THE AUDIT PODCAST

Lessons Learned
from The Audit Podcast

Trent Russell · Host



Objectives

Apply effective interviewing techniques to build comfort, encourage candor, ask stronger questions, and gather more meaningful information from auditees.

Develop a concise internal audit “elevator pitch” that explains why an audit is occurring, why an area was selected, and how was selected, and how the engagement can provide value.

Differentiate business-process expertise from internal audit’s risk perspective and connect risk, controls, and governance to organizational strategy.

Identify ways to use curiosity and relationship-building to strengthen engagement with colleagues, auditees, and the broader internal audit profession.

300+ conversations later



350,000

Downloads since 2020



Intern → CAE

Every seat at the table



11

Five lessons from the other side of the mic

01

The interview is the job

02

Nail your IA elevator pitch

03

You're in my world now

04

Caring and curiosity

05

A mode, not a media

TAKEAWAY

Not one of these is technical. Every one of them is learnable this quarter.

LESSON 00



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LESSON 01

The interview is the job



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Every guest is nervous. So is every auditee.



The podcast guest

- Has never done this before
- Worried about how they'll come across
- Not sure what you're really after
- Deciding how much to volunteer



The process owner

- Has never been audited before
- Worried about how it looks upstairs
- Not sure what you're really after
- Deciding how much to volunteer

TAKEAWAY

Comfort comes before candor. You get the performance first then the real answer only comes after they relax.
relax.

How I open every single episode

It's your show

This is about you.
I'm not the point.

We edit everything

Nothing you fumble
ever leaves the room.

Say what you like

There is no wrong
answer in here.

I just ask questions questions

You're the expert.
I'm genuinely not.

TAKEAWAY

Say the quiet part out loud in the first five minutes: what this is, what it isn't, and what happens to whatever they tell you.

THE HARDEST SKILL ON THIS LIST

Ask the question. Then be quiet.



the pause you want to fill →

TAKEAWAY

Count to three before your follow-up. The answer worth writing down almost always arrives in second four.

Good questions get good answers

Before an episode I read the book, their LinkedIn, and anything else available so my questions are worth their hour.



Every time. No exceptions.

MY PREP SHEET

1. **Intro notes**
   Who they are, in their own words
2. **Logistics**
   How this works, and what happens after
3. **Topics**
   What I actually want to know

TAKEAWAY

Prep is respect.

LESSON 02

Nail your
IA elevator pitch



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Three things they need to hear in thirty seconds

01

Why we're here

The purpose of internal audit in in one sentence a would happily happily repeat to their boss.

02

Why you were chosen

You are not in trouble. Here is exactly how your area surfaced in surfaced in the risk assessment. assessment.

03

How we add value

What you will have at the end of of this that you do not have today. today.

TAKEAWAY

If you don't hand them a story about internal audit, they will use the one they already have. And you won't like it.

Make it about them, not about you

WHAT THEY USUALLY HEAR

✗

“We're executing the FY26 plan and testing controls over your procure-to-pay cycle.”

WHAT THEY SHOULD HEAR

✓

“Procurement came up in our risk assessment. Here’s why, what we're looking at and what you'll walk away with.”

TAKEAWAY

There's a perception of internal audit we don't get to ignore. The pitch isn't 'here's who we are' it's 'here's what changes for you.'

LESSON 03

You're in my world now



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They know their process. You know risk.

Their world

- The process
- The systems
- The people
- The numbers

Where the audit happens

Your world

- Risk
- Control
- Governance
- How it ties to strategy

TAKEAWAY

Defer to them on the business. Never defer on risk. Most people aren't thinking about how their work carries the strategy. Somebody has to bring that and it's you.

LESSON 04

Caring and curiosity



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What the best guests have in common



They care

You can hear it in the first five minutes. They care care about the job, the profession, and their people. people.



They're curious

Early on I asked leaders what trait they hire for. Curiosity came back so consistently I stopped asking.

TAKEAWAY

Neither one shows up on a certificate or degree.

THE QUESTION I ASK EVERYONE

“What are you especially passionate about?”

Hundreds of internal auditors. Interns, managers, directors, chief audit executives. The most common answer, by a mile, has nothing to do with a standard, a tool, or a framework.

It's their team.

Every level. Every industry.

TAKEAWAY

Ask your own team this question this month. Then use lesson one and be quiet.

Lessons learned from peer audit podcasters

Choose topics that interest you. Keep it conversational.

Richard Chambers

(Former IIA President and CEO. Sr. Advisor of Risk and Audit - Optro)

You can't just have an opinion. You have to know why you believe it, and be able to explain it clearly enough for someone else to follow

Rob Berry

(Founder – Audit Leverage

President – That Audit Guy)

Quickly realizing how much you don't know…five years and still learning.

Jon Taber

(Audit Manager – Casey's)

LESSON 05

A mode, not a media



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The podcast is a mode, not a media

I never set out to make content. I set out to to build relationships. The show is just the reason anyone in this profession will take my my call.

Yours doesn't have to be a podcast. A newsletter. A roundtable. A monthly coffee. A user group. Pick the one you'll actually keep doing.



Media thinking

Downloads. Subscribers. Sponsors. Reach. Metrics that flatter you.



Mode thinking

A standing reason to reach out out to anyone you want to learn from.

TAKEAWAY

Pick your mode. The relationships are the point and the format is only the excuse to start them.

MY LAST QUESTION ON EVERY SHOW IS ALWAYS THE SAME

“What do you want to leave the audience with?”



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