

The Secret Ingredient To Writing

Three Month Vacation Podcast

Sean: Hi, this is Sean D'Souza from psychotactics.com and you're listening to The Three Month Vacation podcast. This podcast isn't some magic trick about working less. Instead, it's about how to really enjoy your work and enjoy your vacation time.

Imagine you go to the café and you're sitting there and the barista is making this fabulous coffee. The machine is superb, the barista has just won the championship. This is the top of the line barista and then you get your coffee. You take one sip and you think, "Something is wrong with you," because it can't be. It can't be this bad. How come this coffee is so yucky. It's very simple. Bad input. In coffee land, that is bad coffee beans. Either they're over roasted or under roasted, or just inferior coffee beans. Input is what matters and the same thing applies when you're writing an article or a book. The most important thing of all is input.

If you were to ask someone to write a story about their life, they probably could manage it. You would have to narrow it down, of course. You would have to say, "Tell me about when you were 10." You would have to narrow it down further, maybe some episode at school, but eventually, they would come up with some story and the story would have clear ups and downs. It would have a storyline, it would have everything in place. How did they do that? How did they conjure that up from nothing?

Nothing is a silly word to use here, isn't it? They already had something. They had the whole story in their mind. They have the concept in their mind. That becomes input and then it's a matter of structuring it in an article, and you have to know that structure, or structuring it in the form of a book. Then, you have your material. Most of the time, when you sit down to write an article, we don't have enough input. We have knowledge but we don't have enough input.

In this episode, we're going to look at what is input, where do you get it, and why structured and unstructured input is very important. Let's tackle the first burning question, which is: What is input?



The thing with you and me and everyone is that we already have the answers. The problem is we don't have the questions. We don't have that thing that prods us in the side and gets us to answer the question. That is our problem. It doesn't matter if you're a lawyer or in real estate or fitness or any business. You already have the answers. The problem is you're not getting enough questions. People don't ask you enough questions and so to get those questions, you have to go elsewhere. That elsewhere is really other books, other material, and that is input.

To give you an idea of what my day looks like, I start off the day with going for a walk. Usually, I have a few podcast, different types of podcasts and my phone is loaded with audio books as well. I know a lot of people have aversion to audio and obviously, you're listening to a podcast so you don't have this aversion, but a lot of people think that they're not going to listen to audio books or they're not going to listen to podcasts because they're not going to remember anything.

You're not supposed to remember everything. You're supposed to remember just one thing. That one thing is something that the author says and this could be something brand new, something that you've never thought of. That's input. Now, your brain is churning. Now, your brain is moving faster than ever before.

What if it's old material? Old material, when listened to or read a second or a third time, is different from when it was read the first time or listened to the first time because so much has changed. You have learned so much in between and now, that seems like mundane material could be very exciting. Both old material and new material make a big difference. That becomes input. That becomes like the coffee bean. That becomes the great stuff that you can work with. That is your starting point. You want that ignition point and that ignition point comes from input.

Of course, when we think of input, the input could come from a report, it could come from a book, it could come from audio, it could come from video. Why audio?

Because you're always traveling somewhere. You're always going to the supermarket. You're always walking around. You're always doing something that is just dead time. This is when you want to get that input. You want to start making notes, get more input, make more notes, and all the time, your brain is readying for that moment when you're going to write. Book reading, on the other hand, is a dedicated amount of time. You probably sneak in 15 minutes before bed or 15 or 20 minutes in the morning if you're lucky.



This dead time is there all the time for you. When you're waiting in the queue, when you're at the dentist, when you are picking up your kid, when you are driving in your car, there are literally hours in the day just waiting for you to get that input. If you think I'm telling you not to read and just listen to audio, that's not the point. The point is very simple: To be able to have output, you have to have input and to be able to have great input, you have to read great stuff or listen to great stuff and really crappy stuff.

Crappy stuff? Why would you listen to crappy stuff? We know that when you are listening to great stuff, it really inspires you. It makes you feel on top of the world. You feel like you're going to write an article or you're going to write some chapters in your book. You feel that because that's what input does. It sends energy through your system. Why would we deal with crappy stuff? The reason why you're dealing with crappy stuff is because you want to see how badly people give advice because that also sends a charge through you. You get very excited. You get emotionally charged. You want to get rid of this rubbish that people have been spouting.

That then generates another form of input, which is, "This is really bad, I need to fix it now." Crappy stuff could be just average information, but it also could be unstructured information. It might seem like, "Why do I have to listen to this?" Some of the great input comes from bad stuff. You can show people how to avoid that bad stuff, how to avoid that bad structure.

However, there is a downside to input. That is we're all information junkies so we could be reading and we could be listening to endless amounts of stuff. The key is not to remember everything. I've said this before. I want to say it again. You just want to take away one idea. You will almost never get one idea. You will get more than one idea. If it's really crappy, you might get nothing. This is where the strategy of having several podcasts, several audio books, and several books maybe, if you're reading ... That's really why you need to have several of them, because then, if you're getting nothing for half an hour and you think, "This is rubbish," you can switch. You can switch to something else.

I will listen to philosophy and psychology and marketing and all kinds of stuff on a single walk. It all becomes input. Most people think that article writing and content creation is about sitting down and writing. It's not. It doesn't matter that you have all the information in your head already. You still need an ignition point. You still need something to fire you up. You still need something to inspire you, something to get frustrated about. That is how you create great content.

You can make coffee from any coffee bean or you can make coffee from great stuff. Even bad coffee teaches you a good lesson.



That brings us to the end of this episode. What are you going to do? What's the one thing that you're going to do as a result? You definitely want to subscribe to this podcast. If you're on iTunes, you just press the subscribe button and therefore, you will get a lot of the content that is coming out on Three Month Vacation. [Episode 5, 6, and 7 is about storytelling](#) and one of the most critical thing in sales, in storytelling, in article writing, in book creation, product creation, is storytelling. You want to go back and listen to 5, 6, and 7. If you haven't heard it, well, here is a nudge again. Go there, [subscribe](#), and that's your one thing that you need to do today.

You want to stack your phone with lots of podcasts, lots of audio books. There is a ton of dead time. People say they have no time. No, they don't have efficiency. This is efficiency. Do it. Today. There is a series on storytelling. If you go to Psychotactics.com and search for storytelling, there is a really good series on storytelling. Yes, you have to pay for it, but it's worth it. It's all input and it will help you write better articles.

There is also the [article writing course](#). If you want home study for that, that's well worth it. We've been doing the article writing course since 2006 and we never promise that one person turned out to be a great article writer. Everyone turns out to be outstanding. That is because the [article writing course](#) is built on structure. It's built on a system. When you put those elements together, it's just fabulous. It's just amazing. You take the input, you take the structure, and you get great articles. You get great content and then you don't struggle anymore, which is the goal, isn't it?

Finally, you know about the [information products course](#), so that's on the East Coast of the United States, in Maryland. It's located at the Sheraton Silver Spring. It's the 5th, 6th, and 7th of May. We don't have 300 people come to our event and have 25 speakers. There is just one speaker and you spend 3 days actually working instead of just listening to more blah blah. We'll see you there. Bye for now.

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And if you have any feedback, you also want to write to me at sean@psychotactics.com. Anything you'd like to see or listen to anything you don't like, just write to me at sean@psychotactics.com. I actually implement the feedback. You can do this from your phone or your computer. [Here's a graphic, if you need any help.](#)

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