

Business For Superheroes Podcast Transcription: Episode One Hundred And Ninety Two: How To Outline Your Business Book Lightning-Fast



This is a podcast about one woman's mission to help entrepreneurs and business owners write better business books. Each week, we tackle your writing excuses because they're our excuses too, and help you beat the blank page of doom so that you can write the book that will grow your life and your business. Now here's your host, Vicky Fraser...

Vicky: Hello, and welcome to the 1,000 Authors Show. I'm Vicky Fraser, and this is my husband, Joe.

Joe: Hello.

Vicky: Hello! We are on episode 192, can you believe that?

Joe: 192?

Vicky: 192. Today, we are drinking Ungava Gin.

Joe: Gin. From Canada.

Vicky: From Canada. I think this is one of my favorite gins, you know. Yeah, what's with it?

Joe: Tonic.

Vicky: Cool.

Joe: Slightly flat tonic, to be fair.

Vicky: Slightly flat, yeah but the gin tastes so good that it's okay. So, you might have noticed if you're watching the video version of this, that I'm wearing a bobble hat. There is a very good reason for that. Despite the fact that my office is super cozy, my hair looked like shit, and there was no way

that I was, I was gonna say inflicting that on you, but frankly, I don't even care about you. It was like, I cannot, I cannot, I cannot--

Joe: Cannot be public with that hair.

Vicky: No, no, it was very bad. I didn't even want Joe to look at my hair, and he sees me at like, first thing in the morning.

Joe: Aw.

Vicky: Anyway, so we are here today to talk about how to outline your book lightning fast.

Joe: Outline your book. What's an outline?

Vicky: Well, we'll come to that in a moment Joe, because first of all, we're gonna do section one of the podcast. Do you not remember this conversation we had? We're gonna split the podcast into--

Joe: Well, we've had a lot of conversations on the podcast and, how many times have we actually done what we said we're gonna do on the podcast?

Vicky: Quite a lot, I think!

Joe: Mm, I think it's about 12%.

Vicky: No. I think it's more percent than that. Many more.

Joe: Many more.

Vicky: I think it's more than 50.

Joe: I think you're wrong.

Vicky: I am not. So, section one of the podcast, from now on, is gonna be what we're reading. And it's gonna be what Joe's reading, what I'm reading, and what I'm reading, because I always have at least two books on the go. So Joe, what are you reading at the moment?

Joe: Well, I'm receiving quite a lot of criticism for reading The Wheel of Time series.

Vicky: I'm not criticizing, I am a little bit.

Joe: Yes, a little bit.

Vicky: But how, can you just tell the listeners how long you've been reading The Wheel of Time series for?

Joe: Oh, man. Well, I'm reading it on Kindle, which is a little bit misleading, 'cause you can't kinda gauge how thick the book's gonna be, so you just kinda go, oh yeah, I'll start reading this, and then, like a thousand pages in, you realize you're only 20% of the way through or something, and you're like, oh man, this is a bit of a commitment. And had you known it was that commitment, you might not have started.

Vicky: Would have had a break.

Joe: However, I'm on like, book eight of The Wheel of Time--

Vicky: How many are there?

Joe: Loads.

Vicky: 53?

Joe: But I'm like, well ahead of the curve, because it's being made into another TV series, much like the Game of Thrones type thing. It's all a bit fantasy and a bit magic, and a bit kind of epic.

Vicky: 'Cause I like a bit of fantasy, and I haven't read The Wheel of Time. But I have made you stop reading it for a while, haven't I? And read something else.

Joe: You have, you've pushed me into N.K. Jemisin's

Vicky: The Fifth Season trilogy.

Joe: Fifth Season trilogy. And I'm about 80 pages into that. But the problem with that is, I do a lot of my reading in bed. And I've read so much on the Kindle in bed, that I'm actually struggling to be in bed with a book that you have to hold open, and have drafty arms, and it's all a bit annoying.

Vicky: Seriously, last night, we were in bed, right, this is, Joe, stay with us. We were in bed, and I was reading my book. I'm reading, I'll tell you what I'm reading next week, 'cause I'm talking about The Fifth Season. But I was reading my book, and, then I just heard this snuffling from a millimeter behind my head, and I'm like, what are you doing? And Joe's there going, how do you read? How are you reading in bed, what are you doing? And I'm like, through the magic of fingers, and hands.

Joe: It's just so annoying. And it's a chunky book. You've gotta hold it open, and you wanna have duvet up round your ears, and you wanna be snuggly, and it's just difficult. It's technically difficult, I'm out of practice.

Vicky: So, anyway, I'm reading, or I have literally just finished reading, at the time of writing this podcast, I'm reading N.K. Jemisin's The Fifth Season trilogy. Which is absolutely bloody brilliant. If you like fantasy, science-y, really smart writing, this is a really good book. And it's also super interesting, because N.K. Jemisin is a black American fantasy writer, which I think is quite rare. It's quite a white genre. And, the messages that she, it's just brilliant. Apart from anything else, I love the story. She is a masterful storyteller. But she's writing from the point of view of people who have to fight for the respect that other people are given. And, it's just really interesting. It's fascinating, it's heartbreaking, and it's just a bloody good story as well. And so I really thoroughly, for a whole host of reasons, recommend N.K. Jemisin. I basically read that trilogy, and then I've bought everything she's ever done. So I'll be talking about that in future podcasts, 'cause this is what we're doing now. And for my non-fiction book, I am currently reading Deep Work by Cal Newport. And I've almost finished it. It's a really super book, and if you ever struggle to, 'cause I think we live in this attention deficit economy, and we're constantly switching from thing to thing, and I know that my go-to thing when I'm feeling a little bit stuck, is I will reach for--

Joe: Instagram.

Vicky: Brain candy.

Joe: Facebook-y things, other things, internet.

Vicky: Yeah, and I've got blocks on my computer to stop me from going on social media, and I keep my phone in a different room, it's in a cupboard, it's in my locked cupboard, when I'm working. But, I will reach for something else. If it gets difficult, if the thinking gets difficult, I'll open my emails without thinking. And it'll be a surprise, anyway, this is all about how to train yourself to concentrate, basically, because we don't concentrate anymore. And a lot of the work that we do, particularly the work that I do, because I'm a writer, and a lot of the work that you do, as well, I think, really requires that kind of deep, it's deep work. It requires that deep concentration. And you have to train yourself to do it. So, I really thoroughly recommend that book. It's very readable, it's very good, and it's just really great.

Joe: Hm, nice.

Vicky: Right then, into the podcast.

Joe: Is this section two?

Vicky: Section two of the podcast. So yeah, the problem that I want to solve in this podcast is the whole getting stuck before you've even started thing. Right? When you're writing your book. So you try and dive in, you're like, right, I'm gonna write a book, I've got this idea. And, you dive in, and you try and write, and then you just sit there staring at the blank page, and then you reach for Facebook, or Instagram, and then you cry. And, no wonder! Because it's a really tall order to write a book at all, let alone open a blank page and just start. So if you don't know what you're gonna write exactly, you're gonna struggle to write anything at all. And the solution, as you may have guessed, is to write a detailed outline. And I'm gonna very quickly show you how to do that in this episode, and Joe's gonna fire questions at me and say, what do you mean by that? And blah blah blah.

Joe: Okay, I can do that.

Vicky: So, I'm just gonna switch windows on my Mac, because I wrote this podcast outline, and then I wrote a better article, so I'm just gonna refer to the article. So yeah, writing outlines. People roll their eyes a little bit when I say write an outline, because it reminds them of writing essays at school. Do you remember being told to write outlines?

Joe: Yeah yeah.

Vicky: How did that make you feel?

Joe: It kinda felt like it was getting in the way of actually writing the essay. It almost felt like procrastination sometimes.

Vicky: Yeah. Which is a funny thing, because your most powerful weapon in the fight against procrastination, and fear, and anxiety, and all of that kind of thing, is actually your outline. And if my teachers had told me that, and also had told me that it was a way for me to be lazier than I already was, I would've done the Snoopy happy dance, and I would've dived into outlining all the time. It wasn't until I started writing books, and created my own method of outlining, that I realized what a superpower this is. Because like you say, it kinda feels like procrastination, it's like, oh, I need to write this thing, but I--

Joe: I'm just gonna do something else instead.

Vicky: Just do something else. But, you can't just dive in and write, yeah?

Joe: You can just dive in and write rubbish.

Vicky: You can.

Joe: Disorganized rubbish.

Vicky: But what happens is, 'cause I remember teachers would say, what happens is, you gotta outline, because otherwise your writing's gonna ramble drunkenly across the page, and it's gonna stop off for a bit of a fight, and then

it's gonna get sidetracked by a comfortable-looking sofa, and then, before you know it, you've just got this big word salad.

Joe: Is that what your teacher said? Sounds like something you would say.

Vicky: I have paraphrased. And embellished.

Joe: Extensively.

Vicky: Made it more interesting. 'Cause my teachers were just like, write an outline, 'cause otherwise it won't make sense, which is quite dull. I like to be more colorful than that. But you know what, my teachers were right, and so were your teachers. They were right, you will write a better article, a better book, a better essay, a better whatever the hell it is that you're writing, if you write an outline. But what they didn't tell us was how much easier sketching an outline would make writing the damn thing. Or they didn't tell me anyway. Did they ever say to you, oh, it's gonna make things so much easier?

Joe: This will all make things easier, no, not really.

Vicky: No! I don't remember ever being told that by a teacher. And, it's hilarious, 'cause if they'd told me that writing an outline could cut my writing time by like a third or more, I would've been all over that, like a tramp on chips. All over it. And if they had told me that it would be my best weapon against procrastination, and confidence woes, and anxiety, again, I would've been all over it. Because, if you've ever sat down to write anything big, I bet your inner dickhead has piped up, and been like, huh, you're not gonna be able to do this, and that's not very good, and... Do you know what I mean?

Joe: Yeah yeah yeah.

Vicky: And if they'd have given me a technique like the one I'm about to give you, I would've been really happy.

Joe: Okay.

Vicky: Cool!

Joe: Technique.

Vicky: Technique. So, we are going to, this is what I would like you to do, dear listener, I would like you to do a quick recap of the whole reason behind you writing a book. So open a new document in Scrivener, or Word, or Google Docs, or whatever the hell you do your writing in. And I would like you to create the following four headings. My Big Idea, My Book Compass, My Readers, and My Goals. That's four. And under those headings, I want you to note down the following. So under My Big Idea, I want you to, in one paragraph, describe your big idea, who you're writing it for, and what you want your reader to be, do, have and feel when they're finished. What will they get out of it?

Joe: That's a big paragraph.

Vicky: It does sound like a big paragraph, but actually it's not. So, for example, my book, which is now available on my website, and on Amazon.

Joe: Nice.

Vicky: Is called How the Hell Do You Write a Book? And it is all about how to write a book, for business owners who are stuck, who know they've got a story inside them, and by the time they've finished reading this book, they are going to feel confident enough to write it, and they're going to have everything they need, so they actually started doing it. And hopefully, they'll have bloody made a start. You know what I mean? So, that's only a paragraph. It's quite short. So, you should be able to do that. Heading number two.

Joe: My Book Compass. What's a book compass?

Vicky: Well, this is gonna keep you on track. So you're gonna write this out and stick it on a piece of paper, where you can see it when you're writing, so that when you start getting off track, or panicking, or whatever, you're gonna look at it and be like, oh, okay. And you're gonna fill in the blanks. I will use my book to reach, my ideal reader audience, by showing them, what you're gonna show them with the book, which will enable me to, reach my goals. So, for example, for me, I would say, I will use my book to reach business

owners who want to write a book, by showing them exactly how to get started and actually finish their book, publish it and sell it, which will enable me to find the kinda clients that I want to work with, and stop wasting my time and clients' time with people who aren't necessarily interested. So, I could've said that better, but, you get the idea.

Joe: That's the first one.

Vicky: Yeah.

Joe: First draft.

Vicky: And then you are going to write a little bit about your readers. Your ideal readers. So you are gonna describe briefly, very briefly, your ideal reader, and remind yourself of your ideal reader avatar. So what's the big problem your book will solve for them, what pain does it cause them? And, what's the fourth one?

Joe: Fourth one is, why are you writing this book?

Vicky: Okay, so yeah, your goals as a writer. Why are you writing this book? What do you want it to do for you? So, you've already talked about what you want it to do for your reader. What do you want it to do for you? Does it need to help you find better clients, does it need to cut down the number of tire kickers, does it enable you to raise your fees, what do you want it to do for you? It's really crucial to remind yourself of this stuff before you sit down to write your outline because it's gonna inform what your outline is. So I'm hoping that you've already done this stuff, if you're thinking of writing a book, and you're ready to do your outline. But if not--

Joe: Do that stuff.

Vicky: Do that stuff. So, now it's time to start on the outline itself.

Joe: Just a quick question from the point of view of the dear listener, hi Vegard.

Vicky: Hi Vegard!

Joe: Have you got this available somewhere, so I can read it?

Vicky: I have indeed.

Joe: Excellent.

Vicky: This is available to download from my website.

Joe: Excellent.

Vicky: And we will give you the URL in the show notes.

Joe: Splendid. Because there's detail here, isn't there? You probably want it written down.

Vicky: No, there is something that you can download, and I'm actually working on refining it at the moment, so I will update the link at some point with a better version of what I've already got.

Joe: Okay. But what you've already got is up?

Vicky: Yeah.

Joe: Cool.

Vicky: What I've already got is up. So, it's time to start your outline now. We're gonna do high level sketching. This is gonna be fun, and by the time you have finished it, you are gonna have a valuable document that you will refer to throughout your book writing adventure. You are going to create another two headings on a new sheet of paper.

Joe: New sheet of paper. There's a big vertical line down the middle.

Vicky: Yeah, you could do.

Joe: One heading on one side, one heading on the other.

Vicky: Yeah, or you could divide it top and bottom. I don't care. But you're gonna create two headings, they're gonna be number one, Big Idea Topics, and number two, The Lint Trap.

Joe: The Lint Trap.

Vicky: Yeah, so you know when you have, we don't have a tumble dryer, but tumble dryers have a lint trap that's where they catch all the fluff. And every now and then you have to empty the lint trap, so that it doesn't clog up the--

Joe: Otherwise it catches fire and burns your house down.

Vicky: Yes it does. You don't wanna set your book on fire, do you? Well you might do at some point, but let's not do it now.

Joe: Empty your lint trap, people.

Vicky: Empty your lint trap. So the lint trap is there to catch all of your ideas and thoughts that don't directly relate to your book's big idea. 'Cause they might be useful, they probably will be useful. They might form a whole other book, they might form blog articles.

Joe: Might be all kinds of good stuff, just not for this book.

Vicky: Exactly. And, the reason that I want you to create the Lint Trap section is because if you have an idea it's really difficult to throw it away. And so, I don't wanna try and make you do that. 'Cause the danger is, if I make you throw it away completely, you're gonna stick it in your big idea topics, and you're gonna have a big bloated mess of a book. So I want you to, if it doesn't fit directly under your Big Idea, wang it in The Lint Trap. And, at this point, you're just scribbling ideas down. It's like, okay, so, for example, if I own a shop, and I'm writing a book about fashion, and helping people choose clothes better, and all the rest of it. It might be like, right, I'm just gonna scribble down all of the ideas that I can think of--

Joe: So you've got like, colors, and styles, and--

Vicky: Yeah, and you're just like, wang it all down.

Joe: Shoes.

Vicky: On the left hand side. And then you might also think of savings accounts, and things like that, which might pop if you're thinking, how much do I spend on clothes? So it's like, well savings accounts aren't relevant, so I'm just gonna put that in The Lint Trap, 'cause that'll be a good article to write at some point, that's vaguely relevant. Does that make sense?

Joe: Yes.

Vicky: That probably wasn't the best, like rugs, maybe rugs, interior design. Kinda goes with fashion, but not really. So, don't worry about the order for now, just get them down on paper. So, the next thing that I would like you to do is, I would like you to, I need to scroll down a bit.

Joe: I would like you to scroll down a bit!

Vicky: Yeah, I would like you to scroll down a bit. Okay, well let's give them an example. Let's give them an example from a made up book and a real book. So, if you were writing a book on fashion, that was gonna help people invest in clothes that really suit them and make them look and feel fabulous, what would your main topics be, maybe? In no particular order.

Joe: I would assume body shape. Color. Textures, patterns.

Vicky: Dresses.

Joe: Dresses.

Vicky: Suits.

Joe: Yeah, business wear.

Vicky: Jeans.

Joe: Casuals.

Vicky: Holidays.

Joe: Sports.

Vicky: Accessories.

Joe: Shoes.

Vicky: Hair.

Joe: Makeup.

Vicky: Yeah. And, you know what, at some point, you might decide that hair and makeup go in The Lint Trap, but for now, they can stay in with the main topic, because they are relevant to how you look, as a whole. I have my bobble hat, which is an accessory. And also, I have bad hair, which is hidden under the bobble hat. They're relevant. It's like, what do you do when you're having a bad hair day? Put a hat on. Anyway. I digress. Here's an example from a real book, called How to Sell a Crap Load of Books, by a guy called Tim Vandehey.

Joe: Hi Tim.

Vicky: And also someone called Naren Areyal.

Joe: Hi Naren.

Vicky: Which is divided into 10 secrets, or chapters, they call them secrets. And their 10 chapters, their secrets, are Platform, Rule of 10, Rule of One Half Million, Build on What You Have, Branding, Local Celebrity Strategy, Pull Don't Push, Synergy Rule, Create Sharp, Sexy Intellectual Property, and finally, X Factor.

Joe: I don't know what some of that means, but okay.

Vicky: Doesn't matter. They did, that's the point. So they've come up with those ideas. The big idea, which was How to Sell a Crap Load of Books, doesn't really need refining any more than that.

Joe: It's pretty specific.

Vicky: Pretty specific. And then they're like, right, what do we need to tell people? And these are all the topics. So, Pull Don't Push, for example, is about marketing. You wanna pull people towards you rather than push your sales at them. Okay, so now you've got your chapter headings. They will change, don't worry about creating clever chapter headings, this is just the chapters at the moments.

Joe: These are concepts for each chapter.

Vicky: Yeah. You can change the order later, don't mess around with the order. Just get them on a sheet of paper, and start working with them. So, stage two of your outline is finding the details. You are going to take the first of these points, the first chapter, so for example, Body Shape.

Joe: Body shape.

Vicky: And you are going to break it down even more. Just like this. You are going to break it down into the chapter hook.

Joe: The chapter hook, so, what's the big idea for this chapter, why should I read it, what problem or pain is it solving, what is exciting, what exciting thing is it teaching me?

Vicky: Yeah. So you might wanna include a story or an anecdote to set the chapter up, if that's how you want to start. So you might be thinking, oh, you know what, I saw this amazing dress on a friend of mine, and I thought, oh, you know what, I would really like to have that dress. And so you went and bought the dress as well, and it did not look the same. It didn't look the same at all. It looked wrong. It didn't suit you. It's like, how could it look so different on her than it is on me? And you realize, it was because you have different body shapes. And so that would be, it's a bit of a basic story, but that's the kinda story that you could tell. And that's the hook for this, that's the big idea for this chapter, is why do some clothes look really good on some people and not others? And it's body shape, it's a body shape thing. So,

you will then, once you've done that, very briefly, you're gonna then look at the chapter takeaway. What is the crucial takeaway for this chapter?

Joe: People need to realize what body shape they are.

Vicky: Yeah, and it's important.

Joe: And understand what that means to them.

Vicky: Yeah. Not in a shaming way, not in a, I wish I was an hourglass shape, but I'm actually a round shape, not at all. It's more about finding out what body shape you are, so that you can pick the clothes that are gonna make the best of you. And so you want to note down in this little heading here, what do you want your reader to be, do, have and feel when they're finished? What action do you want them to take, at the end of this chapter? Simple. And after that, you are gonna list a load of chapter subtopics. So what are the main points that fall within this chapter? What supporting points can you--

Joe: So you might be going, you might have your various body types, at this point, might you?

Vicky: Yeah, hourglass, pear-shaped, apple-shaped, I think they call it, and that's where I run out of--

Joe: Shapes.

Vicky: Body shapes. Like skinny, large.

Joe: Tall.

Vicky: Tall, short, petite. Long-legged, short-legged. Long-bodied, short, there are--

Joe: Boobs.

Vicky: Yeah, really curvy, really athletic. Big shoulders, which is a problem that I have, 'cause I'm strong, and I can't find fucking shirts to fit me. I hulk

out of them, it's really annoying. And that makes me feel really unfeminine, and I hate that.

Joe: Aw.

Vicky: Yeah. So, this stuff is important. You might be thinking, oh, it's a bit frivolous, writing a book about fashion. It's not, everything is important. Back on topic. So yeah, what supporting points do you want to include? Once you've written your supporting points out, again, wang them all out, if you come up with stuff that doesn't quite fit, put them in The Lint Trap. Supporting stories, what stories do you have to back up the content that you're writing about? From your own life, from your clients' lives, from story you simply found elsewhere. Make sure you reference them if you're gonna do that, but yeah. What stories do you have? Note them down, link them to your supporting points. 'Cause one of the things that I often do, and I tell other people not to do, but I do it, it's like, do as I say, not as I do. I'll find a story and be like, ah, that's brilliant, and I'll stick it into my Scrivener file, and I'll find it later and I'll be like, I have literally no idea what I was gonna do with that story. So yeah, make a note of why you have saved this story, and how you think you can link it in to your book. What's the next thing I want people to do?

Joe: Signpost the next chapter?

Vicky: Yeah. So this is really important. Not everybody does this, but I think it's really important, to make the book flow. So, how does this chapter link into the next one? Tie the book together, so that your reader slides smoothly from one chapter to the next.

Joe: It kind of implies we know what the next chapter is, though. And at this point, maybe we don't.

Vicky: That's a really good point, Joe. So if you do know what the next chapter's gonna be, this is gonna be really easy for you. If you don't know yet, come back to this. You can come back to your outline. Your outline can be a living, breathing thing that you can change. Shall we give them some examples?

Joe: Okay.

Vicky: Well we don't have to. How long have we got left?

Joe: I have no idea.

Vicky: 21, we're 20 minutes in.

Joe: We've got a few minutes left.

Vicky: Okay, so, let's use the How to Sell a Crap Load of Books as an example. The first chapter is entitled, Platform Before Book, Way Before. What's the chapter hook, Joe?

Joe: Platform Before Book. Okay, so, the chapter hook, this chapter'll start with a story about Tim Vandehey's clients. One of whom was action film star, Tyrese Gibson. Who on earth is he?

Vicky: I don't know.

Joe: Action film star?

Vicky: Well his book, How to Get Out of Your Own Way, went straight into the New York Times bestseller list. And when it fell off that list, he tweeted his two million Twitter followers to buy it, so it popped back on again. Thus illustrating the importance of building a platform before you start to sell your book. Not all of us are gonna have three million Twitter followers, but--

Joe: It'd be nice.

Vicky: It would be nice. But, if you haven't got a platform at all, it's time to start building one. Do you have 1,000 followers on Instagram?

Joe: Do you have a mailing list?

Vicky: Do you have a mailing list? Do you have 2,000 people who like your Facebook page, or even 500 people, it doesn't matter. You need to build on

this platform. So, that's the chapter hook for this. What's the chapter takeaway for it?

Joe: Start building your bloody platform, long before you publish your book. You need to have these people on your team.

Vicky: And this is all stuff you can be doing, by the way, while you're writing your book. You should be doing it.

Joe: And for general, sensible business reasons, you should be building a platform anyway.

Vicky: Absolutely. So the chapter subtopics that I found by flipping through the chapter and finding their subheadings, is Planting Isn't Harvesting, you know, once you set up your platform, you've gotta actually build it. It's not enough to just plant your tomatoes, I think is the analogy they use. You can just plant your tomatoes, you need to nurture them and then pull 'em off the thing.

Joe: And pinch the bits off.

Vicky: Pinch the bits, yeah.

Joe: Pinch them.

Vicky: Another subtopic is The Four C's, which is consistency, constancy, coordination and connection.

Joe: So this about don't be sporadic, don't be, don't--

Vicky: We don't need to explain all these, this is just--

Joe: Oh okay, yeah. Don't want loads of ridiculous effort.

Vicky: Another subtopic, Getting Traction, another subtopic, Volume, Volume, Volume, basically publish a shit load of stuff. Another subtopic, You Got Game, it takes time to do this stuff. Another subtopic, When to Start. You know, when do you start publishing on the internet, social media, blah blah

blah. And, final subtopic, How Long Things Should Take. So that's all of their subtopics that they stuck in their first chapter, which was Platform Before Book. The supporting stories, they used parallels with planting a garden.

Joe: Tomatoes.

Vicky: Like I said, the tomatoes thing. A guy called Danzarella from HubSpot about press releases, he was talking about press releases, and they talked about Michael Hyatt, who was talking about expertise. So those are the stories they used. They actually didn't signpost the next chapter, but they could've done, by linking the importance of a platform to the fact that selling books is always 10 times harder than you think it will be. Which is chapter two, which is The Rule of 10. Which is what that means.

Joe: And off they go again with topics and hooks and subtopics.

Vicky: Exactly. And that, my fine feathered friend, is how you outline your book. It's pretty much--

Joe: I mean, there's a lot of information there.

Vicky: There is, but it doesn't take that long to do. You can outline your entire book in less than a day, easily. Easily. I would say in half a day, depending on how much of an idea you've got about what you want to talk about.

Joe: And depending, presumably, if you have a moment where you think, oh, I've just had a brilliant subtopic idea, you can look through your outline, and say, well it should really sit in this chapter. You can add it in, and you start editing that chapter, and off you go. It's all good.

Vicky: Exactly. So, yeah, once you've done that for your first chapter, you just repeat it for all of the others, and your book is all but written.

Joe: Do you find that following that technique leads to chapters that all, it feels formulaic? I guess you've gotta be careful that you're not boiler plating these chapters together in such a way that they all feel like the same sort of structure. You might have to mix it up a little bit.

Vicky: It's a really good question, but no, it's not something that has ever worried me, or does worry me. Because, the chapter hook of every chapter is gonna be different. It might be that you've got a story to tell for the first chapter, and that's how you start the hook. It might be that the second chapter starts with not a story, actually, but a parable or a real life example, or a fact, an interesting fact. So you don't start every chapter the same way.

Joe: So I guess yeah, you gotta be careful that all of your chapter hooks aren't all anecdotes. Or aren't all disasters from other people's businesses, or something. You need to be--

Vicky: Mix it up a bit.

Joe: A bit conscious about what you're doing.

Vicky: Yeah, and if you think about all of your subtopics, you have to have subtopics, you have to order what you're gonna talk about and how you're gonna talk about it. Because otherwise it's just gonna be a big word salad. And so, it is a good question, and I understand your concern, but it's not something that's gonna be a worry. Because apart from anything else, each chapter's gonna be different, and also, human beings, we like formula, we like to know what--

Joe: We like to know what to expect.

Vicky: We do, yeah. Especially with stuff like that. And so that's why if you do any research into storytelling, if you deviate from storytelling conventions, your story probably won't work. Because, romances, they have very specific things that need to happen, and when you deviate from that, the story does not work. You know? It's really interesting, because you think, oh, I want to write something, it's kind of why, it's like *Ulysses* by James Joyce breaks all of the story conventions. And yes, it's considered to be one of the literary masterpieces of the 20th century, but it's incredibly difficult to read.

Joe: It's not fun.

Vicky: I dunno, there are people who will say they love it, I don't love it. I've tried to read it, I don't love it. I'm not gonna slag it off, 'cause it's James Joyce,

and not gonna do that. But, he broke all of the rules, and it's not a book that's easy to read, and it's not a book that a lot of people have read. And there is a reason for that. So, I dunno, just keep that in mind. But yes, that is, I hope that you're gonna listen to this and think, jeeppers, I could just outline my book and get going.

Joe: And if you've listened to this and it's just too much information, too fast, you need to look in the show notes, get the link, go and download it.

Vicky: And even better, go and buy my book.

Joe: Or buy the book!

Vicky: Yeah. I actually do know what I'm talking about. Pretty good at this.

Joe: Sometimes.

Vicky: I dunno, sometimes I think, I'm having a day where I think I'm pretty good at this.

Joe: Nice.

Vicky: Other days, I'm like, oh my God, everything's rubbish. But yeah, you can buy my book from moxiebooks.co.uk/buythebook or from Amazon. It'll be available on Amazon, I think by the time this comes out.

Joe: Cool.

Vicky: Yeah. Thanks, Joe.

Joe: No worries.

Vicky: So, what are we doing next week?

Joe: I have no idea.

Vicky: Oh, what's the takeaway?

Joe: Oh, takeaway, don't start by writing the book, start by writing down your ideas, breaking them down into chunks, having your hooks, and your ideas, and your sub-ideas, and plan. Plan it all out.

Vicky: Look look, I did plan the next week.

Joe: Oh okay, so next week, we've got collecting stories, how to flesh out your book on top of the outline.

Vicky: And start actually writing it.

Joe: Start actually writing the thing.

Vicky: Yeah, which'll be quite cool. I don't know if this fits in with the content plan that Harriet and I have made, so she might be listening to this at the moment and tearing her hair out.

Joe: Sorry Harriet.

Vicky: Sorry. And on that note, I would also like to thank Harriet for all of her hard work, and looking after me, and putting up with my last minute changes of launch date, which has changed again.

Joe: Harriet, you're basically amazing.

Vicky: You are basically amazing. And, Harriet, by the way, also runs a fantastic burlesque business in Spain, in Barcelona, and she teaches people burlesque, and she is a wonderful burlesque dancer. So, I'm just gonna put that out there. And I also wanted to thank very much the Podfly team, because, again, they put up with my last minute changes, and my last minute, oh, I can't get the podcast to you until the last minute, i.e. now. So thank you so much guys, you do a fantastic job.

Joe: Yeah, if you fancy putting a podcast together, and you have no idea how to, we'd recommend--

Vicky: Podfly.

Joe: Having a chat with the Podfly guys.

Vicky: Yeah, they're awesome.

Joe: They'll sort you out.

Vicky: Thank you guys. And we'll be back same time next week. In the meantime, book's out, moxiebooks.co.uk/buythebook And, if you've listened to, oh yeah, thank you Joe. That's the--

Joe: Is this the print on demand Amazon one?

Vicky: Yeah, actually, it's a really nice quality. We'll talk about that next week. Remind us.

Joe: Not bad.

Vicky: I'm really pleased with it. So yeah, you can buy that. And, if you've listened to every episode, please email me with your postal address, because I've got a little gift to send you.

Joe: Nice.

Vicky: 'Cause that's crazy. And if you like the podcast, please go and subscribe on iTunes, and rate us and review us!

Joe: Yay!

Vicky: Five stars.

Joe: Five stars.

Vicky: Five stars. If you leave us a review, that'll make Joe really happy, he really loves the reviews.

Joe: I do like a good review.

Vicky: I like a good review too.

Joe: If you didn't enjoy this podcast, other podcasts are available.

Vicky: Yes, that is also true. Yeah, right.

Joe: Right?

Vicky: Yeah. We'll be back same time next week.

Joe: Bye!

Vicky: Bye!

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