

Laylee: 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 conference, where we're on a mission to help entrepreneurs step into the role of industry leaders and educators. I'm so glad that you're here. Today's episode is brought to you by the educators lounge, the membership for creative educators, looking to become industry leaders.

If you want to join us, get your first 10 days free at LailaAhmadi.com with the code podcast. Now let's jump into today's episode. Hello friends. We're at the next level retreat, and I am with. The lovely Danielle Throckmorton, and she is the host of Reach Retreat, and I am doing a little one on one coaching time with her.

And so we thought it would be fun to share just a snippet of what it's like to do one on one at the retreat. So we're going to let you listen in. Here we go. So Danielle, tell me about what it is that you're wanting to grow and kind of where you are right now.

Danielle: Okay, so coming to you for tips and tactical ways to grow as a speaker.

I have had experience speaking since 2022 through some of my own events, but also awareness that I'm speaking in general has landed me opportunities to go and speak at local conferences, networking events. Um, I have had the opportunity to travel and do some speaking as well for other people's retreats.

There are a few opportunities that I have reached out and applied for, like through certain conferences, uh, where I've, you know, been able to move forward with that. But looking at 2025 and the direction that my business is going, I want to be a bit more strategic on where I'm speaking, not only because of growing as an individual or growing client retention or connections, but more so like being intentional with making sure I'm serving fully in the spaces that I'm at.

And so I think I'm looking for more next level since it's our theme for the retreat opportunities for me as a speaker. Like, where would I start at? You know, your experience is speaking at some larger events like, like, show it right. You're

compressing time by being able to be in front of A larger audience, but also something that feels aligned to you.

So that's kind of what I'm looking for.

Laylee: Yeah. I mean, I love this. I feel like we talked a little bit about this poolside when we were talking about kind of finding those, those places that do align with what it is that we want to do, but also like the people we want to surround ourselves with. So I think for me, the biggest thing that was helpful was showing up.

In the spaces that I wanted to be present, establishing relationships with people there, and then kind of pursuing that next step with them within their own communities. So again, it was kind of like. Go in, make the, like, establish a relationship, continue the relationship, continue showing up for them and giving, And then whenever the opportunity arose to become a leader within their community, Being able to say like, hey, I would love to, you know, Serve your community the way that I feel I've been served within it, you know.

Because at that point, you're such an integral part of their community that it, It truly is like a give back, you know, it's a give back more than an ask. And I think that's where the differentiator has been between. Me growing in certain spaces and some of my peers applying and having to reapply and reapply and then getting, you know, they'll get in eventually.

We all, you know, we should never stop applying, but like, I think that's kind of what was the catalyst for me was that I really wanted to be a part of the community more than I wanted to be the leader and then those opportunities to lead once they were open, communicating to them that like whatever way, shape or form that.

Would take and I've seen you do that though Like I just saw you do that at the last conference that you were at where you were like I'm here as a speaker But I'm also happy to volunteer things like that I think other people see that and other people feel that intention. So I think that would be the first thing is just keep doing what you're doing in that respect of showing up and giving back because that's what's organic to you.

I think if it wasn't organic to you, I wouldn't give that same advice. So if somebody is listening to this, like that's not you, I would, I would make sure to say it needs to align with your intention. The second thing that I would say is offering opportunities for those same people to participate in your spaces.

So seeking out for you because you have reach retreat, I would reach out to companies who are people who have. Retreats or places that you would like to speak at and invite them to lead in your community or invite them to become a sponsor in your community or, you know, an attendee within yours as well.

And that way you're cultivating that relationship like 10 times as fast as you would just over DM or email, because you're getting them in your space and they're seeing the heart with which you lead your people and then hopefully inviting you to use that same heart within their community.

Danielle: And that's exactly how I have made a lot of those connections.

They've all been very organic, like going to the spaces and being like an attendee and then applying the next year, or even having them reach out, being like, I saw how you showed up in the community and we want to see that more of you now. As far as presentation, you know, you talk a lot in the membership, you talk a lot in your socials or like your live videos with you in the conference spaces about on stage last year at Creative Educators on just tips of ways to like really professionalize the forward face part of being a speaker and so on my website I have a dedicated page for speaking and I have listed out like several things Speaking topics for that opportunity, but more so like how often within awareness in our brands or like social media posts or in our email marketing, like how often would you recommend someone like lead with, I'm a speaker.

Oftentimes the only time I mentioned that is if I am speaking at an upcoming event, I highlight like, Hey, I'm speaking at such and such conference. So I'm just curious, like what would you recommend as far as awareness goes for People to not just say, Oh, you already are speaking at this event. But like, Hey, I'm available and would like to have the opportunity to do that.

And it's not like just for monetary purposes, although like it does take time and money and all of the things it's important to consider that as I'm growing that aspect, but more so like, I just want to be a part of pouring into people. And I feel like I'm bringing value when I do that.

Laylee: Yeah. I mean, I think if it were me, I would be Recaps as much as possible.

I think the hard part is, like you said, we feel like we can only share things as they're coming up or as they've just finished. So we're coming right off it and we're like, I just came off this, here's this recap. And then we never post about it

again because it was like four months ago and maybe it feels like Why would I share this now?

But you can, you know, take the footage or take, you know, take an image or something of you leading in that space and maybe put a different message to it, but something that ties back to the fact that, you know, when I was leading here, when I was speaking here, when I was doing a workshop here, this is one takeaway that I think is You need today, you know, and so you're talking to a different audience, but you're bringing back the fact that you are actively speaking, even if it's not like actively happening at the moment, because, like you said, you want to be seen as being available for it.

If you are now, if you weren't like, let's say you only take on like four speaking spots a year, I probably wouldn't tell you to flood your socials with it. But I think that where we're at, where it's like, We want to be open to the invitation. Like I know I do. I love to be open to the invitation. I want to be open to the ask, even if it doesn't make sense.

Like I would love to apply for reach retreat, but the dates don't make sense this year kind of thing, but it's like, I want you to know that I'm available. So I'm going to continue to share any kind of imagery or video or visual that ties back to the fact that like, this is something that I actively do, even if the message, the caption is a little bit different.

Does that help?

Danielle: Yes. And then I'm going to ask one that could be like, uh, cringeworthy for other people who've maybe thought about this. Yeah. So popping in and reaching out about speaking opportunities, even when they don't have applications open, because I will say like, from, A person that hires speakers, it does like for me, it feels like kind of sexy because I'm like, Oh my gosh, like they're thinking about my event or they're thinking about being in my space and it goes further.

So then when I still see their applications come through, like, The radar is on like for you, would you be like, why is she pitching me right now? And it's not pitch time. So I'm curious to see your perspective. Cause to me, I'm like, look at that initiative, but I feel like there's like a good way of doing it and a bad way of doing it.

Laylee: A hundred percent. There's a good way and a bad way for me. My first angst is like, please don't do that. I can't like, I knew you were going to correct.

I know. I, I think because. I am such a people pleaser that I'm like, if I don't have an active application or somewhere to immediately direct them, which I do, I mean, I would always say, you know, join the waitlist, make sure you're on the email and then you'll get an application.

But if it's like in my DMS and it's the only time we've ever talked, that's the wrong way to do it. Now, if we're like, Friends and friendly in the DMS and you're like, Hey, did I miss this? That's fine. I'm always like happy to redirect you. But if it's like at random and we never talk, that's when I'm like, okay, cringe.

I, I, I cannot feel this right now. Like I can't handle it. It's too much. But yeah, I do think I'd like the initiative if it's a followup. What's the wrong way in your head? What's the wrong way?

Danielle: I don't know because I do love action takers and I do like people who put themselves out there. I think it would be different if it was like a standard non, like I've researched your business, but I was just curious of just trying to how to stand out amongst the crowd a little bit.

You know, I, I don't want to speak at places I'm not passionate about because I think it would show. So I think regardless, like I'm always going to hype up the pages regardless of what's happening. I think that you were the one that mentioned there was a huge influx of people that like pop up on your page and show all this support during like speaker applications and then you're like, where are you at all the other months of the year?

Laylee: Every year.

Danielle: So I'm putting intention behind like the places I really care. I'm putting myself in the rooms, just like this one, putting myself in the rooms, uh, virtually as much as I can. And also just trying to show like support all throughout the year and not just like, Hey, when speaker applications are open, now you're going to see me.

Creeping back up, you know? Yeah.

Laylee: A hundred percent. And I also will say like, I think paying attention to where people say they like to be pitched is really important. So like, I actually don't mind, like, I like an email that's thorough. Even if I'm not taking applications versus a DM, because I like to save my DMS for like giving people

fun advice and connecting with people on a different level versus like, Hey, can I speak at your event?

That doesn't stand out to me anymore. And I think the big shift for that happened as you were speaking about it, when I started my podcast like five years ago, and then the pitches started coming and cut and then the pitches never ended. And so now that doesn't make people stand out for me. It just makes you like, Blend in to another person that wants to be on a platform that I have, and I love to highlight people, but I will not remember you in a DM, but I might remember a great pitch in my email.

Danielle: Okay. I think that's a good tip. It's like, I want to pay attention being like, Hey, I saw such and such event or you're headed here. I really liked this part of your event. I feel like you contribute in this way. Like, I think the intentionality of like showing that it's not just a templated email and reach out pitch would be.

Much better. And then I guess I have one more question if we want to tackle that before we wrap up, but as far as Sourcing like aligned places. I know I connected with Dawn here at the retreat and she said hey There's some really great stuff There's, you know, conferences that we're attending. I have a list of different things.

I know you've mentioned putting together some for people as well, but for yourself, like, is there a place that you search for these things or is it like you're just out there in your network? I'm just curious. Like, is there a hub? If not, are you making us a hub of like places that we need to know about, you know, as far as educators, how we can pour in and not, and not even just the traditional large conferences, but just intimate spaces like this too.

Laylee: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, that's definitely something that's in the works. So I'm glad that you brought it up and we are. Working behind the scenes to kind of create that hub because I don't feel like there is one that's comprehensive. Um, for me, the way that I found them over the past, like, several years has just been, I mean, I like stock the stocking of the stocking.

Like, I'm like, I find one person and then I see where they're at and I find the next, the other 10 people they were with at that event. And then I go into a deep dive on like, where did they go a month before that? And it's just like, it is hard to, I mean, it's hard work. It's like, I feel like a detective or like a, what is it called?

Like a research assistant or something. But I think that I think that's why we're working on something, coming out with something to help people hopefully like cut that time out. But yeah, if you're in the meantime, just kind of like digging around, I would say find the connections and then find where those connections were the past half year, you know, like scroll through.

And if you see something you're unfamiliar with, like follow the rabbit hole,

Danielle: you know, I like that you said that it's hard work. And I think that's what oftentimes people don't recognize is like, it, you There's not an easy answer like there isn't an easy click here hub like you need to research and do the work

Laylee: Yeah and even if there was it would still be hard work to pitch them all like there's still going to be a piece of hard Work attached

Danielle: and I feel like for me like I don't want to ask the general like how do you pitch but like that's what?

I feel like would be most valuable for me to continue to learn from you is The pitching aspect because I know what I pay attention to as a speaker, but also Not everyone thinks the same just like how I was like, please pop in my email and be like, hey I've been stalking you and I love your brand But I feel like that's one thing I'm looking forward to learning from you more is just like how do I be effective in?

the ways that I'm pitching to make myself stand out and It align with the, with the person that's going to be vetting them. All right. Well, thank

Laylee: you. Thank you for sharing on the, and letting us record you. Where can we find you, Danielle? And more about Reach A Treat.

Danielle: Yes. So Danielle Throckmorton, super hard.

Um, I will be, uh, Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, all the places. And same for Reach A Treat. It's LinkedIn to my bio for Danielle Throckmorton. And I'd love to see so many of you guys there in the future.

Laylee: And of course we'll link everything in our show notes. So we'll see you guys on the next episode for show notes and resources mentioned on today's episode.

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