

Limitless Life Experience Podcast

How to get speaking gigs

Transcript

Welcome to the Limitless Life Experience Podcast with me, your host, Suzy Ashworth. I'm a mum of three, a multiple-six-figure serial entrepreneur, business strategist, Hay House author, speaker, coach and believer in miracles. I help female entrepreneurs like you go from confusion to clarity when it comes to creating messaging that converts browsers into buyers so that you can build a business that makes a real difference in the world and helps you live a life without limitations. This is the limitless life experience.

Hello, hello, hello, you gorgeous human being! Welcome back to the Limitless Life Experience podcast show, with me, your host, Suzy Ashworth.

Today we are going to be diving deep into how you can get your first, second or more speaking gigs. This is a question that I am being asked more and more frequently, either from a perspective of 'Can I come and speak on your stage?' or 'How did you get that gig?'. This is a really great opportunity to share with you what are the biggest turn-offs when people ask me whether they can speak on my stages and really the things that I have done to build up my speaking credibility and receive more invitations.

So let's start with the turn-offs. There is nothing more awkward than somebody that you don't know very well, who you don't know their business, you have never seen them speak publicly, you've never seen them speak online, you really just don't know who they are and what they stand for and what their values are, say, 'I'm going to speak on your stage one day!' People have said that to me and I'm like, 'Oh, OK!' And I get it because I talk a lot about confidence and 'You have to vision yourself into it' and 'You have to speak yourself into it'. However, what I want you to understand is that when people have paid money to come and sit in person – not to have you on in the background with a webinar that you're kind of like half listening to, half not listening to, but they are there, they've paid money and they're using their most precious commodity, which is time, to be in your space – that is one of the most valuable platforms you will ever have the opportunity to speak on. It's so valuable and I think that people who are not running their own events underestimate the value of being gifted somebody else's audience. I mean that not just from a live perspective actually, but *also* with a webinar and *also* with a masterclass. When you are offered that opportunity (and it *is* an opportunity), and when you do a really good job, when you understand how to put together a presentation (whether there is a pitch or not), how you can convert those eyeballs and ears into new subscribers, new raving fans, new clients, it is really, really incredibly valuable. So when somebody is assumptive in saying, 'I'm going to speak on your stage', that is a **big turn-off**.

So my first piece of advice is: always be humble in your approach, particularly if it's somebody who is five, six, or even three steps ahead. The stage is the stage and it's still super valuable. So the first question that I want people to be asking is: 'What's the process for applying to speak at your event?'. That is a way more respectful and serious way to approach a host of an event in a way that they are going to receive that much, much more openly to that kind of assumptive close.

The second thing that is going to not work in your favour is if you're not speaking. I have done this with people who I have faith in and who I have believed in and thought, 'This person, I would love to have

them on the stage, I think they're ready for this opportunity', and it has worked in my favour and it's worked against me. As my platform gets bigger – I'm not necessarily charging more for my events but one day I may do – it is more and more important to me that I feel incredibly confident that whoever gets to speak on my stage knows how to captivate an audience. So if you don't have any speaking experience, particularly live speaking experience on a stage, that's the first place to start: with smaller stages, where the risk is low, so that you can gain some experience and be able to say to whoever it is that you are pitching, 'I have spoken on X, Y and Z stage.' If you haven't done that, I definitely at least want to have heard your podcast or heard you being interviewed on a podcast or seen numerous videos, so I can see how you engage, I can see your facial expressions, I can see how you go back and forth with the people who are on your Facebook live or your Instagram live. I want to see you speak, and if you haven't done that, it's going to be difficult for you to gain those bigger stages. Don't try and run before you have actually walked.

So those are the two big turn-offs for me right now: that assumptive close and not really having any experience and so just trying to jump the gun a little bit. Sometimes – not all of the time, but *sometimes* – you *do* have to earn your stripes, and when it's a stage where people haven't paid ticket money to come and see you but you're representing the host, that is one of the times where I believe that you *do* have to earn your stripes.

So what can you do to get those invitations or put yourself in a really great position when you pitch somebody for them to say, 'Yeah, I'd love to have you on'? This is really just an extension of the last one: not speaking is a turn-off so *just speak!* I want to see you practising talking. The more you talk on a stage – that can be on a podcast, on a Facebook live, on an Instagram live, doing a small workshop to four or five people – the more you do that, the more you're going to be able to hone your stories, the more you're going to learn the secrets of speaking effectively, the more confident you're going to be able to be when you do pitch people to be on their stage because you can say, 'I've been speaking for the last two years. Here's my speaker reel.'

When I say 'speaker reel', you can pay somebody a couple of hundred pounds to go through your Facebook page and just edit together some good Facebook lives. 'I haven't spoken on stage before, but here are some of my lives where I'm getting really great engagement and you can get a flavour of the type of things that I have to talk about.' So please, please, please, please, if you want to speak, then you need to speak. It's like if you want to write a book or be a writer, then you have to write. So that is the number one thing that I am inviting you to do.

Number two is make the mindset shift. On your Instagram bio, on your sign-off for your emails, be saying that you are a speaker. I did this before I was an author: 'writer, speaker'. As soon as I'd got my TEDx, 'I'm a TEDx speaker'. Be letting people know all of the time that you are that person, so you're just planting the seeds before you've ever pitched them or before they've ever had their event idea.

The other thing that you can do is **create a speaker page** on your website where you outline your key topics, what your experience is, what your specialities are. Put that on your website so you're just emotionally, mentally and psychologically moving into that space and letting the universe know that you are available for speaking gigs.

The third thing – and this is the thing that I did that I absolutely believe changed the game for me – was I put on my first event two years ago. There were 40 people in the room (I think I'd sold 50 tickets) and I also sold from the stage. So I did a half-day event, it was amazing, and I think I sold nine places on my

course, which was the Limitless Life Experience (it's not available any more but do you see the thread here?!). And I was like, 'Wow, that was amazing!' And I have to say actually, even before that, the first mastermind I ever sold, where I think I charged £500 for three months and then at the end of the three months we met up in an Airbnb – that's an event. It was an in-person event where people came to see me. I think there were maybe five or six women at that event and it was three years ago. That was the mastermind, I was pregnant at the time and I left that event and I was absolutely shattered, but I knew at that point that **live and in person** *had* to be a part of my business model because it was *such* an incredible day.

So what I'm saying here is I put on my own events and I put on my own stages. The first one that I talked about – where I sold the Limitless Life Experience course – that was an event that was purely targeted at baby business owners, and it was such a rush but that was the first 'proper stage'. That's how I grew in confidence and knew, 'Right, I can do this!' And because I created my own stage and I had a videographer there so that they were able to catch promo from the event, I then had social media collateral that I was able to share and so other people were able to start seeing me as a speaker. I was no longer just telling them that I was a speaker: they could *see* it because I had that video footage.

So I really recommend, even more so than a photographer (it's great to have the shot of you with the microphone, don't get me wrong, but even more so than a photographer) that videography, so that you can create a one-minute, one-to-two-minute social-media promo and then you rinse it and that sells out your next event, but more importantly, it lets people know that, 'Oh, this person is serious.'

The next getting-speaking-gigs hack is investing in people's programmes and going to their live events. So if you listen to the podcast, you will know that in June I go to Iceland to speak at the Selfmade Summit. It's the largest event for entrepreneurs in Europe, which is super exciting. How did I get that speaking gig? Well, a couple of ways, actually – a couple of things did it.

The first and most important thing is that I had a relationship with the host, Sigrun. I had invested in her coaching three years ago. When I got my Hay House book deal, I was working with Sigrun, so we knew each other. We had a relationship. Every now and again, you will see me list out all of the coaches, all of the programmes that have made the most significant impact on me and in my life, and she is one of those people. So you will see me paying tribute to her, alongside lots of other people. I do that as a way of appreciation to say thank you for helping me get to where I am. Those acknowledgements, I believe, go a long way with people and help to continue the relationship. Whenever she had a successful launch and shared her numbers, I was there in her inbox saying, 'That was amazing, you're incredible, it's amazing to see you rise.' I just really love to check in with people and love to celebrate them as I see them doing amazing things. And so I kept that relationship. We only worked together for three months, but I kept that relationship going by just acknowledging and checking in with her successes.

And then what she saw for me was some footage from me speaking at the Self-love Summit. Whenever you speak at an event, if it's filmed, make sure you get the footage of you. I asked numerous times whether that first issue was ready because it took a little bit of time to get the edited version, but I'm so glad that I did. Not only was it an incredible event where I ended up on stage with around 80 women all in their underwear, but obviously that was captured on film, so what that did – that and another clip of me talking about how we deal with feelings, or probably more accurately how we often choose not to deal with our feelings – she got to see me in action and she got to see the way that I can hold a stage, captivate a stage and *move* people, emotionally and physically (literally!) into sometimes doing really

crazy things! So I'd invested in working with her, I had kept in contact, kept our relationship going and she got to see me in action through other events, and because of all of those things I got the invitation.

Next on my list is to **write a book**. Lots of people have asked me, 'Should I get published or should I self-publish?', and it really depends on what your key objective is, but for a lot of people, writing a book is not about becoming a #1 *New York Times* bestseller, it is a credibility marker – credibility and authority – and you can absolutely get that through self-publishing. What that does is position you as an expert in your field and automatically gives you the niche and the specialist subjects that you can pitch yourself as being the one person that they need to have on their stage, talking about your particular subject matter.

Perhaps it goes without saying, but being good – *really* good – at what you do gets you noticed. It gets people talking about you on social media. It gets your clients saying amazing things about who you are and what you stand for and how you supported them. It means that your peers feel really, really comfortable in saying, 'I've got this opportunity. Would you like to hop on board?' Just be good. Set that as your intention. And if you, like many of the people that I work with when I first start working with them, have a few confidence issues, look at the results – that's your evidence. And really *respect* your results, don't belittle them. Don't be like, 'Well, that was easy.' Look at the results that you've got and let that feed your own confidence loop.

Finally, pick your friends wisely. I don't mean 'Be covert in who you hang around with', but your business buddies, your biz friendships, when you are authentic (put that in, that big bold wording!), when you are authentic and you like somebody, be intentional about building relationships with them. I remember, a year and a half into my business, I would be in different groups of people that I had invested in and I would see people, their names pop up again and again and again and I would see what they were celebrating in their businesses and what they were celebrating in their lives, and through observing people online, I'd be like, 'I want to be friends with that person, I want to be in that person's inner circle', and I would write – this sounds really stalkerish but I would write the names down, like 'This is on my vision board! I'm going to be friends with that person, and I'm going to be friends with that person!' And what do you know?! Through genuine and authentic opportunities, I *did* build relationships with people.

Often, my clients say, 'How did you get into this circle? How did you get into that circle?' I invested in courses (and not necessarily theirs – it might have been courses that they were a part of, so that's a coincidence), more strategically I have invested in people's courses and I've invested in coaching. And then through being a good student, through showing up, through making them look good, I then built relationships with them and then they opened up their networks. This is an important one actually, because not everybody is generous with their networks, and certainly not everybody that I have worked with has been generous with their networks.

And for me that has been, particularly as I've built my business, I have intentionally looked for people who are abundantly minded when it comes to their connections, and I have invested at a high level (so I haven't been like, 'Oh, I invested in your £200 course, can you share all of your best friends with me?' No, I have invested at a high level) and then through those investments, those friends have come and done workshops, or been at events that I've been at, and then I've had the opportunity to build new connections and friendships, and then from that, opportunities to speak on podcasts, speak on stages, go to workshops, just hang out, and then from that hanging out, there have been new opportunities. That has been the way that it has worked.

Finally – I want to give it its own point, even though I mentioned it earlier on, but I didn't really emphasise it – it doesn't matter what programme you are in, when you are a good student and you shout and celebrate about what it is that you're doing (not in an arrogant, egotistical way, but just like, 'Yay, I did this, and it ended up like that'), even if you're in somebody's programme who doesn't have a stage, there'll be other people who are in there. So how I got my invitation to speak in Australia in 2019 was because I was sharing about the successes of my business in a group that I was in and somebody who has an amazing event in Australia said, 'I love watching you rise, I've been watching you for the last few years, I'd love to have you on my podcast and would you be interested in talking at my event next year?', I was like, 'Um, yes!!!' So be good at what you do, talk about what you do and really look to build authentic relationships.

One of my dream goals is to speak at Mindvalley University. So guess what we'll be doing, if not this year, definitely next year?! It's going to Mindvalley University, myself, my husband and the family. And then because of the places that I have invested, I have two contacts with the people at Mindvalley, and so through at least one of those contacts I will be looking to see where might there be an opportunity for me to connect with the people that I need to connect with in order to start building that relationship. So eventually, whether it is this year or next year or the year after or in three years' time, I will be thinking about where are the opportunities for me to build that relationship for me to get onto that stage. All of those things I am thinking about, I will be using the same strategies for the stages that I want to speak on that I've just shared with you here, and for sure they work, so get to it!

Let me do a quick recap for you:

1. I want you to speak. You need to be speaking if you want to be a speaker – on your own platform, so use your Facebook, use your Instagram, use your YouTube.
2. Add a speaker bio and a speaker page to your website.
3. Create your own stage. It doesn't need to be big, it can be a mini stage, but to give you that experience and confidence and to let other people know that you're not really asking for their audience to test yourself on.
4. Invest in people's programmes and their coaching and go to their events. Let them see who you are.
5. Maybe write a book so that you're able to position yourself as the go-to expert in X niche
6. Be really great at what you do.
7. Pick your biz buddies wisely. Always be authentic, but look to see who is making moves, who is living the life, who is doing what it is that you want to do? Where are they hanging out? Start hanging out and start building those relationships so that you can make those connections and maybe eventually end up on their stages or the stage of their friends because of the relationships you have invested in.

So that is it from me for today. If you have got any value from this podcast and you feel a friend would get some value from this podcast, please feel free to share the word. And if you can take the time to leave me a review on iTunes, that would be crazily amazing.

And, after all of that good stuff, please remember that faith plus action equals miracles.