middle of winter, which is like August or September down there. And, um, he's already gonna be there if you're willing to do this.

We're willing to work with price. Um, conversely, there's been speaking events that said, we want Mike, we need this date. And we need him. And my agent's like he's not available and they're like, what do we have to do to make him available?

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. Yeah. Supply and demand. Supply and demand.

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**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. So I think there's this belief that once you pick a fee, that's your fee.

It's a negotiating point, but you can negotiate it up. Yeah. Um, I think what we talked about, the, the, uh, buyback, or I'm sorry, the, the buyouts, so don't forget that. What do you wish more authors, these are some notes we have here. What do you wish more authors would do with regard to speaking?

**AJ Harper:** You covered that, kind of just what you want them to focus on.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. I, I, I think what authors miss on is they speak once and they think, okay, well that speech is done. What's my new speech? You gotta speak on again and again and again, even if it's the same audience. Mm-hmm. And most, most rookie speakers don't. See that they show up and say, oh, I've already spoke about this.

What's my new subject? And they exhaust themselves. I've done the profit first presentation. I don't, I wanna say a thousand times. I don't know if it's been, maybe I've been doing it for 15 years. I do 40 gigs on average, live a year, so that's 600 plus virtual plus pi. You know, I do it over and over and it's the same story I've told the piggy bank story live now countless times.

I cry every single time. The key is that you cannot allow it to be a rote presentation. It can't be just going through the steps. You've got to live that presentation, and the best speakers do that. The best speakers get so good at their speech that it's no longer the structure of the speech. It naturally becomes fluid again.

It's been rehearsed so many times. I think speakers, I wish they would do more of that. I don't think they rehearse enough. I think some speakers say, ah, I'm naturally good just off the cuff. No you're not. You say you are and you show up and you just, you ramble and you suck. The best speakers will rehearse that speech.

I. Hundreds of times. I, I used to have that audience. I know you know about this, uh, down in, uh, I can't remember which county is in New Jersey, um, but they have a Chamber of Commerce. Yeah. And they said, they said, we'll be your first audience. And I would rehearse the speech prior, but then I would deliver the speech to them and they're writing on the notepad, like, I got this, I didn't get this.

But that didn't even matter as much. It's just Washington reaction. Yeah. Oh, no one likes that joke. The, the, the, the dumbest joke I thought I ever delivered is this joke about boarding airplanes. When they say people with parents with children under the age of two can board early. And this woman walks on and her 2-year-old has a full grown mustache.

And I'm like, that's so stupid. And people like rolling in the aisles over that. And I'm like, well, you know, and I, I would riff off that. You gotta test the audience. Professional

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comedians. I love studying comedians, you know, that too. When they don't do the net, when they do the Netflix special, that's not their first gig at that like

**AJ Harper:** Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** That's rehearsed and rehearsed and that's been delivered to countless small bars where lots of those jokes went dead and they were buried there and never brought to life again. And they find their stupid must mustache joke worked and they brought it to the forefront. I wish more speakers would treat it like comedians do.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Think it takes the PowerPoint, God dish, the PowerPoint.

**AJ Harper:** I think, um, you know, before we close, I just wanna say that any author can, I think it's important for every author to have some sort of speaking component. And it doesn't have to be, you're gonna do a big keynote. It doesn't even have, it doesn't have to be a TED Talk.

I. It could be something virtual that you do. It could be a panel discussion, it could be a reading. But get out there, get out there, get out there and let people see you and engage with people and you're gonna move more books and change more lives.

**Mike Michalowicz:** I love that. We, um, we're going out to dinner now. Where are we going?

**AJ Harper:** Probably The Pub.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Is that the only restaurant in town?

**AJ Harper:** No. Oh, there's more than one restaurant. It's maybe like three.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh, that's amazing. Yeah. I can't wait to, to tour the rest of your island. I can't wait for one of our listeners who's never met you before. In person who hasn't worked with you prior, has heard of you through this podcast, over all these episodes, and been so blown away.

They're like, I'm coming to Madeleine Island, and then go to the pub with you. That's my vision. If, if that speaks to you, our listeners, uh, go to [ajharper.com](http://ajharper.com). I guarantee AJ will transform your career as an author. And uh, also, uh, just a quick side note, we do have an imprint with Simpl, uh, with page two called Simplified.

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I am actively looking for relentless driven entrepreneurial authors who see their book as a way to transform the entrepreneur industry by taking a topic and making it simpler, I can't guarantee that an opportunity will present itself. Can guarantee if we don't connect, it'll never present itself. So why not reach out to us?

You can email us at [hello@dwbpodcast.com](mailto:hello@dwbpodcast.com). The next episode, which maybe we'll do one more today. Tonight, you think we'll see how we do. We're gonna talk about cognitive debt.

**AJ Harper:** Mm-hmm. That new MIT study?

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yeah. We wanna give a little teaser what that's about, that article.

**AJ Harper:** Uh, yeah. They did a study with, um, I think it. Students who write essays and use chat GPT Yeah. And, um, discover that there's a problem.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Yes. It may be killing their creativity. It may be causing, uh, cerebral atrophy. So listen to, that's gonna be an interesting conversation. You know, it's something we're just discussing and maybe we'll

**AJ Harper:** in the context of how, you know, authorship.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Of course.

**AJ Harper:** Yeah. Authorship all is a concept.

**Mike Michalowicz:** aOh nd we'll talk about it at the pub. Uh, you got one last chance. You wanna use your funky board and do any, uh, Prince or any other voices? No. No.

**AJ Harper:** No no. I'm, no. That was the last episode. Last episode.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Then you're done.

**AJ Harper:** We're over. We're done. You're over done. I indulged you.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Thank God I'm not in control of that panel because every episode I'd be f-ing with you.

**AJ Harper:** It... you would, because there's all sorts of sound effects. Yeah.

**Mike Michalowicz:** Oh God. It just lights me up. We hope you love this episode. Uh, we'd love to see if you wanna come and see us in person. So also email us this, that at [hello@dwbpodcast.com](mailto:hello@dwbpodcast.com).

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