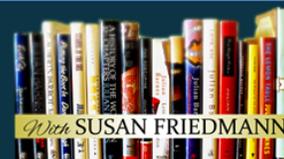


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BOOK MARKETING: How to Use TEDex to Skyrocket Your Expert Credibility Interview with Sarah Lawrence

Susan Friedmann: Welcome to Book Marketing Mentors, the weekly podcast where you learn proven strategies, tools, ideas, and tips from the masters. Every week, I introduce you to a marketing master who will share their expertise to help you market and sell more books. Today, my special guest is Sarah Lawrence. She's an award-winning speaker, writer, and organizer of TEDxTenayaPaseo. Her passion is being a momentum maker for those who want to make a massive change in the world with a message that needs to be heard.

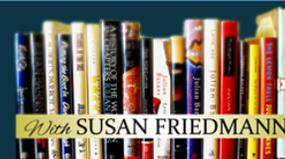
Sarah is a speaking coach for TEDx speakers and experts. Over the years, she's built over 300 public speaking stage opportunities for experts in different niche markets. She's worked with everything from personal development, healthcare, nonprofits, and high-tech businesses. Currently, she's the operations manager for Success Road Academy, an industry leader in online marketing and training specializing in online course creation for the expert industry. Sarah's life purpose is to become a force for those looking to show up in the world in a way, and make a massive positive impact. Sarah. Well, I know you make a massive positive impact. What an absolute pleasure it is to welcome you to the show and thank you for being this week's guest expert and mentor.

Sarah Lawrence: Thank you so much for having me. I am super excited to be here.

Susan Friedmann: I know that many of our listeners have probably heard the term TEDx, but perhaps they're not exactly clear on what it is. So that we sort of start off singing out of the same hymn book as they say, tell us exactly what it is. What do we need to know what it is?

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Sarah Lawrence: Yeah, absolutely. I love that you just made that analogy, singing out of the same hymn book. That was brilliant, and it made me smile. Absolutely. TED is the encompassing brand, and when we think about TED Talks, we think about higher-level speakers, Brene Brown, Simon Sinek, and those type of speakers who are getting millions of views. The difference between TED and TEDx is TEDx are locally, independently ran events by organizers who have a license from TED. People who are interested in putting on a TEDx event, they apply through TED, and then they are granted a license if their speakers, their theme, the topics they want to suggest fall under kind of what TED considers to be ideas worth spreading.

TED is looking for very specific things within a TEDx event. So those people who follow kind of under those specific things get licenses to hold these TEDx events. There've been over 13,000 TEDx events across the world. They happen everywhere, on all continents, in all cities, have different platforms, different languages. It's really quite an amazing phenomenon because it's allowing people in all social statuses, in all countries, in all economic statuses to really get out there and share their idea worth spreading. And it's a really amazing, impactful thing.

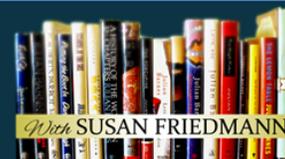
Susan Friedmann: Let me ask you, what is the power of being a TEDx speaker, and why should our authors even consider being one?

Sarah Lawrence: That's a really great question, and the way that I see everyone who holds a message, and especially when we're talking about authors, you have now taken your message and put it into written form. Well, what if you could take that same message and create an impactful talk? People learn different ways, and people hear things in different forums. If you can take your message that you've created into a book and get it onto a TEDx stage, you are now taking your message and how you choose to show up in the world and what you want to be known for on a stage that is really one of the strongest brands in the world.

Being a TEDx speaker means that you're backed by the TED brand, and the credibility that goes along with that is instant. If you Google TED Talks or TEDx Talks, under your topic, you can actually bring up and see other speakers that have spoken about things that you speak about. But you'll be able to see how your message, even if it seems like your message is cliché,

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how it will be different because it comes from your perspective. There's such power and credibility that come behind being a TEDx speaker.

Susan Friedmann: Being a TEDx speaker takes a lot of practice. In fact, take us through what are the steps from actually wanting to be a speaker, being up there on the stage, and delivering your talk, your message?

Sarah Lawrence: First off, internalize your message. Know what it is. Understand that how you show up in the world is ... You are a vehicle for your message. One of the things that I see a lot with TEDx speakers is that they have an idea of their message, but they don't have a roadmap. What that means is they don't know how to explain to people how they should take action. They don't know how to explain to their audience how they should take action on the idea, right? They're able to say, "Well, I have this really amazing thing, and you should do it. I don't really know how to explain how to get to that end product." And TEDx Talks are driven by content. They're driven by that roadmap.

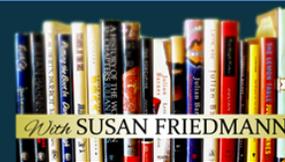
The way that I always teach it and the way that I always explain it is that you'll see a lot of talks outside of the TEDx forum that are driven by story. You hear somebody's story and it makes you relate to them on a very emotional, personal level, and you buy into who they are as a person. With TEDx, that is part of it. Their stories, their emotional credibility, but the talk is actually driven by content. People want to know how and why they should take action on whatever that idea worth spreading is. And so there's such a change in context and a change in content.

When we're talking about the steps to get on that stage, first is internalize your message, understand and have a clear roadmap on how and why people get from point A to point B. Next is to get it out of your head. If you have a book already, you've gotten most of this idea out. Really take a look at your written transcript. Look at your book. See what parts of it may translate to a stage. Now, if you aren't sure of this, I definitely suggest either getting a coach or talking to even a friend or some kind of feedback from a community, someone who can look at your book and say, "All right, what parts of this would really make a good talk?" It doesn't have to be perfect, but if you have kind of an outline, then you can pull from there.

Now you've internalized your message. You've looked at your book to figure out what parts of it would make a good talk. Now what? What I always say is

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to write out your talk. There are people in the industry who thrive off winging it, and I will tell you that any day of the week, I can get on stage and talk for hours. But here's the difference. When you're talking about higher level talks such as TEDx, you definitely want to write out your talk. What this allows it to do is get it completely out of your head and make edits along the way. When you are winging it, you don't get to make edits. You get to just show up and hope what comes out of your mouth is what was meant to come out of your mouth.

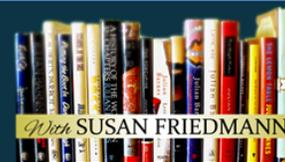
And so once you've now written out your talk and you've internalized your message and you've looked at your book, what you want to do now is actually start reaching out to TEDx organizers. Now this is going to feel out of place to you because your talk is not going to be perfect, because you're going to be unsure about it, because you're going to doubt yourself. But let me tell you that the stages out there are ran by organizers who are looking for volunteers. They are looking for people who want to be in the TEDx community. They're looking for people who are willing to step up. If you are willing to create relationships within the TEDx community, people who are organizers, you're not only going to find that ultimately that stage is easier for you to get because you have a relationship, but what you're going to learn about how to develop your TEDx talk along the way is invaluable.

And this is not your common mentor. This is not someone you're hiring to coach you through it. This is not someone who is officially your coach, officially your mentor. This is lessons you're going to learn by being in the environment. Often, I talk about this, that when you immerse yourself in somebody else's environment, when you see them in their natural habitat, which is actually a quote that I got from Frank Forza, who is a journalist, and him and I were talking about it. But when you see someone in their natural habitat, you get to experience who they are on such a deeper level, and the lessons that you will learn for yourself and your talk and how you will be impactful are just invaluable things.

We've internalized our message. You've looked at your manuscript from your book. You've written out your talk. You've started to develop these relationships with these TEDx organizers, and now you really want the stage. You utilize that relationship. Say, hey, look, I'm really looking to get on a TEDx stage. I would love to talk on your stage. Not in exchange for, but I would also be willing to step up and volunteer if needed, if that's what you need. Reach out to more than one organizer. Don't have your heart set on

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one stage because you never know. You never know if their stage is full. You never know if you will fall under their theme. You never know what the circumstances are that may or may not put you on that stage.

Most of the time, if you don't get on that stage, it has nothing to do with you. It has to do with other guidelines that the organizer has in place. I have not accepted speakers because I felt like their talk wasn't a good match for my theme. I have not accepted speakers because I felt like their talk wasn't in alignment with the rest of the event. Multiple reasons. And so keep in mind that it very often does not have anything to do with you as a speaker, your talk, your book, anything like that. It has to do with how in alignment you are with a person's event. Reach out and develop these relationships with multiple organizers. Don't have your heart set on more than one stage. And then just ask what the application process is.

If you are constantly working towards this goal, if you're developing those relationships, you're working on your talk, you have an idea of what your message is, you will eventually work your way to the stage. Some stages are easier than others, but I always say that even though all licenses are backed by the TED brand, some TEDx stages are higher quality than others.

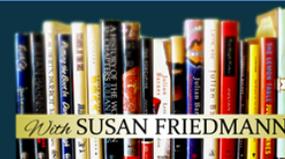
And what does that mean? It means that TED provides suggestions on certain things like what your video set-up should be, what your staging should look like, all of those things, but it doesn't mean that they're always followed by organizers. Ask questions. As much as you want the stage and you want to get your message out there, make sure that stage is worthy of you. Ask what the camera set-up looks like. Ask what the stage is going to look like. Ask their plan on uploading and editing videos. Make sure they have a tech team that can handle that kind of tech load. As much as we talk about what TEDx can provide for you, understand that your message and how you show up in the world is also valuable.

Susan Friedmann: Well, there's so many things to consider. And what occurred to me was I'd always thought that there was just one TEDx, but there are multiple. How many are there, even within North America?

Sarah Lawrence: I don't have an exact number for you, but there are 13,000 that have been held up to this point worldwide. TEDx is everywhere. Here in Vegas, I'm located in Las Vegas, we actually had a license holder who had the name TEDx Las Vegas who hasn't done anything, any events in a very long time.

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We had a TEDx license holder at our university who, I think their last one was about three years ago. This is actually very common, where organizers will get a license. They will hold an event, and then they renew their license, but they don't necessarily always put on an event. And the reasons for that are, there's lots of reasons why an organizer may or may not decide to put on their event, but there's so many of them, which is why I say definitely develop the relationships with multiple organizers and don't have your heart set on just one.

Susan Friedmann: If I lived in Vegas, I could go to one on the East Coast or the West Coast or somewhere in between, so I don't have to be in the location where the TEDx event is being held. Is that correct?

Sarah Lawrence: That is correct. You don't have to be local to the area. Now, some organizers prefer that for multiple reasons. The organizer of TEDx Stanley Park in Vancouver, British Columbia actually had nine in-person rehearsals. He asked that everybody was local, and that is a preference of the organizer, but not every stage is like that. I have speakers from Canada. I have speakers from California. I have speakers from Utah, all over the place. It's not a requirement. It's really up to the organizer's preference.

Susan Friedmann: And what about the timeline from the time that you say you're looking at this message and writing it out and wanting to be on the stage to actually being there? Are we talking months, years? How long are we talking?

Sarah Lawrence: I would definitely say give yourself an entire year. In some cases, especially if you're starting from ground up and you're developing these relationships, it may take longer, but it really takes a year to create a TEDx talk out of an idea. And the reason is because you go through multiple revisions and you go through multiple coaching, and you go through tons of feedback, and it is a process. The process that it took to write your book, you go through edits and send it off to someone and all of that. You're looking at a very similar process for your TEDx talk. There are people out there who can put together a very high quality talk very quickly. And some of those speakers are actually on my stage, but I will tell you that I always suggest giving yourself at least a year to properly work through it.

Susan Friedmann: This is just open to multiple errors, those mistakes that people just make without even knowing that they're making a mistake. What are some of the

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common mistakes that you find with speakers wanting to perform on a TEDx stage?

Sarah Lawrence:

Many TEDx speakers are speaker speakers, right? They have gotten on lots of stages prior. They know how to get up on stage and talk. They know how to really ignite the audience in a big way, but there's multiple kinds of speakers out there. One of the biggest mistakes I see is people who speak to sell their product are so used to speaking to sell that then they get up on a TEDx stage and they have to completely pivot how they talk. And that is a huge challenge because when you're on a TEDx stage, you are not selling. You're not selling yourself. You're not selling your product. You're getting up there to like really provide a solution for a big problem that humanity has, right? You're saying, "I have this idea and let me tell you how to implement it so that, look, the world can be better." And it's a very different context than speak to sell.

Another big problem I see is people are very used to talks being driven by a story. Just like I was saying before, they're not used to like 85% of their talk being content and being science-backed. It's all about how do we open loops properly in the TEDx talk? How do we include a story as emotional credibility, but it doesn't become our driving factor? How do we expand on content where it makes sense? And then, how do you take all of that and make sure it's on message? Really, the structure and the content of the talk is another one. A big part of what I talk about when I coach, too, is things that we do intentionally and things we do unintentionally and how they are very intertwined with each other. I always tell the speakers, pay attention to these two things. Know what your intention is getting up on stage, and then pay attention to what you're doing unintentionally.

For example, when I get up onstage, I want to exude confidence, but something that I physically do is I roll my feet to the side, and I don't know why I do it. I don't know what my mental trigger for it is, but I always roll my feet to the side, which onstage comes off as submissive and not confident. It's all about audience perception. And so when we're talking on a bigger stage, something that's going to get recorded, something that's going to go on YouTube and live out into eternity, what is happening on that stage that unintentionally, that is being perceived by the audience in a way that you did not intend? And that is a big, big thing, and speakers are constantly overlooking that step. Like what are the unintended consequences of this

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unintentional action? Those are really the biggest things that I see speakers making mistakes on on that bigger stage.

Susan Friedmann: And one I think you mentioned earlier was if you're used to speaking, often, you are winging it. Even though you've given the speech so many times, you're getting up there, and it hasn't been written out because you know it, so I'm sure that, too, is, there's an element of mistake there because you had mentioned it earlier. What do you think?

Sarah Lawrence: No, yeah, absolutely. What you end up doing unintentionally when you're winging it is the whole thing is unintentional, if we're being honest. You have intentions of giving off your message, but that doesn't mean that's going to happen in the most impactful way. Really, when you have reached that level of mastery in speaking where you can get people to relate to you on an emotional level through your story, when you've created this common character, when you're able to really explain that, when you have to pivot into your entire talk becomes intentional, your entire talk is driven by content, it's a very different mindset, and it's a very different movement on stage. It's very different toning. The whole thing is very different.

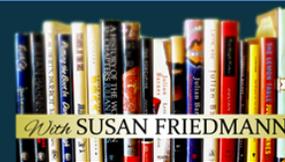
And yeah, when you wing talks, you make mistakes often. And that is okay in a lot of forums. In fact, in a lot of places, making mistakes makes you more relatable. People are able to say, wow, like this expert up on stage messed up. They're like me. We all mess up. But on the TEDx stage, it's all about giving people that very, very clear roadmap because you are seen as more than an expert. You're really seen as this person who has found this path on how we can change humanity, and it's a very, very high level talk.

Susan Friedmann: What are the expectations from the speaker of the organizer?

Sarah Lawrence: It definitely varies from organizer to organizer on what the expectations are. For me, I believe in setting people up for success. I knew going into it that my speakers would need to get coached. They would need feedback. I provided coaches. They were always able to get coaches on their own, but I provided coaches for them, as well, so I knew that they needed feedback. I set an expectation that I needed written drafts, and I needed a video, for several reasons, but mainly the video is so I can give very direct feedback on how to improve their talk, and the written draft was so that I knew that they had a written draft. They weren't winging it. They weren't like just putting together an outline, that they actually had a script that was within TED

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guidelines. I set my expectations so that they were set up for success each step of the way.

All organizers do this differently. Like I said, the organizer of TEDx Stanley Park required in-person rehearsals on the stage nine times. It's just not realistic for me to do that because my speakers are from everywhere. Based on location, based on what they really are looking for in their speakers, it just, it really varies. But I will say, as a speaker, regardless of what your organizer tells you, fall within their expectations, but whatever those are, know that you are going to put hundreds of hours into this talk.

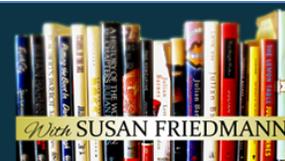
You need to get feedback from other communities. You need to get it in front of other people. You need to have some kind of coach from somewhere, whether that's from the organizer, whether that's someone you hire, whether that's a friend that has done other TEDx talks, it doesn't matter. You need to have someone coaching you along the way. You need to have a team who is willing to say, yes, I've got you as you go through this process. You need to be open to revisions. You need to not be married to any piece of your content or your story because it's going to change. I would say, as a speaker, there's expectations you should take on before going on that stage and then hear what the organizer has to say also.

Susan Friedmann: Now you're talking about several hundred hours of time that you put into it. What about the financial aspect? What kind of financials are we even thinking about here?

Sarah Lawrence: As a speaker, your financial expectation is based on travel. If you are looking to be on a stage that you have to travel to, that is covered by you. Speakers do not pay to be on TEDx stages, and if you are ever asked to pay to be on a TEDx stage, do not pay to be on a TEDx stage. Speakers cannot pay and will not be paid. As an organizer, I cannot pay people to be on my stage as well. That goes both ways. Organizers have a very strict guideline on what they can put money towards and what they cannot. Obviously, event costs itself, so venue and all of that, the organizer pays for out of pocket. That can be reimbursed by ticket sales. As a speaker, your investment is time if you're traveling somewhere that you have to pay for travel. If you're local, obviously, that's different. But just the stage itself, there's no financial investment for speakers.

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- Susan Friedmann: You're responsible as the organizer for selling the tickets and doing all the promotion and any of the media that's needed for that. That's all on the organizer. Is that correct?
- Sarah Lawrence: That is correct. The one thing that I do ask of my speakers and most organizers do ask is that speakers promote. They can promote on social media. They can promote to their mailing lists. They can promote to whoever. But we do ask speakers to promote. Number one, for ticket sales, obviously, right? Obvious reasons. But number two, you want eyes on the event. My event is a hybrid event, and it's being live streamed, so I can sell an unlimited amount of tickets, and as long as that all zeroes out in the end, I cannot benefit financially from the event, but it doesn't make my budget bigger to make the stage more high quality and all of that. The live stream tickets are unlimited. If you are talking about an in-person event, depending on how many times the event has happened, it determines on how many tickets you can sell to in-person events.
- Organizers will still ask speakers to promote because even after the event, when those talks get recorded and uploaded to YouTube, you want as many eyes and views on those talks as possible, and promotion is the way to get there. If speakers help promote, it literally helps everybody. Everybody is helping everybody get those views, get people drawn to their talk and all of that. I do ask my speakers to promote, and most organizers will. As far as media releases go, I handle all of that. I do have someone working with me on PR. Most organizers do have someone working with them on PR. And then, as far as financial investment, I carry all of that. Anything that I want ahead of time before ticket sales come in, I pay out of pocket. I manage the finances for the event. All of that.
- Susan Friedmann: That's a lot that you have to do. And then, of course, what the speaker has to do. But it's like a marriage, I suppose, that both of you have to do your share to make the whole thing work fantastic. If our listeners wanted to find out more about what you do and how to even get involved in this process, how can they do that, Sarah?
- Sarah Lawrence: Absolutely. You can always email me at Sarah@TEDxTanayaPaseo.com, and I will drop you that email address so you can put it in the comments, and then you can check out the event at www.TEDxTanayaPaseo.com. And you can see all of the speakers that I have in the lineup right now and purchase

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tickets to the live stream if you're interested. They are \$47 each, and my event is called 12 Hours to Impact. It's 12 hours of speakers who are going to make a massive positive impact in the world.

Susan Friedmann: How exciting. Yes. And I will put all of that, because that is quite a mouthful. It was a mouthful to say, so let alone for our listeners to spell. I will put all of that in the show notes, Sarah. And if you were to leave our listeners with a golden nugget, what would that be?

Sarah Lawrence: Anything that you do is all about taking action. When you have a big goal in mind, and as authors, you understand this, that when you're looking to write a book, that seems overwhelming. When you're looking to be on a TEDx stage, that seems overwhelming. But if you take it one step at a time and you just keep moving forward, no matter how small that step is, you do eventually get to your goal. And I am a big believer that it is about how you show up in the world and that you show up in the world. The world is run by those people who show up. Spend your time, spend your hours showing up for yourself every single day and taking small, actionable steps towards your goal.

Susan Friedmann: And that will give you that massive positive impact overall.

Sarah Lawrence: Yep.

Susan Friedmann: Sarah, you've been amazing. This is a topic that we've never covered in such detail. I know it's going to fascinate our listeners, so thank you. Thank you so much. And thank you all for taking time out of your precious day to listen to this interview, and I sincerely hope that it sparks some ideas you can use to sell more books. Here's wishing you much book marketing success.