

Lesson 7: Planning Episode 0



Background

In podcasting, an “Episode Zero” is the name given to a type of introductory or “pre-launch” episode. It is also sometimes referred to as a “trailer” and serves the same function as a movie trailer. It isn't essential to create an episode zero, but many podcasters do, and there's a few good reasons for it. The first reason is to introduce the show to first time listeners. In a podcast episode zero, you can lay out the kind of things your audience can expect from the show. Here, you want to make it predominantly about them. This is where persuasive communication comes into play. **There are many other podcasts out there they could be listening to, so what are they going to get from yours?** When hearing a podcast for the first time, listeners are constantly asking themselves “is this worth my time?”.

Say Things Like:

“you're going to learn...”

“I'm going to help you with...”

“We're going to simplify...”

“I'll walk you through the exact process of...”

Other Benefits of an Episode Zero

An episode zero is an opportunity for you to set the mood and tone of the show, as well as show a bit of your own personality too. If it's going to be light-hearted and humorous, then the same should be true of your episode zero. If it'll be highly produced with music, sound effects, and multiple elements, then absolutely demonstrate that as much as possible right out the gate. You also get to “lighten the load” of introductions that need to happen in episode 1.

[Example 1:](#) Trailer for a podcast called “99% Invisible”. This is a highly professional example.

[Example 2:](#) A HV student sample from “Pigskin Predictions”. What do you think needs work?

Length of an Episode Zero

Anywhere from 1-5 minutes is common, but more towards 1 is better. Keep it brief because listeners don't know you or like you yet, so won't stick around for very long.

Credibility: Who Are You?

An important aspect of episode 0 is letting people know who you are and why you are qualified to speak on this topic. Commonly, new listeners will be asking themselves questions like;

1. Is this person an expert in their field? Background? Qualifications?
2. Can I relate to this person? They might not be an “expert” as such, but have been through the same issues I'm experiencing now.
3. Is this person on a “learning journey”, just like me?

You don't need to be an “expert” to podcast on a subject, or feel the need to pretend to be one.

Just be honest with your listener – that's the characteristic that matters most!

AI Statement:

This is a reminder that AI is not allowed unless specified by the teacher. For this assignment, please DO NOT use AI to script your episode 0. **Listeners want to hear your authentic voice and AI will not give you that.** AI scripted shows sound perfect and robotic, lacking the human realism that people want in a good show. If your script looks like AI was used, we may check the version history of this doc to inspect your writing process.

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Step 1: Planning Episode 0

The following points will need to be addressed in your episode. Use this space to plan them out. These do not have to be in complete sentences and are only here for your own planning.

1. How will you introduce yourself/yourselves?

Type here

2. How will you give your show's title?

Type here

3. What is the tone of your show and how will you demonstrate that?

Type here

4. What is your credibility? See the above section.

Type here

5. What background information do your listeners need for your topic and/or show? Why are you making this show? Why does it matter? What is its purpose? What is your personal connection to it?

Type here

6. What will the segments look like in your show? Will there be any? How long can your listeners expect an episode to be?

Type here

7. How often will you publish episodes?

You can expect ten episodes published about every two weeks

8. Do you have any people or resources to call out or thank?

Type here

Step 2: Script It Out!

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For episode 0, it might be better to script out what you are going to say. This is because you are new to recording your voice and this will help you stay on track. Episode 0 should also be pretty short and packed with info, so a script will help you stay on track.

Type here

Step 3: Read it Aloud and Time Yourself

Read your script as if you were recording it. Time it with your phone to make sure it isn't too long or too short. This will also let you hear how your script sounds so you can re-work things as needed. It's also great practice!

Step 4: Intro Paragraph

To post your show online, we need a brief introductory paragraph to your show. It should explain what your show is about and who you are, all in a sentence or two. An example is shown below in red.

Here is a intro paragraph example:

The Speaking for the Silenced Podcast is a student-run podcast that examines the world-wide issue of human trafficking. Join podcast host Jacqueline Sun, as she breaks down many examples of human trafficking including forced labor, bride trafficking, and more.

Write your intro paragraph here!

Type here

Adapted from: <https://www.thepodcasthost.com/planning/launching-your-podcast-with-an-episode-zero/>