

THE WEALTHY SPEAKER

John Beede (SpeakerCareer.com) interviews Jane Atkinson (SpeakerLauncher.com)

John Beede: Hello everybody. My name is John Beede. Welcome to another expert interview series call.

Today I have Jane Atkinson on the line with me. She is the author of *The Wealthy Speaker 2.0*. This is my copy. It is dog eared, it's covered in notes, and I believe that this, out of all books in print for trained speakers, has the most condensed, packed information that is the most valuable. I highly, highly recommend it. It helps me greatly in my speaking career.

Jane has over twenty years of experience as an agent and as an executive of a bureau. Now she's a coach, training speakers like you to get their start and take their career into the five-thousand-dollar, ten-, twenty-thousand-dollar fee range per speech.

I'm very excited, Jane. Thank you for being on the call with us.

Jane Atkinson: Oh, I'm so excited to be with you. Thank you.

JB: Sure. Let's connect the people on the call with you. Tell us how you got your start. Where has this speaking industry, in this crazy world, taken you and what does your life look like today?

JA: Well, I think twenty-three, twenty-four years ago I was wandering aimlessly through my life and didn't really have any career in mind for myself. I had done a lot of really awesome, cool jobs, worked at ski resorts, cruise ships, all kinds of fun things, and had landed at 3M here in Canada. I was just doing temp jobs and knew that I wasn't going to try to climb the corporate ladder, but I loved business. So I had absorbed everything along the way.

Anyway, I stumbled on a Les Brown video on PBS and I taped it on VHS at the time, and I watched it over...

JB: We do know it's twenty-five years ago, then. [laughter]

JA: Yes, exactly. I watched it over and over and over again. It was this "live your dream" speech and it was all about how if you can believe it, you can achieve it—that kind of stuff. And if you can look up, you can get up. I had never seen a motivational speaker until then and it was really quite fascinating to me, the idea of reading books and getting your own MBA in whatever topic you were interested in.

I was fascinated by that and so I became a sponge. I thought, 'That's it, on my next job move I'm going to work for a motivational speaker.' Lo and behold, be careful what you ask for because within thirty days I had my first job as director of marketing for a speaker here in London, Ontario, Canada.

JB: I know, I get the chills. [laughter]



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JA: I know. It happens so fast sometimes. I went into, it was a woman named Beth, an amazing author of a book about creating champions, about leadership. I worked with her for three years, basement office, straight commission. It was a really amazing, she was a fantastic mentor. It was a terrific learning experience. I then got recruited out to Vancouver to work with... I went from, really, this impoverished situation to working for a multi-millionaire, Peter Legg, flying around in private jets and helicopters. It was the complete opposite of what I'd been weaned on.

And then I got recruited down to Dallas to work with the Canadian Olympic athlete Vince Poscente. I worked with him for four years and took him from zero to eighty engagements a year. That entire time, for the years I lived in Dallas, I worked under the roof of his wife's speakers' bureau and watched them grow that company from, there were only four of us in the office and a dog at first, but when I left it was about thirty people.

JB: [laughter] The dog took a lot of those commissions.

JA: [laughter] So it was a really amazing experience. Then 9/11 hit and I moved back to Canada, started my own company, Speaker Launcher, and I'm over ten years now doing my own thing where I coach people. Really, my goal is to make other people successful because that's how I'm successful.

When I was in Dallas, over ten years ago, I sat down with my life coach, a guy named Rich, out of California, and he helped me map out what I wanted my life to look like. That's exactly what it is today.

JB: You're doing it, you're living the dream.

JA: I'm living the dream. [laughter]

JB: That's fantastic.

JA: I can honestly say I'm living the dream.

JB: That's so cool. I'm very excited for this because you clearly have a load of experience in a variety of different capacities. Your book's called *The Wealthy Speaker 2.0*. In your mind, what is a wealthy speaker? You've coached them now for ten years. What is that? Paint both the dream of what that looks like and how can someone create... if you were their life coach, how would you help someone create the dream of how they can become a wealthy speaker?

JA: Well, when I go and give presentations I speak to mostly groups of speakers and I'll say, "Imagine the perfect day and put a" [audio cuts]. It might involve standing in front of ten thousand people, it might involve standing in front of ten executives. Everybody is looking to create what's perfect for them. It might involve travelling overseas. It might involve, "Ooh I just got six engagements all within driving distance of my house." The people who were road warriors, they craved that because



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they've already been there and done that and they've got the t-shirt of the overseas travel club. I really help people in that exercise in the beginning of the book.

JB: Got the t-shirt. [laughter]

JA: I help people figure out what is perfect for them, because what's perfect for me isn't maybe perfect for you, isn't maybe perfect for some of the people listening. The idea of "wealthy" is, first of all, I talk about it as being a mindset. Moving out of the struggle mode is such an important element here, and there really is some mental conditioning involved with actually stepping into what it is that you want. You can pay lip service to it, but if you are sabotaging it... I sabotaged myself when I worked out west for the multi-millionaire. It was coming too easily to me and I was just like, "Wow." So after two years, I said, "I've got to go." I'm making too much money and even though out of a hundred people in the company I was always there the latest at night, I didn't feel like I deserved it, so I hadn't stepped into what I was capable of just yet. It was too much for me too fast.

JB: It's almost like there was a self-worth thing going on where you didn't feel you were valuable enough to the company to get what you were receiving.

JA: Exactly, and so I needed to catch up to my own mental space in order to go on. Then there have been times when the opposite of that is true, where I've been walking, the river's right behind me here, and I've been walking along the river and thinking to myself, 'Okay, I need to play a bigger game, I need to step up. I'm playing small, I'm playing it safe, I have some of the things that I want, but I could be doing so much more.' A big pivot came over ten years ago when I was turning forty. I decided I was going to really step into my fullest potential. Part of that mental conditioning to get there was writing the book. That's what was really required to step fully into who I was going to be in the next chapter.

JB: I'm smiling right now because I remember a line in there saying "Why not embrace the house by the river," and now here you are in it. It's cool to see it happen. This is real. [laughter]

JA: [laughter] And I used to eyeball us right next door. They're our best friends, Jeff and Trish live there. The reason I liked it was because they have a balcony off the bedroom and I always thought, 'They never spend any time out there, so I figure I'm okay.' I love our house. [laughter]

JB: [laughter] I think what you're talking about right now plays in really closely to speakers. When you think first, 'I can't go out for two thousand dollars for a speech. How would my words equate to two thousand dollars?' Then there are these mental caps: 'I can't go out and charge seventy-five hundred for a speech,' or twelve thousand five hundred, and it continues up like that. I think that's a nice example of a struggle a lot of speakers go through.

JA: Well, let me give you a perfect example. I have a client named Ryan Estes. He has climbed the ladder quickly, significantly, so when he first quit his job at the worst time to really quit a job in



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America, maybe four or five years ago, his company was downsizing and he volunteered his position. He was a VP and he was freaking out, so we started at five thousand dollars. "Oh no, I don't know if they're going to pay me that." Then I convinced him he was worth it. Next thing I know we're talking about seventy-five hundred. "Yes, I'm not sure," and boom, he stepped into it. Then he got into the groove of it and he went to ten and then he went to twelve five no problem. I remember at the fifteen-thousand mark he started to question things again: "Is this really... am I giving them enough value?"

What I talk to people about is, it's not about the one hour of time you're with them. It's about the twenty years of your experience that are going into that hour. That's what people will pay for, and so by the time he was at fifteen thousand he was booked solid. People were being turned away a lot, and getting angry about it even. So he went from fifteen to seventeen five and then to twenty and I said, "Okay, so how's it feel at twenty?" He said, "Surprisingly, getting very little push back at twenty; we got more at seventeen five than I'm getting at twenty." There were certain places along the way where I just had to convince him, "Dude, you're worth it, you'll see this someday, you're worth it," and really, he's out there blowing it up. He's really, right now, the biggest success story from zero to a million dollars in about three to four years, and that's with a lot of doing it right.

JB: Do you think that had he just had the mindset to start with he could have started at fifteen or twenty thousand?

JA: I think he needed to catch up with his confidence and he needed to also build some momentum. There are people who could enter the market at that price. I have a client who is the former editor and chief of Cosmopolitan magazine, so she has a level of notoriety already about her. She could have gone out at fifteen easily.

There are a few people I've worked with who can step right out of their CEO positions into 15k, but I think that most people need to feel a little momentum behind them as they go up in price in order to feel confident with it.

You know, for me, I just look at the calendar. My calendar is full and I'm booking a month in advance or two months in advance as it has been this past year, and then I know, "Okay, it's time to raise my fee" because I need to get my calendar back at manageable. Therefore, it's okay to raise your fee because while you might get fewer clients, they're going to be at better fees.

JB: A big lesson for me has been learning to value my own life and my own time. That is what has put my speaking fee higher because, "If a thousand students want to hear me talk, sure, I'll go out and do it for three thousand dollars." Suddenly I'm out for three months on end and I don't have any sort of life. It's like, "Wow. I really need to value myself." I think that's a huge part for speakers.



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JA: Oh, and the education market can just chew you up and spit you out. They really, really work you hard for not a lot of pay. That's really one of my big roles as a coach, helping people. Just the last call before we got on this interview, she was saying, "Well, they're doing these multiple engagements," and so she dropped her price fifty percent, and I'm like, "Fifty percent is too much. You need to come back and you're going to have to get on a plane three times. I wouldn't get on a plane for less than this," so we were really... The ability to have someone else tell you that you're worth it is priceless, really.

JB: I think I know that client. I think I spoke for them, I think I actually know them. [laughter] All right, let's jump on to the next question here. How can speakers choose a subject that is both authentic to them and one that meeting planners actually are interested in booking?

JA: Well, my goal is to have people have an intersection of where passion and profits meet. So something that you are passionate about but something that is going to be profitable. We have this form in the book that helps people decide. They list all of the ideas that they have, and then they rate them based on five different criteria. I really believe that by assigning numbers to it you can take the emotions out of the decision of what you should be speaking on. So, if your profit number comes out high and your passion number comes out high and there are a few others in there as well, it feels like a no-brainer that this is the right path for you to go down. If you think that you're going to be bored to tears speaking about the subject five years from now, you probably don't want to pick that lane. And it's not to say that we don't change lanes, but the goal is that we just add or we widen the lane a little bit, or even narrow the lane in some cases.

Let's say I want to do leadership. Then I decide one day it's not leadership anymore, I want to do social media. There's no highway in between. You're just picking up...

JB: Just rebranding and starting over...

JA: ...I'm leaving all my clients behind and I'm going over here now. Instead you could steer your clients over towards something else that is leadership-related.

JB: Okay. If somebody hears, "Social media is big right now," I'm going to talk about social media, what's the criteria for them to say, "Yes, this is the right fit for me versus..." Do you see what I'm getting at? Can you just pick a subject to speak about because it's hot right now? When do your credentials make you an expert in the field?

JA: Right. Well, "hot" is definitely not one of my criteria because usually if it's hot now it's going to be cold at some point, so I look for the things that have longevity. A lot of the things that fall under the leadership umbrella, they've been around for a long, long time and people will always need to groom their leaders. Sales audiences are always going to have pick-me-up conferences and meetings because salespeople are constantly looking for new ideas and ways that they can sell



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more. People who speak about change, I don't think that change is ever going to stop, and even the motivational and inspirational-type speakers, they're always going to be needed. They've never really gone out of fashion. So I would look at some of the stable topics and then say, "Is there an interesting spin that I can put on it that has something to do with what's going on today?" I have several clients—and I actually believe that this is going to be one that's going to be around for a long time to come—that speak on generations. "Generations" is becoming that leadership topic where there are a lot of different elements. It can be communication between the generations, it can be Gen Y, it can be Gen V, Millennials, it can be Gen Z; it's this new thing that's kind of a melting pot of generations. There are all kinds of different ways to come at it, so I think that is one that will be around for a little while.

I would say try to pick something that you're passionate about, but you also need to be able to prove that you're credible to speak on it. You know that ten-thousand-an-hour idea is something to keep in mind when it comes to your own credibility.

JB: You have been an agent and a speakers' bureau executive both. When starting a career, should a speaker focus more on generating celebrity for themselves or proving expertise?

JA: Well, I think going down the celebrity path is, it may come because you're successful. Ryan's a good example of that. He's got some level of celebrity now within the corporate community, but he didn't go out for that reason. I just don't know; celebrity that sounds like that is an idea based in ego, not in what's actually real. In your brand, sure, you want to look good, you want to look polished, you want to look like someone who has it going on. You can do that in your marketing materials, you know, in your website that's easy to show, but you have got to back it up. If you go out with celebrity and nothing backing it up, you'll get one engagement but you'll never get asked back again. The goal is that you're getting two to three spinoffs from every single event so that it becomes easier for you to market yourself. That's the goal and so I would say that celebrity will come if you're good enough. Focus on the expertise and it will come.

JB: Cool. What are some tips you have for developing expertise or proving it? What are the best ways to demonstrate that in the marketing materials?

JA: Well, what I'm looking for in people's "About Us" page on their website is "What have you done? What is in your background?" A lot of people really gloss over it. You know, so and so worked in the corporate world for twenty years. Yes, okay, but what? What did you do while you were there? I'd like to know. Was it VP of human resources for ABC Company? That's important to me. If you can name drop and feel comfortable with it, then definitely name drop.

JB: I think, even if it's a subject like "I was a hairdresser" and then you speak on customer service like Patricia Fripp or "I was a greeter at Banana Republic." That carries more weight than generically saying "in the corporate world for twenty years."



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JA: Yes, exactly, or worked their way up from receptionist of this company to being a vice president. That's a great success story. When people are trying to figure out what they want to be an expert on, I'll always ask them, "What have you done in your life over and over and over again that's really proven to be successful for you?"

I have a client who rose up in a situation where, really, she was one of the first in her family to go to university. She was one of the first very young African-American women to work in Congress in Washington. She's a lawyer, she's done all these amazing things, and really hasn't put it on her bio. It's helpful to have somebody tell you, "Oh yes, that's important, put that on there." She's done something, she has some formula that has helped her rise up and get to this place in her life and her career. That can help other people. There are other young women, or young black women, who are saying, "Yes, she can do that, then I can live my dreams too." It's very inspirational.

JB: I think there are a lot of people out there who are saying, "If only I had a Jane in my life right now," or "If only I had someone who booked me eighty gigs a year; that's what I need." What do you think is the right time to approach bureaus and agents, or to find someone like you or to contact you, and how do you maintain those relationships?

JA: Well, I've often told people, first of all, it's a tricky relationship to get working properly. We're trying to throw money to solve a problem and a lot of times it doesn't work. What I will say is that you would do yourself a service by spending three years working the business yourself, by understanding how to sell yourself. Then you can train somebody on how to sell you.

The first woman I worked for, Betska, she knew how to sell herself. She knew all kinds of things about the business. She didn't say, "Come on in here, it's the blind leading the blind, we're going to be successful." She said, "Here's what it takes." I listened, I absorbed, I... there was this set of tapes, remember when you got cassette tapes in a book?

JB: Oh, yes. [laughter]

JA: Oh, exactly. I listened to them over and over again. It was Tom Wininger, booklet one and booklet two. We just hung out in Washington and I said, "You know, I studied that profusely when I got into the profession." But I think knowing how to sell yourself is the absolute key to training somebody else to do it for you. You really have to spend a lot of time on the front end training them. It may take a long time before they get a booking, which is why people often get discouraged and the situation doesn't work out.

You should have some momentum. When you're losing business because you don't have someone following up leads for you, that's when it's a really good time to hire. When you have no business you need to get out there and plant those seeds yourself.



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JB: I like that answer. That's brilliant. Assume somebody has an ideal subject, they've got an entertaining speech and they've positioned themselves as an expert. How can they then find people who will book them to speak? During those three years, what are the processes to actually locate people who can pay them to get booked onto their stages?

JA: The way we start is by narrowing it down to industry. We'll start with the associations in that industry. Let's say you speak on "generations" and you know that in insurance they have tons and tons of generational issues. You know, the old guard in insurance and all the new people coming in. We would start with the associations that house the leaders in insurance, and start planting seeds. Think of it like a farmer's field; you're planting, planting, planting and then you may have to go back and fertilise, which doesn't mean necessarily what you think. We want good content, no BS. [laughter] We want to throw good content on top of it, let them know, keep it in touch with them in particular ways. We might have a process that involves, it used to be called Sendcall. We would call and send something out and then we would follow up. Now it might be that we do a phone call, we do an email, we send a postcard, we send an article. We have a process of things that we would be touching them with to both plant the seed and then fertilise it. It's really a numbers game; once you have enough seeds, there's the harvest. So we would be going straight after probably, depending on the fee, let's say my speaker was five thousand dollars. I'd say, "That's a good fee for state associations." So we would find the right association and then go state to state and see if we couldn't get into those conferences.

JB: To each association in all fifty states or wherever those associations are?

JA: Well, we tend to go with the bigger ones. We don't spend a lot of time working on the Rhode Island Association of Insurance Agents and anything like that. [laughter]

JB: What have you got against Rhode Island?

JA: The little teeny tiny states don't often have the biggest budgets, so they sometimes will do regional things with other people, but, yes, go to Texas and you're more likely to get funded.

JB: I cannot for the life of me get into New Hampshire, so I'll go there for free if I need to. [laughter]

I love that you talked about this campaign of mixing it up with different media. That's something that I definitely teach at our beginnings because just to do email, call, email and then quit, and then as you develop your career and go out for higher fees, you could start adding physical mailings, which are a bit more expensive, but certainly set you apart from the crowd. Can you give an example of how many pieces you'll send before you'll quit on somebody?

JA: Well, I think everybody's going to have their threshold and how much they have the ability to spend. I have a client, we were talking about it this morning. We were going to do... he was too late for the conferences this year, so we're starting now for next year. I suggested doing an oversized



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postcard that's going to be beautiful with a saying from him that will be something that people will post up. Maybe it was about leadership, I actually can't remember even who it was I was talking to. It's, like, three hours ago, sorry. [laughter]

JB: [laughter] So it's not about "hey, book me," but instead "here's something of value."

JA: Here's something of value to post on your wall and then when you're thinking... on the other side, you can put as much sales-ey stuff as you want, but my idea was just that it has a nice quote from you that makes people think about this idea of leadership or whatever it was. On the other side, it's "book for all of these different things." If they've read that and posted it on their bulletin boards, then it's all about being at the right place at the right time. My idea was that we'd send out a series of three over the course of a year and that they would all be beautiful.

Oh, I know who it was. It's a guy who works in the travel industry, so it would be a beautiful blue ocean; it's kind of his theme anyway on his website.

JB: And a little shot of the turtle and a cruise ship in the distance.

JA: Talking about selling to the affluent and they were trying to sell these high-end cruise packages. He was going to help them do that and so some quote from him on "remember that your customer is blah, blah, blah," would sit on their bulletin board for the entire year. Hopefully, there'll be two more beside it.

JB: Hopefully they remember that there is something on the opposite side of it when they go in there, go to book the speakers. [laughter]

JA: Yes, exactly. But the huge URL is right there at the bottom of those postcards if you forget.

JB: So somebody can take their hook or the subject that they, not their level of expertise, what they're talking about, but their story, and they can make that into a motivational postcard or something that's engaging and of value to their client.

JA: Yes. You know how people are always quoting other people like Winston Churchill and people like that? Well, quote yourself. I always encourage people to quote themselves because that is, you're making Winston Churchill the expert. Why don't you make yourself the expert? That's why we quote ourselves on our postcards.

JB: I think a great way to find quotes that people resonate with is to just tweet them first. If you get a bunch of retweets or likes and favourites on that tweet, suddenly, okay, that sticks. It may not be your favourite, but it's other people's favourite, so market what works.

JA: Exactly, and you never know. You can't be subjective about your own work. [laughter]



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JB: Yes. The ideal is that meeting planners come to you. Let's say you put up your website and you get a call out of the blue or an email and they say, "Hey, I'm interested in booking you. How much do you charge?" Where do you take that from there? What are some do's and don'ts for negotiating with meeting planners?

JA: Love this question. One of the things that I was a party to when I worked at the Speakers' Bureau, say that I called a speaker to find out about a date or a price, but I was actually busy while I was looking for that information. We had this charm called "show up and throw up." People would show up and then they would just start speaking and they wouldn't be quiet for twenty minutes. Don't do that. Don't do that because people have a very limited amount of time. I would be very respectful of that. You would say, "Well, let me just ask you, do you have time? Can I ask you a couple of questions about your conference first? Then I'll tell you which is the right price for you."

"Okay, yes I do." Okay then, you ask a couple of key questions and let them talk. When it's all you talking, honestly, the more they're talking, the more you can come back with, "Yes, well, actually I have this one particular thing that I'd like to recommend. It's called this. That's why I think it would match up with what you just said." If you're doing an equal balance of talking and listening, I think your calls are going to go much, much better. It's when I have people come on the phone with me and just, blah. You know, they just talk and talk and talk and talk. If I'm a busy meeting planner, that is going to annoy me. I want some information, so check in on the time and see if it's okay to ask a couple of questions. And then if they don't have the time, just give them the information they're after.

JB: So don't hide the fees. "I won't give you the fee until you've jumped through my seven hoops."

JA: Exactly. The same thing goes on with the "Contact Us" page of your website. If I can't find your phone number or a direct email address on your website, that annoys me. If I have to fill out a thirteen-block form in order to get there, also annoying. Make it really, really easy. It's okay to have a form for the people who want to use that, but don't make too much of it mandatory and make sure you have your direct... here's the way to circumvent that, especially a phone number. Oh, it makes me nuts if I can't pick up the phone and call somebody if I'm in a hurry.

JB: You can only AIM instant message me. It's the only way you can book me as a speaker.

JA: That's right, that's right. AIM.

JB: That's valuable. You mentioned a lot of stuff about what meeting planners hate when you're in the conversation in the booking phase. How about at the event itself? "Oh my God, I'm never bringing that person back." What do they say? "That person was a class act, I can't wait to have him back again."



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JA: You can do the best job on the platform, everybody may love, love, love you, but if you go over your time that may be all they remember you for. It comes back to you thinking that what you have to say is more important than what they're... You're just a tiny little cog in this big, giant wheel that is their conference. You're one piece of the whole puzzle and so, to mix my metaphors like I do all of the time, just remember that. Remember what your role is and if somebody else goes over ahead of you, make sure you check in with them. "Do you want me to stick with my finish time? Can I cut stuff?" Always be prepared to cut things and always be prepared to finish when they want you to finish. Somebody else will inevitably go over, usually the president of the company or somebody like that. Fine, that's their prerogative. You need to make up for the time and they don't know what they've missed. Have it chunked down so that you can do that story and that story, and then decide that this story is going. I know people who are whipping through their slides until one second before they go onstage and they do it, they pull it off. You have to be a professional, you have to stick with your time.

I would say the more time you can spend with them, the better. If you can sit through some of the conference leading up to it, it will help you tremendously. You might avoid the gaffe of telling a story that's similar to a story that's already been told. Who's going to look bad? You, because you didn't know and they went before you so they always look better. Even if it's your story, the more time you can spend with them, it ups the rate of spin-off anyway. Try to go in and spend some time with them. If they want you to come to the cocktail party the night before, do that. Whatever your routine is, try to make it work around what they'd like you to do. I think that the more you can do that, no matter what level you're at, people will be impressed.

JB: You reminded me of speaking at an event at Denver. My agent told me that the bureau that booked me for this said, "You've got an hour." The client thought forty-five minutes. They had already gone over the president, and the stuff before me already went over, and so I'm thinking, 'Awesome, I've got an hour.' I watched the video afterwards and it was fifty-eight minutes and I'm going, "Perfect." To this day when I approach other associations of that, or other state associations, they always say, if I'm booked, "Hey, make sure you stick on time, we heard what happened in Denver." And I'm going, "Ahh, come on." [laughter]

JA: "Not my fault."

JB: It sticks with people.

JA: That's a communication issue. It's a communication issue and you need to always be double checking, the day before, the minute before. Have various times that you check in and just run through the particulars. Okay, I'm doing this, I'm doing this, I'm doing this, right, right, right. Just double check because they will sometimes change their mind and in the morning meeting on the day of the conference your time might have gotten changed and nobody let you know.



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JB: The question I always ask now because of that event is, “Do you prefer that I end on time or do you prefer that I go my full forty-five minutes?” or whatever the time. And then, “Whoa, wait, forty-five minutes, no, we were thinking thirty-five” or, “Oh no, end on time, just take all the time you want, just go, we want you.” Then obey what they say. [laughter]

JA: [laughter] That’s nice, that’s exactly right.

JB: At a certain point a speaker is just a hired gun. You go out and you have to physically show up. You do your labour and you get a check, and granted, it’s very honourable, it’s valuable work and it’s highly paid, but then you have to physically go to make money. If somebody ever can’t or they stop wanting to travel to speak, how can they build their empire or their product line if they don’t want to speak any longer?

JA: Well, we’re still trading time for money and as my friend Ian Percy says, we’ve just developed a really nicely paid jaw, but we still have a job. My goal is for myself and my clients to get away from trading time for money. We want to be out on the back deck sipping a glass of wine and hearing the cha-ching go on the computer, which means, “Ah, we just made some money and here I am sipping wine.” That’s the goal.

JB: Life is so hard.

JA: We look at other things that we can do to drive revenue. Of course, products is one of the first things that comes up for people—writing books, etc., and then repurposing them into other things. The thing that I’m really into right now is membership platforms and online communities. What are you doing to bring those audiences with you into your community and then have them pay for something so that they get to hang out with you once a month or whatever it is afterwards. There are speakers out there who are speaking to thousands and thousands of people every month and they’re doing nothing with that opportunity, they’re missing it. I would speak about consulting. Certainly you could be a trusted advisor, you can develop those webinars and online training programs, you can develop your membership platforms. There are all kinds of ways for you to leverage what you know and, of course, building that high volume of online orders is just fantastic.

JB: A big transitional moment was when I realised that I was sort of making a Holy Grail out of the stage and the platform, like, “I will only share my message from a stage, which is a sacred place.” When I realised that I can put that same message, if the message is valuable, it doesn’t matter if it’s in a product or in a video I’m selling or a membership website. It’s still the valuable product that different people are going to consume in different ways. Some people may really love a stage presentation. Others may hate it and they would just love to have a book to take home with them, or they would love to have a video to watch.



THE WEALTHY SPEAKER

John Beede (SpeakerCareer.com) interviews Jane Atkinson (SpeakerLauncher.com)

JA: Or a little training video, exactly. There are all different ways of digesting it. I'm just getting ready to launch my sixteen-week program. We piloted it last, I guess about three months ago. It was an eight-week program and the feedback was "we don't have enough time to get all the work done," so we've advanced it now to a sixteen-week online training course. It's kind of a hybrid version, so there's a module that comes out every Monday, and then every second Thursday we meet with them to make sure they don't get stuck. My team and I are there to help make sure they advance through each level of the program. They have eight learning modules, and it's amazing. It's getting really, really terrific results.

JB: This is for speakers?

JA: That's for emerging speakers, yes.

JB: If somebody is listening to this right now, they're going, "Oh my gosh, Jane is just awesome, I want more information from her, this has been fantastic." How do they get into that course? How do they get your books? How do they get more information from you? Can they coach with you? Tell us about the opportunities that people have.

JA: I have this kind of umbrella of offerings. Where I'll typically have people start is with the book. If they go to speakerlauncher.com [laughter] they can get *The Wealthy Speaker 2.0*. I also have a companion piece called *The Epic Keynote* which is all about presentation skills and styles of wealthy speakers. If they start there, the next step is often, I do a little focus forty session, which is like an introductory session. Then I'll usually recommend which way they go from there. It's going to depend on when they're listening. If they're listening next week, they can get in touch with me right away about the online training program, but we also have a big event in January that's going to launch our Wealthy Speaker University community. That will be a big two-day event in Dallas and then we will be with them for the whole year. So there are lots of things they could get involved with, but I would say come to speakerlauncher.com and see what's what, depending on when you're listening to this.

JB: Speakerlauncher.com is where you can get the most up-to-date stuff on Jane and Wealthy Speaker information. Cool. This is the end of the call. Assume somebody runs into you a year from today, they've listened to this and they say, "Jane, I heard that interview with you and John, and as a result I did X, Y and Z." Jane, what do you want X, Y and Z to be that would make you very proud of them?

JA: Well, I have a process that is the foundation for everything I do in the business. It's in my book, it's in my coaching, it's everything. It's called "Ready, Aim, Fire." In the "Ready" stage we get crystal clear on what we are selling and we develop some marketing language around that clarity upon the statement. Then we move into "Aim," which is where we develop our marketing materials. Then and only then do we "Fire," we roll it out to our target markets. There might be people out there



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right now who are firing willy-nilly. If they go back and get ready and take aim before they fire, I promise it will be a much more strategic implementation, and they will have more results that way. I think that's probably a good thing to leave people on.

JB: That's awesome. Jane Atkinson, speakerlauncher.com, thank you so much for being on the call.

JA: Thank you.

