

Welcome to. So here's the thing, the podcast for small business owners, entrepreneurs, and creative educators who are ready to take their business to the next level through candid conversations, tactical approaches, and a few unpopular opinions. We're lifting the veil on what it takes to build both a life and a business that you love.

I'm your host, Laila Ahmadi, a coach for creatives and founder of the Creative Educator Academy, where I help entrepreneurs step into the role of industry leaders and educators. I'm so glad that you're here. Now let's jump into today's episode. Hey friends, welcome back to another snack sized episode. This week I'm going to be answering, well, I'm going to be starting to answer because let's be real.

It's a snack size episode. Quite frankly, the topic is massive. This is the highest requested topic in my life right now. I am a speaking coach and strategist. And because of that, a lot of my clients have this one complaint when they come to me, not only my clients, but my friends, my industry peers, anybody who wants to get started in speaking, asks me the same thing.

And that is, How on earth am I supposed to connect with people who can get me onto stages? How am I supposed to find events where stages are even available for me to pitch to speak? And of course I have an entire pitching guide. I have all of the resources. I do the coaching. But it is rare for me to actually do the pitching and to do the lead generation for my coaching clients.

That's not to say I don't do this as a service, but it is few and far between. It is not at all my bread and butter. And so because of that, a lot of what I do is guide people on how to find their own leads, how to do their own pitching and how to make true connections with people who can get them on stages.

Now there are, of course, People whose full time job it is to pitch for you, to find leads for you, to generate those numbers and, and make those connections on your behalf. And those people are incredible and irreplaceable, especially if you want to pursue a career in corporate speaking or speaking for profitability without having to actually sell an additional service or push people toward offers.

Now, a lot of the audience that is listening right now, a lot of you guys who are listening are probably creative entrepreneurs who have. Coaching services, courses, digital products. And so you maybe want to take stages in the creative realm in particular, in which case, of course, you are not really speaking with

the intention of getting on stages for large sums of money, or maybe you think you are, but I think as you'll start getting into it, you notice.

That a lot of creative speaking gigs are either unpaid or low payment. And the goal there would be to become profitable by driving people to your offers, making sure that you're connecting throughout the conference. And so you can still be a profitable speaker, even if you're not being paid upfront by the host of the conference or the host of the event or whatever it is that you're speaking at, but you're actually trying to really just drive to your, Existing offers and existing services.

So all of that to say, there is a lot that goes into generating leads and it really does depend on the type of speaking that you're pursuing, but a couple of tips I wanted to share for my creative speakers out there, and this is really just a starting point, of course. As I gave the caveat at the beginning, this is a huge, huge topic that I do have some resources for in my shop.

And of course I do speaker coaching where I dive really deep into this. However, because I get asked this question all the time, I thought the snack size episode would be a great time to share three top tips for starting to seek out speaking opportunities. Through the art of connection. So the first thing that I would suggest you do is to strike up a connection with people who are either on the stages that you want to be on, or of course are staffing those stages.

Now, as I say, every time I talk about community or connection based networking, I want to make sure that you're not going into this in a really like sleazy way. I want you to be. As careful as possible, not to come across as a transactional type of approach. I want you to make sure that you are being really genuine in the way that you connect with these people.

Make sure that you have a give, not just an ask. But of course, if you have, for example, let's say you have a podcast, you could invite these people to be a guest on your podcast and make a connection through that way. You're letting them onto your platform, sharing your audio. Audience with them for no ask in return.

Now, of course, the hope would be that you would strike up a genuine relationship. You would be able to talk about it either on or before the podcast episode starts recording, where you could say, you know, I would love to either. Beyond the kinds of stages that you're on, or I would love to be considered for any future speaking opportunity you have, or if you don't want to be that blunt.

And like I said, you want to be really genuine about it. So whatever your personality lends itself to in that situation, for me, it would probably be like, Asking, Hey, do you have any tips for somebody who would want to take your stage? I would love to eventually do that. And I don't want to, I want to make sure that I'm prepared in the best way possible to pitch you when the time comes, which is not today.

Right? So you want to make sure that first connection, the first time you're having any kind of real conversation with that person, it's not a pitch. It's not gross. It's not transactional. You're not using these people, right? You're actually trying to give them something that's beneficial to them and their audience While also gaining a little bit of knowledge and insight yourself and hopefully gaining a new friend, because I think we can all agree that the creative industry can be really lonely, but it doesn't have to be.

And a lot of the stages that I've taken in my life, um, it may not have started this way, but. Now are truly, a lot of them are truly from relationships that have been built people getting a firsthand view of what I can offer their audiences and wanting me to do that for them. And I think that that's a really organic and great thing when it's done in a genuine way that is again, non transactional and, um, just not icky, just really genuine and from a good place.

The second tip I would give to you would be something that seems really obvious, and it may be obvious, but it may be one of those things that you know, but you really just don't want to do. And that is do your research. So often I hear my coaching clients and I, I call them out with the, with the, Most loving of tough love here, but a lot of them say lately, I just don't ever hear of things until they've already happened.

And then I see it on Instagram and the FOMO is happening and I didn't even know it was happening to pitch it. And I always ask, well, Are you seeking these things out? How are you searching for these things? And then it's crickets. There's no answer typically from my, from my own amazing clients who do the best they can, but it makes sense, right?

Because just like you and I have our thriving businesses, my coaching clients. Are mostly very successful, very high level entrepreneurs with a lot going on. And so I say, if you don't have the time to seek it out, have someone on your team do it for you. Have a VA do it for you. If you can't enlist the help of somebody to do the pitching for you, whose professional full time job it is to do lead gen and pitching, that's fine.

Get your VA to do it. But make sure that somebody on your team is seeking these opportunities out so that you're not in the position of, Oh, I just saw this on Instagram. I sure wish I knew it was happening. Make sure that they're seeking through, through social media, through Facebook groups, through Google, through LinkedIn.

There are so many places where people are posting their events or the events that have happened in the past year so that you can then see the trend and make sure that if it's happening again next year, you're prepared and ready to go. Transcribed The third and final tip out of probably a million that I could give, but I'm sticking to three today, the third and final tip I'm going to give you is to have your speaker page ready to go, have your pitch written and ready, have all of your collateral, all of the things that are needed in order to make a solid pitch ready.

So that when you do stumble upon something, you're not scrambling to put together a, A lazy looking speaker page with all of your assets and all of the things that you need in order to make a strong pitch. It's all ready. And maybe you just have to make a couple of customizations to fit that speaker opportunity, but make sure you have the back end ready before you need it.

That is probably one of the biggest pitfalls. I see my. Coaching clients come across. I actually even collaborated with Elizabeth McCravey, who owns a template shop, a website template shop. I worked with her to create a quote unquote Lely approved speaker template. You can actually get a discount on that using my name lately.

Um, or just go to the link in the show notes, or you can always DM me and I can send you that link, but that website is a great template to use. To start with. Um, and it is show it only, which I also can get you a free month of show it. So if you need any of these links, like I am here to help you out. Um, of course these are affiliate links, but like I said, uh, I spent the time with Elizabeth McCravey to create this template, to make it easy as possible for my students and for people like you who are listening to this, to go out there and get these things ready so that when things arise, you're not panicking and trying to create a website overnight with no idea of what you should include in it.

So I hope that this all helps. And I hope that you will of course, go forward, make those connections. Um, I always say, you know, especially when it comes to connection based things, which was Tip number one, if you can show up the places they are, I know it's not always possible for everybody to attend every conference and every event, but if you can get in the room in person, it is such a beautiful thing to do.

And of course, second to that would be creating a really, really great way to connect face to face, even if it is virtually face to face. So I hope these were helpful and I will see you on next week's. Guest episode, and I have loved hearing the feedback about these snack sized episodes. If you guys have a question for me that you want me to answer on one of these, just reach out.

I'm always happy to do so. And I would love, love, love to see you in my DMS or in my inbox. Have a great week. For show notes and resources mentioned on today's episode, head to [so here's the thing podcast. com](https://www.thethingpodcast.com). This show is brought to you by the creative educator Academy, where we teach creative entrepreneurs how to teach, because I believe that industries thrive when experts can share their knowledge.

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