

Where to begin?

Well, let's just dive right in shall we?

#1 record good quality audio.

Everything else depends on your message being audible. Do not let audio quality detract from the content. Only rarely does function trump form – for example, a poor quality recording of Bill Gates giving advice trumps a perfect quality recording of Joe Bloggs doing the same. In all other instances, quality is important. If the recording is poor, you make it easy for the listener to not give your content a chance.

True sound recording experience takes years and years of real-world lessons (and mistakes). In the absence of this experience, here are some things to focus on (using mics like the ones I recommended – different mics require different advice as they behave differently)

- a) Clip the mics close to each person's face (but not in direct path of air from their mouth) and avoid being able to hear each other on the other mic (i.e. don't sit too close together)
- b) Ensure the mics do not rub against clothing when you move (leave some slack in the cable for material movement)
- c) Use a room that is quiet (not just to your ear, record some silence in it and listen to what's REALLY making noise in there. The fridge, aircon, PC fan, open window, dogs – you'll be amazed. Eliminate them or find another room, that sound can ruin an interview.
- d) Ensure there is no music playing anywhere. Not only might it detract, but you can't edit a conversation with music playing as you'll hear the jumping and cutting.
- e) Sound bounces around like crazy, so use a room with nice plush furniture and thick curtains. The more (irregular shaped) "stuff" there is in the room, especially close to you when interviewing, the better. Flat surfaces (like tables) cause sound to bounce and come into the mic again with a slight delay (sounds horrid).
- f) Install 'iRig record' on your phone. It's a free App and when using the mics I recommended will take care of everything for you.
- g) If there's a problem – STOP! Fix the mics, test the mics, listen to a test recording, and only then proceed. You cannot go back and re-create a great interview and your guest will question your professional ability if the sound is crappy.

#2 Back your recordings up!

Immediately.

And in 2 different places (not 2 directories on the same hard drive!)

#3 there are no "magic" questions that make a great interview, though there are types of questions that work. Understanding your intention will guide you while chatting. Look to your Toastmasters lessons for the content of a good speech, and help your guest release/reveal their story through your guidance. This is about THEM, help them tell their story. Something that makes an average interview a great one is if you can get them to reveal their "origin story". The WHY that made all the other stuff happen. Sometimes they don't even know they have one so listen carefully and probe and encourage. You capture that, you have a great interview.

Here's an excellent example of an origin story (from Petro's most popular episode by far)

<https://castbox.fm/app/castbox/player/id1478229/id100078650?v=4.1.0&autoplay=1>

Get your guests to do this and your series will rock!

I recommend you share the Podcast Guest 101 series with your guests a day or two before your recording so they are familiar with many of the tips and tricks, but not too close to the interview or it may feel overwhelming.

Don't fixate on episode duration, it can be as long as the conversation needs it to be.

Maybe add some music to the opening? (Beware of copyright and only get music from sites like <https://soundcloud.com/audio-library-free-musicor> <http://freemusicarchive.org/>

#4 editing is easy - and hard. Like painting perhaps? Holding a brush and applying paint to a canvas is easy, making art – hmmm... I use Audacity and I know Garage Band is also an excellent tool and I'm certain you'll be able to do a great job after a little training and practice. NEVER edit using your original recording. **Never!** Make a copy, re-name it, include words like "edit in progress" in the folder name Etc and use that one. If anything goes wrong, you can make another copy of the original and start over with the editing.

You should remove a few ums and ahs, but leave several in so you all sound human. This is not a BBC documentary (yet.) Don't do sound processing you don't understand as it may degrade your sound quality. i.e. avoid compressors, normalisers, limiters etc – let a professional do that for you when you're done.

If you don't want to do the editing yourself, I can ask some of my network of editors to help out, but then you'll be spending R250 – R450 per episode to edit depending on complexity and duration. Also, I suspect you really want to curate the content yourself here, so rather take a few YouTube lessons on Garage Band and DIY. Some people LOVE it, some – not so much.

#5 Simply putting some audio files on the Internet does not make them podcasts. There are so, so many places you can publish "podcasts", however it's the ability to easily locate them on any platform and listen easily that makes them true podcasts. In other words, putting an audio file on SoundCloud and a link to it on your website is not the same as being able to say "Siri, play the Great Naminbian Women podcast Series for me" – THAT's podcasting! :-)

This is one of the areas we excel at. We'll take care of hosting your podcast and getting it listed on the major playout platforms (Spotify, Apple, Google, Stitcher, Himalaya Ec)

#6 Ready, Fire, Aim – fail fast and learn faster. Get your first interview done ASAP. Then edit it. Then listen to it. Then do more interviews applying the (sometimes harsh) lessons you'll learn. No matter how much you plan and prepare, you'll always (trust me, always) look back on your first episode and say "eish, that was rough" – well yes, compared to what you can do later with experience. This is not a good enough reason not to do it anyway :-D

Be prepared to write off your entire first recording a repeat it. So select this guest carefully (a close friend perhaps?) and let her know you may do it all again so she can relax and have fun.

#7 Hope is not a strategy :-D LOL

I see the word scattered all over your speech. Though I know it's a word we use, for me it implies that something is beyond your ability or control. Given your planning and thought already invested here, as well as your clearly defined goal - it's evident you are in control – so it WILL go where you want it to (no need to hope) :-D

#8 What's this all going to cost? Pricing depends on complexity and time. I can't assist with the studio or equipment, I think you'll enjoy the editing (another art form for you) so I can assist with all the behind-the-scenes "stuff". Hosting, publishing, scripting of RSS feeds etc.

For you, can we call it R100 per episode? All the rest is thrown in for you.
(You can NEVER tell anyone I charged you this rate though LOL)

I could go on and on for hours on this topic (in case you hadn't noticed) ha ha.

I trust you have enough to add to your knowledge and process here? If not, ask ☺

The next steps are all yours. When you have your first edited episode "in hand" I'll send you the links to provide me with additional info I need to publish your podcast channel.

You'll also need cover art at that time (this is a very cool part)

Until then, have fun and shout if anything is still fuzzy.

Enjoy!

Gk