



**SPI Podcast Session #130 -
Booking Yourself Solid:
The Sales Process, Pricing and More
with Michael Port**

Show notes: www.smartpassiveincome.com/session130

This is The Smart Passive Income Podcast with Pat Flynn session #130. Skadoosh!

Intro: Welcome to The Smart Passive Income Podcast where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And now your host, he can spin a pencil like a champion, Pat Flynn!

Pat Flynn: Hey, what's up everybody! Pat Flynn here. And thank you so much for joining me for another episode of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. You're listening to episode 130. And today, I'm very happy to welcome Michael Port to the show. If you don't know that name, you might have heard of his book called [*Book Yourself Solid*](#), a book that sort of one of the required readings I would say, something that I was recommended to read a long time ago.

If you don't know what this book is about, you can just read the subtitle because it tells you everything. It's the fastest, easiest, and most reliable system for getting more clients than you can handle even if you hate marketing and selling. And that's what we're going to be talking about today. I mean how is – like how is that for a subtitle for a book? Awesome.

And Michael is also a top rank speaker, a coach, a trusted mentor, bestselling author, just all-around amazing guy. So I'm just going to – and actually, I found out recently that he has been an actor in some shows that I actually watched. So, all-around amazing guy. Michael, thank you so much for joining us and welcome.

Michael Port: Thanks so much. It's great to be here.

Pat Flynn: Well, thank you. And tell us really quick, how did you become the Michael Port that we all know, author of [*Book Yourself Solid*](#), which is something that everybody talks about, to all the other amazing things that you're doing? How did you get from where you were to where you are now?

Michael Port: Well, I started my career as an actor. So, I had a modicum of success. I was in most of the shows that you had seen – that were filmed in New York, a bunch of films. I did a lot of voiceovers. So, I did voiceovers for AT&T, Coors Beer, Pizza Hut,



Braun Shavers, there was a whole series of Budweiser commercials. Remember those what's up guys? What's up?

Pat Flynn: What's up, yeah, yeah.

Michael Port: Well, they did spinoffs and I was in a series of spinoffs. We did about seven of them. And we, instead of being the what's up guys, we were the Jersey guys. So we said, "How ya doing?" If you remember those commercials, it was just, "How ya doing? How are you doing? How ya doing? How ya doing?" And then at the end, I would say, "You don't want to know."

So that was my first career. But I was an entrepreneur at heart and I had a hard time dealing with that lifestyle, waiting around for other people to give you jobs. It just didn't sit well with me. I have never been accused of having any patience whatsoever.

So, I decided to talk myself – to talk my way into a job in the fitness industry for which I was completely unqualified. And I told them I was unqualified but I made my case as to why they should give me a shot. And fortunately, they did. And I was lucky enough not to know how they did things in that industry. So I came in with some fresh ideas. And I did well. I had some good success there and I helped opened a club.

And then after that, I decided to go out on my own because working for other people is only great when the people you're working for are absolutely fantastic. So, I wanted to go out and just build something myself where I could be that person that was fantastic to work with and for, and that was about eleven years ago. And there's a lot that has happened since then but I think there are other things that would probably be more interesting to talk about than what has happened in the last eleven years.

But I think it's safe to say that I feel like the luckiest guy in the world. I have gratitude every single day that I wake up. It doesn't mean that work is always easy. It doesn't mean that money is just always rolling in. It doesn't mean that everything works. But nonetheless, I know that my job is to get up every day and solve problems. And I feel lucky to get to do it and I know that I'm very fortunate.

Pat Flynn: Amen to that. I'm right there with you, Michael. And so, your book, I guess we'll start with your book, *Book Yourself Solid*. Was this the first book that you published?

Michael Port: Yeah, correct. It came out in 2006 and I've done three different editions of it. The most recent edition came out in 2000 and I don't remember, 2012 I think. And that's called *Book Yourself Solid Illustrated*. So I worked with an illustrator to visualize the concepts. So we cut a lot of the text and we're able to turn the ideas into pictures so it's a lot easier to pick up and faster to consume. And then of course, easier to go back and review because you can pick up – you can go back and look at the



pictures and say, "Yeah, that's what that was. Let me act on that particular concept or tactic."

Pat Flynn: Yeah, that's actually a very fantastic idea. For a lot of the people out there listening that are authors, that's a great way to sort of take it to the next level. Now, tell us what that book was – what's the gist of that book? How can it help all of us?

Michael Port: Well, the book is about how to get as many clients as your heart desires. And I think truly to stand in the service of others as you stand in the service of your own destiny, your own future because if we want to build something great and even if we want to build something that is relatively automated, allows us a lot of freedom and a lot of free time, I think we are well-served to first learn all the fundamentals of how to book business.

I remember when I started, I started as I guess a coach or consultant. The big thing was groups. You got to do group programs because it's leveraged and it doesn't take a lot of time and you can put people together and it's so much money and you can automate and all that stuff. And I remember thinking, "Whoa! Yeah, that's great. But I don't really have anybody around me to put into a group." You need a lot of people around you to do very leveraged activities even if you're just selling products, you need lots and lots and lots of people to buy those products if you're delivering them digitally and you need to know how to get all of those people around you.

And one of the most effective ways is to learn the fundamentals of actually booking business to get one person at a time to say yes to you, I think is very, very important skill because once you know how to do that, then you can look at leverage and scale and building something bigger.

Pat Flynn: Sure, sure. So let's say, we have a skill that we know that we can provide value for others with, and most people don't – a lot of people who have this sort of urge to become an entrepreneur and provide services in this way, we aren't – we don't come from a business background. We don't know the fundamentals. What are those fundamentals that a lot of people should know before getting started?

Michael Port: Sure. So as you can see, I didn't go get an MBA. I had an MFA, Masters of Fine Arts from NYU, not an MBA, not a Masters of Business Administration. So, I didn't know how to read projections and do forecasting and all that kind of stuff. But I understood what the performer knows about creating experiences. And marketers create experiences and great businesses create experiences for the buyers.

And so, I tried to reengineer what I knew, both from the fitness industry in delivering experiences, and as an actor and performer in delivering experiences. And I realized that marketing didn't actually get you clients. I know that sounds strange to say but it doesn't actually book you the business. Marketing just creates awareness for the



products and services you offer. It creates awareness for you and maybe your personal brand identity. But it doesn't actually book the business.

So let's say somebody becomes aware of you or I because of this podcast. So I introduce it. I send it to my subscribers and they meet you and your listeners meet me. They're not just – they're not going to buy something from us right now. And I think it would be a bad idea to try to sell something to them. We haven't earned enough trust to do something like that. I think that's a mistake that most folks make – many folks make is that they rush too quickly to try to have the sales conversation. Because all we're doing is creating awareness.

Once somebody becomes aware of us, well, that's where we start. That's where the sales cycle process starts. What we do once somebody becomes aware of us is what actually books us the business. So our job is to build trust over time. Trust is built in an instant. And as we're building trust, we make sales offers that are proportionate to the amount of trust that we've earned.

I'll say that again because I think it's really important. We would be well-served and our potential clients are well-served, when we make sales offers that are proportionate to the amount of trust that we've earned. So here is how the process works. This is the *Book Yourself Solid* system or process in a nutshell. You use a few of the core self-promotion strategies to create awareness so, networking, direct outreach, referral strategies, speaking strategies, writing strategies, and web strategies. Those are the six core self-promotion strategies. You use a few of them to create awareness. You use them on a regular basis.

Once somebody becomes aware of you, they come and check at your foundation and they look at that foundation. And if they feel that that was built for them, that it's solid, it's secure, that they feel comfortable on it then they'll give you an opportunity to earn their trust.

Now, if you have a plan in place for building trust and credibility, you can put that plan into action and start making sales offers that are proportionate to the amount of trust that you've earned. And the sales offer could be something that doesn't cost but it is something – you're asking somebody to do something, sales offers that are proportionate to the amount of trust that you've earned. And if you have perfect pricing, meaning it's in the sweet spot of that buyer's desire and you know how to have the simple sales conversation, well then, you can book the business.

And the process repeats itself again and again and again because it's a very systematic approach. You execute on a few of those core self-promotion strategies every day and the people come and check out your foundation. If it's not built for them or if it's shaky and the weak then they go away. But if it's secured and solid and it is built for them, well then they'll give you the opportunity to earn your trust.



You take that opportunity, you demonstrate your credibility, you earn trust over time, you make sales offers that are proportionate to the amount of trust that you earned, you've got perfect pricing, you understand anchoring, you understand framing, and you know how to have a simple sales conversations, well then you can book the business. You're not going to book the business every time of course but you're more likely than not book the business because you're having the sales conversation at the right time.

And so, people are raising their hands and saying, "I'd like to talk to you about buying from you." And that's when you want to be in a sales conversation.

Pat Flynn: Sure. I really love all that, Michael. Thank you so much for taking that through that book so quickly and giving us all that information. I really love the part about your sales can be proportionate to the amount of trust that you have, and that makes sense when you think about if somebody were to just visit your website for the first time and would be introduced to you. If you were to sell some \$2,000 coaching course before they even know you, that wouldn't make any sense.

Michael Port: It probably wouldn't, would it? Now, of course the sales cycle is as much of an art as a practical technique because people go through your sales cycle in different ways. So for example, if I sent my best friend over to you and I said, "Look, Alex, you got to work with Pat. Pat is the best. I absolutely love him. I trust him. No doubt about it, you're going to get what you need." He won't ask any questions. He will call you and say, "Pat, can I work with you?" Because the referral is so trusted that he doesn't need to ask other questions.

But that's not how all of our buyers come to us. So some of them will, some of them will come and right away they don't need a lot of questions and they'll buy. But others will sit for six years in our sales cycle just watching, reading what we put out, listening to what we put out before they'll pull the trigger on anything.

So one of the things that – a big piece of the [Book Yourself Solid](#) system which is a big part of the technical part of it is learning how to automate but also, approach the sales cycle manually so that you know who you should be making, what offers to, and at what time.

Pat Flynn: Right, right. And I want everybody to think, everybody listening out there to think not just like you were saying a moment of trust gaining or a moment of the "sale". It doesn't necessarily have to be something in exchange for money. It could be anything from clicking a link to read a post to subscribing to an email list. Those are all small, little, really tiny proportionate things that if somebody just barely gets to know you can – you can close on those things but they can each lead up to the next until you get to that actual sales conversation where you're selling something which like you said, it could happen at different times for different people.

Michael Port: Absolutely yeah. I really hear what you're saying.



Pat Flynn: Now, speaking of the sales conversation, I think this is where a lot of people get sort of – they don't have confidence. They know they have a service they want to provide or something of value to share, and I see it all the time at least on sales pages where they just – they seem weak. They're not confident. If this isn't for you then that's OK. That's sort of like – you can just tell that they're not all into it.

How can someone best sort of display that what they have is something worth value and the person on the other end knowing that and closing with them?

Michael Port: Sure. So the sales conversation starts way before we think we're actually having a sales conversation. The sales conversation starts way before that person calls you up and says, "Hey, I'd like to talk to you about buying from you and working with you." It starts at that foundation.

So there is a very specific structure that I think exists within most sales conversations and we can chat to that in a minute. But first, I want to look at the foundation because you feel comfortable saying the best thing for you would be me when you feel that that foundation is absolutely, absolutely solid.

So the foundation has four building blocks. The first is what I call the red velvet rope policy, the second is understanding why people buy what you're selling, the third is developing a personal brand identity so you decide how you're known in the world, and the fourth is being able to talk about what you do without sounding confusing or bland or like everybody else but without ever using an elevator speech or a 30-second commercial.

And I'm on a mission to kill this idea of the elevator speech for people who sell services. It's absolutely appropriate if you're going to pitch to venture capitalist or trying to get your product into Wal-Mart. That's a different environment. But giving a pitch in 30 seconds that's supposed to get somebody that you just met in an elevator to pull out their wallet and hire you is kind of a crazy concept.

Pat Flynn: That's interesting. I mean we hear about it all the time. What's your elevator pitch? If you can't say what you do in 30 seconds, you don't even know it.

Michael Port: Yes! See here's the thing. You need to be able to say what you do in 30 seconds. But the problem that I have found is that we try to turn that into something that is so extraordinary that it ends up being filled with hyperbole and it sounds highfalutin. So if I'm giving a keynote speech and I poll the audience and say, there are 2,000 people in the audience. And I say, "So, let me ask you a question. I'd like you to raise your hand if you absolutely just love, I mean absolutely love, love, love giving your elevator speech."



Generally, no hands go up. Sometimes one or two and they're usually a couple of dudes in the back like, "Yo! Me. I do."

And that's OK. Good. So I know people don't love giving it. What about listening to it? Raise your hand if you just absolutely love, just love, love listening to other people give their elevator pitch? No hands go up.

So I say to the guys who put their hands up first, I say, "Guys, by the way look, nobody wants to listen to it. So why are we still doing it?" Well, we're doing it because we have to be able to talk about what we do. The reason that we don't want to listen to other people giving it is because it sounds like a speech.

And talking about what you do is really, really easy when you have a red velvet rope policy, you understand why people buy what you're selling, and you have a personal brand identity. You're able to talk about what you do in 30 seconds, three minutes, three hours, three weeks, three months, three years, it doesn't matter because you are so secure in what you offer that you don't feel the need to give a hyperbole laid speech.

So here's the thing. When somebody comes and checks you out, first thing they want to know is who do you help and what do you help them do? So they're asking, "Does this person help me get what I want?" If the answer is no, they go away. If they answer is yes then they look further, still not enough to hire you but then they look further.

So they want to know, does this person help me get what I want? Well, what is me and what is what they want? Me is the target market. Who specifically do you serve and what's the specific result you produce for them?

Now, in order to understand why people buy, you first need to start with that target market because if you don't have that very clear, well-defined demographic group of people, group of businesses that you serve, it's very hard to figure out what they need and what they desire and then of course, the big result that you help them get. And then of course the deep-rooted benefits of that result from a financial, emotional, physical, and maybe even spiritual perspective.

Without that target market, it's very hard to do that. So one of the reasons I think we latch on to this idea of the elevator speech is because we don't yet actually know who we serve and what we sell. So if we know who we serve and what we sell, it's no big deal. You could say, "Well, what do you do?" I say, "Well, I help these kind of people do this." That's it. That's not an elevator speech. This is a really clear practical demonstration or articulation of who I help and what I help them do. And maybe it leads into a conversation. But it's just a very clear description that a 6-year-old can understand. And so, people take you seriously as a result.



Pat Flynn: Right. I mean we see the elevator pitch all the time on shows like *Shark Tank*, the first minute or two is pretty much selling their product to the sharks. But that's venture capital or ...

Michael Port: Yeah, that's different. It makes perfect sense. It makes perfect sense. It's venture capital. That's what you're supposed to do. That's what they want you to do. So they'll give you 30 seconds. OK. I like that idea. You can come back to my office and get 15 minutes. And they come for 15 minutes. OK. You can come back on Thursday for 45. And then it goes from there.

But that's not how a relationship develops between two people, one of whom maybe buying a service from the other one. Or even a digital product from the other one where they're buying a brand identity, where they're buying an experience with that person.

So, it's not of course that I don't think we need to talk about what we do or have a way to do it. But if you know who your target market is, if you know what they need and what they desire, if you have a big result that you help them get, something you hang your hat on and then you know what the benefits are from a financial, emotional, physical, and spiritual perspective, you don't need a script to articulate that. You will be able to talk about those things in an organic, natural way in a conversation.

And I think that's the difference. It may seem like a slight difference but what you're doing is you're being improvisational because you have a foundation that you can actually improv from. You have this platform. But if you don't have this platform then you feel like you need a script because you're not – you're afraid you're not going to be sure what to say next because the foundation isn't strong enough.

Pat Flynn: Right, right. So I think a good exercise for everybody out there listening would be to imagine somebody in their target audience and you can add to this or revamp it if you like, Michael. But somebody to imagine somebody in their target market and just having a casual conversation with them and that person is asking, "Hey, what is it that you do?" The natural answer from there is probably going to be if you don't think about it too much, it just comes out naturally and organically. And like you said, that's part of the sales process.

Michael Port: Yeah. And I also think it's really important to think about that without trying to prove anything. Just focus on the result. That's it. So if I help financial planners get clients, that's what I do on a most basic level. It doesn't mean that they're all sorts of other things that I do or my company might do. It doesn't mean that it ends there. Yes, there are benefits of that and those come out in the conversation, those financial, emotional, physical, and spiritual benefits.

But one of the reasons that I think it goes back to your original question of like, well, why is the sales copy weak or what do they feel like they can't say the best thing for



you would be me is in part because they feel like they have to prove themselves rather than allowing other people to be interested in what they do.

Pat Flynn: Got it. So, more of trying to be magnetic than sort of reaching out and trying to get people who may not even know who you are.

Michael Port: Absolutely.

Pat Flynn: I love it. A couple more topics I want to talk with you Michael if you don't mind. We touched on pricing a little bit. I mean barely. But I would love to go deeper into that if you would love to. OK. We have a service we want to provide, how do we know how much it's worth? How do we know what that sweet spot price you talked about really is?

Michael Port: Well, you're worth what you want to be worth. I mean you value yourself first. We always start there. And sometimes we don't value ourselves enough. We think, "I don't – I can't get that figure. I can get that figure. I'm not like so and so. I'm not like so and so." So I think it starts with us and we really need to resonate with the fees that we're quoting

And I'm not a super woo-woo kind of person, not that there's anything wrong with that, but I'm not suggesting that this is some kind of vibration thing. This is just from a practical perspective, if you don't believe that you're worth what you're asking then it's unlikely somebody else is going to want to pay you that. So we need to start with ourselves first and foremost.

Secondly, we do need to look at our target market and what their price elasticity looks like. Is this a target market that can afford your services in the way that you want to deliver them and the way that you want to price them? If the answer is yes, well then you're good. If the answer is no, you might think – you might need to think about changing the business model so that you can fit into their sweet spot but still make the kind of money that you want to make and feel that you're being valued based on the fees that you're receiving.

And so that's – those are the two places that we start, first with ourselves and second with the market. But I think this – in large part, goes to the business model that you are designing. If you have one offer then that's it. You have to make all your money off that one offer and it's often a single point of failure.

Do you have multiple offers? Are there different offers that people can take advantage of that are at different price points and get them different experiences? So that there's a way for them to move through different offers in your sales cycle comfortably based on where they are in the buying process and what their financial situation is like.



We also need to understand the concept of framing and anchoring. They're two very important concepts. The idea of anchoring – I'm on my boat right now, which is where I spend most of my time when it's above 45 degrees outside. And if I want the boat to stay in one place, I've got to drop an anchor. And if I don't set that anchor well then the boat is going to drag and I could run into shore or God forbid into another boat or something like that.

But if I want to move, I have to pick up the anchor and I have to move. And we have anchors often already set with respect to prices for specific products or services. And for example, let's say you wanted to buy a TV and you never had bought – have never bought a flat screen TV before and you came over to my house and you said, "Hey, that's a really nice TV that you got there." I say, "Oh thanks." And you say, "How much does it cost?" I say, "A lot! It cost \$3,000." I'm just making this up.

So \$3,000 and you said, "OK." So then you go to the BestBuy and you're looking at some TVs and you see one that looks exactly like mine. It may be a different brand. It may be the same brand. But really the same size, the picture looks great, same features, and the price says \$1,500. You say, "Oh my God! What a deal." The first thing you're wondering is, is there something I'm missing? Is something wrong?

But then you realized it's just like the one Michael has but I'm going to crush it and get a better deal here. So that anchor really helped that seller because your anchor was much higher than the price at which they were selling.

Now, what if I had said \$1,500 and you walked in and it said \$3,000 at the store. You then go, "I'm not going to spend \$3,000 because I know I can get one like Michael's for \$1,500." So the anchor is already set. So the seller in that case has to either pull up your anchor and try to set a new one or just give up and walk away because they're not going to be able to move you because your anchor is so firmly set.

So, one of the things we need to do is learn how to pull up anchors and reset them and then use framing either our prices against other people's prices and/or our prices against our prices. So we often like to compare things. And so, one of the reasons we see software products at different price point is because the potential buyer is trying to find the right place for themselves. And the company behind the software product knows which option they want that person to buy.

If you go to – I think many of the 37Signal's products are sold like – it's Basecamp, et cetera. And you will go and there will be three different options and they'll have one highlighted that will even say "best option" because that's the one they want you to buy. It's the most profitable for them, maybe the least amount of labor behind it, and maybe the people who take that one tend to stay the longest, whatever metric they're going by.



So, if we frame the different prices against each other, so for example, I did a program once where, you can write this down so you can see these numbers. I did a program once where I offered three options. And it was an online program, a self-directed so it was very, very inexpensive and there were three different options. There was a gold, a silver, and a platinum. No, a silver, gold, and a platinum.

So the silver was \$99. The gold was a \$199. And the platinum was \$299. So I'm not going to put you on the spot and ask you which one do you think the majority of people purchased. But I'll tell you that 80% of the people purchased the middle option, the \$199 because when they look at the \$99, they went, "That's not really enough." And they looked at the middle one and they go, "That's what I need." They looked at the more expensive one and they go, "Well, I don't have to have that. So won't get that one. I will get the middle one because that's really what I need." So 80% of the people went in there.

Well, I ran it again and I raised the lower prices but I just changed the framing. I put the lower price at \$199 and I put – the second time I ran it, I put the silver at \$199. I put the gold at \$279. And I put the platinum at \$299. The same exact program. I got the same – about the same number of people signing up, a few more actually. So notice that the prices went up and it didn't make a difference in the number of sign-ups so I knew I was way low in elasticity for that particular price point for that particular product. So I could keep pushing it up as well. But I changed the framing. That was the most important thing.

So again, remember, people look at the lower one and said that's not really enough. They looked at the middle one and said, "That's what I need." They looked at the platinum one and said, "Well, you know, I'd like that stuff but I don't have to have it." But now because the one that they want, one that they needed was \$279 and the want that they wanted was \$299, they'd be crazy not to get the one they wanted for an extra 20 bucks. So 80% of the people went into the offer that was \$299. They took the platinum. Not only was it a higher price point but what's most important to remember about this is that they went into the higher offer. They took the more profitable option for me just because the frame was slightly different. But all of the content and all of the delivery was exactly the same.

Pat Flynn: Right. It's like those deals you see at the store where it just wouldn't make sense not to take them even if it's a little bit more money, 5 or 10 bucks extra. I mean it's almost like the extra value meals at the fast food places. It's like 20 cents more for twice as much food.

Michael Port: Exactly. Look, that's what Costco's entire model is. Do you really need 18 gallons of cheese puffs? I would say no, probably not. But you're going, "How can I not buy this? It's such a deal. I'll have cheese puffs for the rest of my life. I'll save so much money." They wanted you to have cheese puffs for the rest of your life.



Pat Flynn: That's not including all the medical bills that come in after that.

Michael Port: Exactly. So it's one of these things that it's interesting because a lot of folks who are going into business for themselves but having spent a lot of time in their earlier years focusing on the business concepts of entrepreneurship, they have experienced all of these things as a buyer but they haven't necessarily thought about it as a seller. And when you start seeing the world from the seller's perspective, you start noticing a lot more as a buyer. You actually end up I think often being a better buyer because you understand the salesperson better because now you have seen both perspectives. That's not an absolute but that's what I have found personally.

Pat Flynn: Me too. Me too. I mean it was sort of like I used to be a waiter at Macaroni Grill and then every time – ever since then, even now, I look at waiters a different way because I know what they went through and I sort of started like at the 15% and if they do really well, I'll add to that tip. And if they don't do what I know that they should be doing it, I decrease it. I don't know if that's bad or not. But ...

Michael Port: So you're actually a little harder on them because you expect more because you know what the service should be like.

Pat Flynn: Yes.

Michael Port: Yeah, very interesting.

Pat Flynn: Just some random fact for everybody out there. But yeah, I mean we're only scratching the surface of pricing here.

Michael Port: So everybody just know, if you're waiting tables, make sure that you do an outstanding job when Pat comes in. If you're going to knock it, you get a good tip. That's just all there is to it.

Pat Flynn: Hey, but if you tell me you listen to the podcast or read the blog then anything you do doesn't matter. I'll give you a good tip anyway.

Michael Port: Right.

Pat Flynn: So like I was saying, we just scratched the surface of pricing, which I know is a huge topic. We've talked about it in the past with Ramit Sethi in another episode and I'm sure there are many more episodes in the future. What's that?

Michael Port: I love Ramit.

Pat Flynn: Yeah, Ramit is awesome. And he's actually going to come back on the podcast very soon. But before we finish up, this is the last thing I want to talk about and we could just talk about this really quick is your speaking career. This is something I have gotten very interested in lately as you know and Michael, I actually



sent you some video of some of my previous talks and you've given me some amazing advice. One, how important is speaking in a person's career as a business owner if at all? And second, what can one do – maybe what's the one or two things that would help them get started as a speaker more than anything?

Michael Port: Sure. So let's define speaking. Often, when we think of speaking as public speaking on a stage in front of hundreds or thousands of people, but we are speaking all day long, aren't we?

Pat Flynn: We are.

Michael Port: And we are always playing roles. Shakespeare said, "All the world is a stage and all the men and women merely players." So we're playing roles day in and day out. We play one role when we're home with our family. We play another role when we're doing a podcast. We play another role when we're hanging out on the boat with our friends from the marina.

Ideally, they're all authentic roles. They are all a true part of who you are. But in certain situations or circumstances, we amplify certain parts of our personality. We amplify certain parts of our skillset. And as a result, we're creating characters that move through these different worlds these different environments, these different scenarios.

Now, this maybe a new concept, this idea of you're playing a character that is walking around this earth right now. You're hopefully not making stuff up. You're not making up your back story. You're not manufacturing some identity. Rather, you're authentic. You're true. You're real. You're in the moment. You're listening. You're paying attention. That's what the great actors do.

And if you start to notice, you can play a better role. You can often play the leading role in environments where heretofore, you've just been playing a supporting role. If you start to see – if you start to realize, well, what would the leading role be like? How would a lead role behave in this situation?

And so I think that this idea of speaking and performing applies to so much more than just standing in the stage giving a speech. I think it applies to all aspects of our lives. A negotiation is a performance.

Pat Flynn: Right.

Michael Port: The person who is at the other side of the table is trying to read you.

Pat Flynn: I mean I fully agree with that. I mean every day, we are trying to convey our ideas to other people whether it's our spouse or our kids and not in like a manipulative selling type of way but just ...

Michael Port: Oh, of course not!



Pat Flynn: That's a part of life and so I really love that. I really love that.

Michael Port: My 9-year-old is driving me crazy. I have to manage that. The stress level that I get, the feeling of frustration and even anger that starts to boil up. I have to play a role of supportive, caring, loving dad. That is who I am authentically but I'm sure most parents would agree that sometimes they behave in ways that they would rather not behave because their kids are driving them up to the wall. So we're trying to play a different role. We don't want to be that guy. We don't want to be that parent.

So, a lot of what the actor does is the actor understands how to manage their own emotions and how to essentially use their emotions to create a feeling in somebody else.

Pat Flynn: Sure.

Michael Port: And I think this can be applied to so much of our life. Now, if you look at speaking on a stage, well, my gosh, this is my favorite topic really in the world of business because you have this opportunity to create a theatrical experience that moves people dramatically. And I used the word theatrical, experience, and dramatic intentionally because often when people are thinking about creating speeches, they think about the content first and foremost and primarily and maybe even entirely.

However, if somebody is in a room and you're on a stage, they want you to create an experience for them. They want you to perform for them. And if you want your content to land, if you want to get a message across, if you want to move people to do something, to think something, to see the world in a particular way, you need to create an experience for them that helps them see the way the world is now and the way the world could be because when you're asking somebody to change their views or to see something in a way that you see it, you're asking a lot of them.

And often, when you are walking on the stage, you might be the fifth person speaking at a big conference and everybody – and they've been sitting for four hours, well, you are going to go on and you're trying to move them, sort of getting them to see the world in this big different often confronting way. Well, that's not easy.

So you've got to be able to demonstrate how extraordinary the world will look if they open up to what you have to say. And we of course can't – we can't assume. We can't think. We can't believe that we can push our views or our ideas on to other people. Well, our job is to try to help them drop their filters because audiences are trying to poke holes often in what you have to say.

So for example, if you go on stage and you use phrases like, "Everybody thinks that." Or you say things like, "It's always this way." Well then, it's easy for them to poke holes



because they can say, "Well, no, no, I know somebody who doesn't think that way. Or you can say, "No, I don't agree with that."

But if you say something as simple as, "Often, many people do this." "It seems to me that people feel this way." Well then they can say, "Yeah. It seems to me that people often do that too. Not everybody, but often. When we use absolutes, we're closing off the world to the folks we are talking with. Not to everybody but to many of them especially those who are on the fence, who are not sure if they should follow you or not. They are not sure if they should listen to you or trust you. And if you use absolutes, they may be less likely to trust you.

So, the way we use language is very, very important. What the actor knows about presenting from a voice perspective, from a speech perspective, from a movement perspective is very special. If you know how to use your voice, if you know how to breathe in such a way that you can get that whole audience breathing with you, you can change the way they feel physically. If you can use your language so that they feel something when you use certain words, you can change the way they feel.

So for example, the word "love" has specific sounds to it. It vibrates when you use the word "V" and the sound L is a long lasting sound. And V can be as well. So love, well, that can be a very powerful word. It's a very different word than – can I curse? Is that OK?

Pat Flynn: Well, we have kids listening to the show.

Michael Port: Oh, so no. So let's say another word ...

Pat Flynn: Thanks for asking though. I appreciate that.

Michael Port: Yeah, yeah.

Pat Flynn: You have no idea how many times I've had to edit out stuff in the past for some guests.

Michael Port: I thought to ask because not everybody is OK with hearing those kinds of words and I think that's perfectly natural.

Pat Flynn: I appreciate that, Michael. Thank you.

Michael Port: I'm just thinking about a work that is like a very hard word like curt. I want to – you can feel that in your body, curt. It's very different than love, love. Even curt, curt, it only has one tone to it. Love can have two different tones. Love. So exaggerating these sounds right now just to demonstrate a point that when you're on stage, the way you use words will influence the way people see you as a speaker.



And then of course movement. If you know how to move on that stage in such a way that you can have the audience following you without ever putting anything up on a screen so that they can't keep their eyes off of you, well then, you can help them move somewhere.

And this is why I feel so blessed to have such extraordinary training, a classical training as an actor because it has allowed me to do things as a keynote speaker that I might have been able to do if I hadn't had that training, which is why I'm spending the next 10 to 15 years of my work focused on performance and public speaking. My intellectual property will all be designed around that and my work will be focused on that because I'm so excited to bring all aspects of performance to the entrepreneurs, to the business owners who not only want to speak on stage to share their message but also, just want to be performers so that they can get up in any situation and improv and feel comfortable doing so.

Pat Flynn: I love that. I mean that's how I approach speaking. It's not just the content. It's how that content is presented. And I do say that I'm performing when I am on stage.

Michael Port: And I see that. I saw that in your presentation. I was so excited because you obviously got that right away for whatever reason. I don't know if you picked it up somewhere or you just felt it but right away, you started working on yourself as a performer rather than as a public speaker. And I think just the slight shift in perspective can make a big difference in a way that you develop yourself as a "speaker."

Pat Flynn: Well, thank you. And again, thank you for all the tips. I definitely am looking forward to getting more training with public speaking from things like working with coaches which I've done before to even like you were saying acting classes, improv classes, all the stuff that will help me become better – a better performer. And so, I would love to talk to you again in the future and have you see how much I've improved maybe the next time I do something on the stage.

Michael Port: I can't wait. Yeah, you must send it to me.

Pat Flynn: Michael, thank you so much for your time today. This has been amazing, a lot of things we've covered from pricing to sales conversation, anchoring, framing, which is obviously huge, and then everything we've just talked about with public speaking. I just want to say thank you in front of everybody and I'm so blessed to have you as somebody out there who is providing all this value for all of us. So I will put out all the stuff that we talked about in the show notes which I'll mention after we hang up. But if anybody wants to get more information about you and all the stuff that you have to offer, where should they go?



Michael Port: MichaelPort.com is the best place to go. Of course, you can get copies of chapters from all my different books and all the different things that we've talked about are represented at MichaelPort.com in one way, shape, or form.

Pat Flynn: Awesome. Thank you, Michael so much. And we'll talk to you soon.

Michael Port: OK. Thanks again.

Pat Flynn: Awesome. That was a great interview. Thank you, Michael. If you love to get more information from Michael, you can go to MichaelPort.com. And of course, all the resources and links, everything that we mentioned on today's episode, you can find at SmartPassiveIncome.com/session130. Again, that's SmartPassiveIncome.com/session130.

Thank you so much again for spending time with me today. For those of you who don't know, you could download the SPI, the Smart Passive Income application that will allow you to more easily get the show on the go, also get my AskPat show, and all the blog posts in one convenient spot and get notifications when new things come out too. And you can change whatever you want to get notified for and all that good stuff. The app is free and it's available for iOS and Android. All you have to do is go to SmartPassiveIncome.com/app. That's it, SmartPassiveIncome.com/app. Go ahead and give it a shot. Check it out. Thank you so much.

And to finish up, I would love to thank today's sponsor which is 99Designs.com, the world's largest graphic design marketplace making it easy for you to get a design that you love. It's a service and website that I've used in the past with great success. So if you're doing anything from a logo to a t-shirt design, to a website or a landing page, you can go to 99Designs.com and post your job that you need and get multiple designers around the world working on your particular project and you get to pick the one that you like the best. Turnaround time is quite fast, at seven days or less.

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Thanks again for spending time with me today. I truly appreciate you. And again, the show notes can be found at SmartPassiveIncome.com/session130. And I have a special video over there for you as well, my first video that I published on YouTube, in over a year with updates on what's coming up next for the Smart Passive Income brand. I'll see you there. Cheers! Keep hustling. Peace!



Links and Resources Mentioned in This Episode:

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