

# JAMES SCHRAMKO



## Using Stories to Sell via Webinars with Colin Boyd

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Colin Boyd helps people sell from stage, both physically and online. Here he shares how to make a webinar presentation by telling stories that sell.



**Colin Boyd**

**James:** James Schramko here. Welcome back to my podcast. This is episode 966. We're chatting today with Colin Boyd, an Aussie in America. Hello.

**Colin:** Hey, James. Hey, mate, great to be here. And congrats on that number on your podcast. Not many people have hit those numbers. We're at about 133, and I feel like I'm doing well.

**James:** You're going well, so keep at it. That's all, a consistent effort. I mean, for me, that's been my platform, it's been the sort of the core background engine to my online business. I know you've been specializing in a different world. So I want to talk about that.

## The gift Colin didn't know he had

In particular, I think you rose through your career as a corporate trainer, and you ended up doing some life coaching stuff, and then you're helping people sell from stage and from virtual stages, you know, which we'd call a webinar, I suppose, in our street talk. You're helping people convert more stuff via those platforms in your current iteration of business, is that right?

**Colin:** Yeah, exactly. And that for me, I remember I was sitting in a mastermind - and I don't know if people have had experiences like this before, you're in a program - and I was doing a certain thing. In fact, I was teaching productivity at the time. And one thing that I'd always done my whole life was I was obsessed with speaking. And my first speaking gig was the thing that kicked off my entire career as a coach, this was 13 years ago.

And I was sitting in a mastermind and one of the attendees, she's running a multimillion dollar online business, she comes up to me and she goes, Colin, I don't want to learn how to be more productive from you. And I was like, Okay. And she goes, I want to learn how to sell from stage from you. And she was like, The way you speak and communicate, I want to learn that.

And it was like, I wasn't aware of the gifts that I'd been given. And I wasn't aware of the things that I'd been working on, and that were most attractive to other people. And then that was about four and a half years ago. And so that started my journey of actually saying to the world, Hey, I actually teach people to speak and sell from the stage. And so that's been the evolutionary journey of that.

**James:** When I first saw you, I think it was on Instagram, and you were doing those little dancing stories, and I thought, I need to find out from Colin how to do those, he's obviously got the moves.

**Colin:** Oh dude, those stories, they're the bane of my existence. I've honestly got to blame my wife for that, because she's the marketing genius behind a lot of the dancing stuff and all the trending things. So yeah.

**James:** Well, I don't really want to learn that actually. It's not my thing.

**Colin:** It's not your thing, no, it's not for everyone.

**James:** My wife's more instrumental in other things, like organizing my books in pretty colors and stuff, which is cool.

**Colin:** Nice. I was going to say they look good.

**James:** They do look amazing. I get a lot of sh\*t for, like, Oh, they should be organized by alphabetical or whatever. But interestingly enough, I can find a book very quickly, because I remember what color it is. I've got a good memory and the visual part of it's very easy to use.

So you've gone through this process where you just got good at selling from stage, you got good at selling from virtual stage. Of course, during the pandemic, virtual stage would have become more and more important. I would say it's a form of productivity if you can find the leverage in turning up to one place, and then being able to be viewed by many, many people at once.

In some cases, you've helped people who have very large audiences, I know you've been at least behind the scenes. I don't know if you're publicly acknowledged for it. But you've definitely been instrumental in helping some of the biggest names online with putting together their presentations that sell, and that's what I really want to find out today on behalf of my clients who are doing webinars.

## **Can businesses still benefit from doing webinars?**

Firstly, the big question, are webinars still useful in 2022?

**Colin:** I mean, for me, a webinar is a really nice kind of entry point for people to connect with audience at a leveraged way. And I think webinars can change and evolve as you go through. Like, it doesn't have to be the classic webinar where you're doing slides, and you're just presenting ideas, never engaging with the audience, and then try to pitch at the end.

Like, a webinar could be like a mastermind-style session where you're in like a Zoom meeting, and you're actually seeing people's faces, like there's so many different mechanisms that you can use for it. But for me, a webinar is cheap in terms of setup, it's something that is easy to set up. So it doesn't have too many moving pieces compared to some of the more complex launches.

And it's a great way to just build rapport with people fairly quickly, and you can make an offer, usually sub \$2,000 in an hour, and you can get people to - if they're the right fit and they resonate with you - people to join a program under \$2,000. If it's over 2000, it usually goes to a call or something like that, that's been my experience.

**James:** Nice sort of filter. My experience was, in 2009, I was selling four and a half thousand-dollar event tickets via live webinars, which I never called them webinars, back then people didn't know what a webinar was, in some cases. I would call it online training, free online training or free training or a live event.

So what we've established here is that from our home or our studio, wherever we want to be, we can actually reach a whole bunch of people and in a short time, make an offer and be rewarded for it. But I imagine there's a huge, vast difference between someone sitting there thinking, Oh, wow, I've got this session coming up. What should I do on this session?

Big difference in the outputs, like, what they actually create, how they go about their process, if they have a process, and if they get results or not? Plenty of people I know have gone out there, copied industry-famous webinar blueprint of whatever type is out there. I'm sure there's plenty, so I'm not singling one in particular.

But I imagine they go and cut and paste the template, put in their own words and pictures, run it, or even probably worse, automate it and then get no results. That's a common outcome for people.

**Colin:** Yeah, definitely. Like I think, there's different levels of running webinars. And usually, when someone starts off on FME, when I started off, you know, I kind of just learned a general formula. I'd studied some people, learned some general structures and stuff like that, and I just followed a formula. And I think that's a really great place to start.

And then as you start to feel more comfortable with your own content, and really start to understand your audience, then you can add even more of your personality, more of your own style in it. So I just think, I think formulas and structures, I mean, I know you obviously share with a lot of your clients a lot of structures, formulas, processes, and it just gets results faster.

So I don't think it's bad that someone would follow a generalized structure. But I do think that if you know how to create content that actually converts, as opposed to - the mistake that most people make with their webinars, is they look at their course, or their program, and they just take the best bits from their course or their program, and they put it in their webinar.

And then they do a pitch on the end if they want to make an offer. And they usually get some nice comments. Like people will say, Oh, my gosh, that was amazing. Thanks. So helpful. And then they'll get no clients. So they get nice comments, no clients. And that's because a lot of the time, they over-teach and overwhelm people on their webinars because there's this internal desire of wanting to help.

So it comes from this really positive place, like they want to help people. But a lot of the time, people get too much into the how-to content. And it actually just overwhelms the audience and puts them in a place of procrastination, essentially, they kind of get stuck in their own stuff.

**James:** I love this. I want to reinforce that. There's some key words you said there. This happens all the time that people will say, I've got a presentation to do or whatever, how should I pitch at the end? And I'm like, Wait a minute. That's where they're going wrong in the first place.

You can pick the spot in most presentations, where someone goes from the happy, comfortable, talking about their content to the - it's like, they flick a switch and they go into stuttering, evil, dirty, filthy sales mode where they're now doing their ugly pitch that they don't feel good about or believe in. I think that's one of the big mistakes they'd be making.

I like that you said they're doing this with good intentions to help people with their helpful stuff. I would say it's a rookie error that just about everybody does, is put way too much into a presentation. I remember the first time I sold from stage, I delivered pretty much an encyclopedia, and I made one sale.

And the lady, her name is Sally, she came up to me at the end. She went to the back of the room and purchased the program. And I think it was \$2,000, it was \$2,000 or \$3,000. And I got half of that. I was like, Oh my god, I just made like \$1,000 or \$1,500 in 90 minutes. She says, I don't understand a word you said but you seem really trustworthy. [laughs]

**Colin:** Well there you go, there's one tick.

**James:** Okay, so yeah, what we're talking about here is you might often get great comments, a standing ovation, but no sales, and you're possibly teaching too much and just confusing people. I really think it'd be worth having a chat about what we should be doing instead. And I know you're famous for your way of using stories to sell in webinars, and I want to ask you about a piece of content I saw.

## **The hero's journey - how NOT to do it**

I was minding my own business on Instagram, probably looking at surfing stuff, or whatever. And I saw your beautiful head of hair pop up in my feed. And you're talking about how there's a wrong way of doing webinars and a right way and that most people do this wrong way where they're - fill me in on the gaps - but I think they were sort of making themselves the hero and stuff, and they got confused when they're talking about [hero's journey](#).

And then there's a right way to actually use stories to actually make conversions. And I'll definitely link off to where people can learn about this. I'll put it at [JamesSchramko.com/storyformula](https://JamesSchramko.com/storyformula). That's where Colin has his training on this. But if you could just introduce us to this revelation you had about the wrong way and the right way.

**Colin:** Yeah, I mean, this is a pretty new revelation that I had probably the last, you know, six or seven months, recently was that a lot of the time, most people in the expert industry or entrepreneurs will usually understand that when we get up to speak or share on a webinar, we should tell our story.

And so we tell our story. And first of all, that's one of the problems, I'll start there. And so, we tell our story. And that story is usually our origin story. So we talk about, you know, where we're from, how many kids we've got, maybe where we went to college, or didn't go to college.

**James:** I hate that slide. Like, here's me, here's my wife, here's my kids, here's my house. This is in the first few minutes of a webinar. I'm like, I don't care. I don't care about - I mean, no offense, you seem like a nice guy. And I don't do it in podcasts either. I don't burden the audience with - the laziest question I hear in a podcast for a guest is, So Colin, for those of us who don't know anything about you (and me neither because I've done no research), do you mind just sharing with us a bit about your backstory? Right? I hate that question. It's so lazy.

**Colin:** I know, exactly. What most people do is they tell the wrong story. So they tell this story of exactly what you said. It's, you know, where they grew up, how many kids they got, how many dogs and pets they've got. And the only person who really cares about that is their mom, which is nice. Yeah, that's nice. But they're most probably not going to buy their program.

**James:** My mom listens to this podcast. A big shout out to Vicki.

**Colin:** Yeah, shout out to Vicki.

**James:** Shout out to Vicki. And she gives me good commentary on whether the guests seem like good people, or they had good information or whatever. So just be on notice, Colin.

**Colin:** Send me a text about how I go.

**James:** Oh, well, I'll give you the Vicki review.



**Colin:** So good. Thanks, Vicki. So we tell this story, right? And because we've been told, we need to tell our stories so that the audience sees that we're credible. And a lot of the time, people want to tell their story of like, hey, you know, and then, this is why I'm an expert in this area, this is why I'm good at it. And we also want to create a little bit of connection.

Now the problem is, is that the origin story, all it does is tell a story about you that no one cares about, that yes, it could create a little bit of connection, but especially in Australia, I mean, I live in the US now, so it's okay to talk about yourself a little bit more in the US. But in Australia, like you know, if you talk too much about yourself, people are just like, Oh mate, just get over it, like you know, stop talking about yourself.

**James:** Yeah, it's like he's full of himself.

**Colin:** He's full of himself, exactly.

**James:** Check out this character, he's so full of himself.

### **From origin to conversion story**

**Colin:** [laughs] So good, so good. I've had to lean a little bit more towards that in the US. But it's like, I've still got some Aussie in me. So, this origin story is about you. And the conversion story is actually about them. And so the big shift that people need to make is that when they design their story that they share at the start, and by the way, you can share this on a webinar, you can share this on a live presentation, you can do this on your Instagram Stories, you could share it anywhere, right?



When you design your story, you need to have in mind, I'm not telling my story. I'm telling the audience's journey of their story. And so if you tell it in the right way, what will happen is the audience will hear you, they'll hear your story. But then they'll start making unconscious connections in their mind and go, Oh, that's how I felt as well.

And now they'll go, Oh my gosh, I've been through similar stuff like that. Oh my gosh, that person's exactly like me. Now, obviously, they may not look like you, may not be the same culture, may not be the same age, the same sex or anything like that. But the thing that they connect with is the emotion of the struggle.

And so in your story, in your conversion story, you have to bring out that emotion, that struggle that you went through in your journey. And first of all, because there's three questions that you have to answer with your conversion story, the first question is, Are you like me? So when you're telling your story, the first frame I think about is I go, how do I tell this story in a way where the audience goes, Wow, this person's like me. Right? On some level.

The second one is, you answer the question of, Can they lead me? And so you share your story in a way where you show that you've actually seen some results, some breakthroughs. But the final piece that most people get it wrong, which is what makes a conversion story is, is there a path that I can follow? And so in your story, you actually build your story around a transformational experience that you had, that epitomizes the pathway that you can help people with.

**James:** Nice. Yeah. So are you like me? Can they lead me? Is there a path that I can follow? It sounds to me like you are telling the story of where you're the guide, in a way.

**Colin:** Yeah. And it's like, you have to walk this fine line, because you are telling your story. But if you tell it the right way, you're telling their story. Can I share my story? Would that be helpful for the audience?

**James:** Look, I think we'll skip that. No of course, you can tell your story. [laughs] What a tease. Yeah, because I do have a question that I want to at least part, and I'll come back to that. So let's hear your story of so far, in this adventure, we've learned that you were a trainer, that you did some life coaching, you found your way online, you've gone to America.

So we know this about Colin, and that he does dancing story videos, and he's coached a whole bunch of people online. If we actually look at the checklist here, I did the certificate for workplace assessment training as well, that's like a trainer training in Australia. And it's a government-recognized thing.

I learned a lot about gap analysis and being able to coach people from that training. I also went online, I've also visited America, but I don't live there. We know that Colin is a good leader, because he's coaching the leaders that we would know their names, they're household names in the online space.

Is there a path that I can follow? Yeah, we've already mentioned the link, [JamesSchramko.com/storyformula](http://JamesSchramko.com/storyformula). So I think we're hitting the main key points here, almost by accident. But Colin, tell me that story. And we'll score it, we'll score the story against your criteria.

## How one speaking gig changed everything

**Colin:** So I was sitting at my desk, I was actually in southern Sydney at the time, at this old brown desk, with my PC on my desk. I had, let's call it two and a half legs on my desk, because I picked it up from one of those 99 cent stores. And it had missing legs. And I had the phone books holding him up.

And I'm in this space where I'm trying to run my business. I was a life coach at the time. And I had this big desire of making a difference. Like, I genuinely wanted to help people, I felt like I had some processes, some things that could actually make a difference in people's lives. And I was excited about what I could do.

But the problem was is that I had no clients. And so I'm looking at my computer with nothing on my calendar. And in fact, I had half, let's call it half a client, I had this guy who I would coach every other month, he would pay me like every other, other month. And so we'll call it half a client. So I had this big desire to make a difference, but I had no idea how to get clients at the time.

And what happened was my landline called, and I picked up the landline. I said hello, it was a buddy, one of my friends from one of the programs I was in. And he said, Hey, I've got a speaking engagement coming up, and he said, I can't do it. And in fact, I've been referred to it by another person. He couldn't do it. And it's a completely free speaking engagement. Do you want to do it?

So obviously, it's a very hot lead, like, no one wants it, right? And I said, Cool. I'd love to do it. It was my first free speaking engagement. And I remember heading into it the night of it. It was in Sydney, walking up the stairs and it was like, literally a dark and stormy night. I was so nervous. So overwhelmed. And my wife saw my arm and it felt like I was on her arm because I'm freaking out so hard.

The event organizer comes running to me, and he's like, Colin, you wouldn't believe this. Biggest night we've ever had. We've got 137 people coming tonight, and this is the biggest we've ever had. For me, this is bad news. Because in my mind, I'm like, I'm just going to look like an idiot in front of more people, because I didn't feel qualified, I didn't feel ready. I looked like I was about 12 years old at the time. And I just felt, you know, just not ready.

That evening, I got up, I spoke. And I made an offer at the end. And I didn't realize at the time, it was an irresistible offer. And at the end of the presentation, out of the 137 people, 125 of them gave me their personal details to follow up. And I followed up, and I ended up signing 12 full-time coaching clients, when I was doing one on one at the time from there.

So I stacked my entire coaching business. And three days later, I'm standing on the hotel stairs after doing a coaching session, and the director from HP calls me and says, Colin, I saw you speak at the event the other day, I loved it. Could you come and speak at our next global training day? And that ended up having five and a half thousand people. That was my first paid speaking event.

And what was crazy was that the revelation I had was that literally in one event, in one speaking engagement, in one presentation, my entire life changed. And it's evolved from there and so forth. But that was the big revelation that I had.

## **James's relationship with storytelling**

**James:** Okay so, are you like me? I guess we could all relate to that first time we were invited to speak or even if we haven't spoken, we'd be absolutely petrified of it. And the more people that are there, the more we'd be scared of it. So we can all relate to that initial situation. Having been through that baptism of fire and then succeeded and gone on, then obviously, you're in a good position to lead someone else who's approaching that situation.

And is there a path that I can follow? Yes, you now offer that process for other people. So I think that's a great story. The question I had relates to this, somewhat. I've got lots and lots of stories similar to that. I have a story inventory, right, I rack them away in my brain. I have incredible stories. And look, over 966 episodes, my audience have heard a lot of them.

But not all of them. There's plenty of stories I've never, ever told. And also, it'd be ridiculous to presume that every listener has listened to every episode. I know there's maybe five or six people who tell me they've listened to all my episodes, which is pretty dedicated and hardcore. And I appreciate it very much.

But I do retell some stories often. I've had a lot of feedback from my audience - they love when I share my stories, right? Initially, I didn't used to share many stories because I was pretty much a robot. I would just get to the point, deliver the punchline, tell them the facts. So my early versions of the podcast, which was Internet Marketing Speed, before [I renamed it](#) the second last time, it was very dry and super tactical and no fluff, no filler, short episodes.

Even the name of episode one, if you go back in the archives, this is ridiculously to the point, it's like [Copywriting with John Carlton](#), to give you an idea. So I was never talking about my story, it was always about the guest and so forth. So over time, I've dialed in more and more of the stories. And I know for a fact it helps people resonate.

A lot of them say that they relate to what I was saying, that they felt like that too. Because I think it's actually easy to lose touch with your audience as you progress. And what I have seen with some of the people I coach or have coached in particular, some of them got a bit big for their boots, or they just turned into some sort of - they became more likely to fob off a phone call like, just not show up, because they became more and more important, they became more and more inaccessible by their clients.

And I think they lost touch with their own origin story that the people who they could help are now not relating to them because they've become too special or too important. For me, taking up that hobby of surfing smacked me in the face with humility and beginner's mind again. It made me reconnect with my audience and understand the strain and challenges.

To remember what it's like to wake up in the middle of the night in, like, a nightmare of having a job or I have to go a long way back to remember when I would put a credit card across the shopping till and wonder if it's going to clear, right? But that is a reality for people, and the stress and anxiety that they have, you know, I believe with [Work Less, Make More](#), I've created an antidote and a way forward. In particular, leverage.

And you know, case in point, I'm bringing on a guest who's a specialist in something I don't really do much in the way of. I don't do public webinars, and I've said no to speaking gigs lately. So I feel like I'm past that point in my stage. Just because I've got such a mature podcast, I've got clients who just don't leave, so I hardly need to add any more, which is great. And I've got nine partners, which are phenomenal. And they're like lifetime deals, like, they're 10-year term deals.

So I'm not looking to always fill the bucket, which is great, low pressure. I do do a lot of zooms now with my clients. I do ask-me-anythings, I do one-to-one coaching calls still with my legacy clients, with my partners. And I do a weekly group call, which is my most dynamic, thriving, best group, this weekly group. They love it, I love it. We're all on Zoom.

That's where I still tell a lot of stories, but I tell them to teach. I tell the story of something that happened to me. And I think it actually says, You know what, I was just like you. This is what happened. If you apply the same lesson that I learned, I can lead you through this now with my advice. So it's kind of like answering a question with a story, is a common thing that I'll do.

In terms of the path they'd follow, you're right, before you said, I've got frameworks, checklists, playbooks or whatever, I give them the breakdown, like this is the checklist of things you need to be aware of.

## **Balancing vulnerability with credibility**

So, I really like your story. It does date you though, two things that stand out. One is, you had a landline. And two is, back then obviously, phone books were thick enough to prop up a table. Like, I don't know if they even deliver phone books, I think they still deliver phone books, but they're so thin, you could forgive thinking it's a pamphlet or something.

**Colin:** It's so true. I mean, stories are just great because what you're talking about here, like you've got this stack of stories. And stories are great, because I think they're really good when you get the balance right of vulnerability and credibility. And so what I mean by that is, you know, if you tell the story of where you're struggling with something for a bit, and then you had a breakthrough, it has a beautiful balance of vulnerability to credibility. And when you do that, it creates an attractability to you.

**James:** I want to talk about that balance. Because okay, there's some things that really - it's great to have an expert on this topic to grill about it - a nice grilling, like soft, good grilling, not bad grilling. One of my previous guests, [Chris Haddad](#), he's known as an emotional storytelling copywriter. And he said, You should tell the stories that absolutely petrify you to tell, like, that scare you to tell, like, that's how vulnerable you can get.

Now there's that point of view. And I appreciate it. And I absolutely have some stories that I have not told and I never really anticipate telling, that are so dark and deep that firstly, in line with this sort of idea of [the courage to be disliked](#), the philosophy there, the Adlerian philosophy is, don't keep bringing trauma back into your life, right?

There have been things that I've been through that I don't really need to bring back into the current, I don't want to put the spotlight on them. I'll let them go. And so that's part of the philosophy around it. But what I get on pretty much a daily basis, right, I get podcast pitches, and pitch after pitch after pitch is the same old vomit-worthy, crappy bullsh\*t about this guy was broke, or in prison or in jail, or crashed four companies in a row, and now he's found the answer, and he wants to come on your show and sell his sh\*t.

Like I just spam delete these now, I'm sick of them. But it's such a boring story. And I don't want to learn from an ex-bankrupt, jail convict, drug meth dealing or whatever. Like, that doesn't appeal to me. And I don't want to put them in front of my audience. Am I wrong?

**Colin:** Well, I mean, potentially, it's not something that you're resonating with. I think there will be people who resonate with it.



**James:** Americans seem to. Like once I was lost, now I've found line is a...



**Colin:** What I do know is that the principle stays true. The principle of that you have to get the balance right of credibility and vulnerability to create a magnetism and attractability in your story.

**James:** So in this case, they're overcooking the fail to the point where I don't think it's redeemable.

**Colin:** Yes. So what can happen is, if people are too much on the fail, it potentially, if you don't know, if you haven't heard the full story and their transformation, and you haven't felt their energy and all that sort of stuff, you can write them off. And so some people, they just become drama on stage, like a lot of the time.

## When you haven't got the rock bottom narrative

**James:** Well, I know what it is, they're not like me, I just can't relate to it, you know, they're just not like me. So far for me, I was always a little bit challenged, because I felt like I didn't have that - I didn't go through bankruptcy or jail or addiction or whatever, before I found success. So I've got a more boring story in a way. Like, I've done well and then gone better, you know, like... [laughs]

**Colin:** [laughs] Yeah, yeah. I was doing all right, now I'm awesome.

**James:** I'll give you an example. Like last week, I was hanging out with a friend of mine, he's a really good business guy. I met him at a Google conference years ago, like over a decade ago. We've remained friends. And we went for a surf together, he kind of, I don't know, he kind of booked himself in to come up and have a surf with me and talk business, which I want to do the surf, but I couldn't care less about talking about business, right? Because I just want to surf.

But anyway, we're taking the surfboards out of the car, and he's going, you know, You and I, we've done well, you know, we've had the big ups, we've had the big downs. But all in all, we've done well. And I said, Well, hang on a minute, I haven't had the big downs. Like, there's been no point in my entire time online where I've had a big dip. Because I'm strong with the strategy, I'm able to manage change, I understand trends and how they're going to impact things before people realize what's happening.

I've got multiple pillars of income, I spread my risk, I don't have redundancy in any one area, like, that's by design. This guy has chosen a very spiky business model, by comparison to me. He's chosen more paid traffic things that can get shut down, he's chosen industry segments, for example, like cryptocurrency would be one example, or travel industry, that are far more prone to ups and downs than I am.

So that really struck me. I've not ever had that, the you know, was-broke-on-a-park bench story that you hear so often. Is it over commoditized?

**Colin:** Well, I think like, even for you, James, it doesn't have to be the broke on a park bench or bankrupt or, you know, in jail. It could literally be, I mean, my story is just, I was just starting out, I was just new.

**James:** That's a way better story. We all started, I can relate to that.

**Colin:** Exactly.

**James:** When you were telling your story, I did what we all do, and I placed myself in your story, because we're all selfish.

**Colin:** But that is exactly the purpose of a conversion story.

**James:** And that's why I wanted to highlight it. I wanted to highlight that if your audience are placing themselves in the story, because that's what they will automatically do, don't take it so far that they can no longer place themselves in the story. And that's what's happening with these pitches. They're like, you're way past that part of the story where I could relate to.

**Colin:** They're trying to draw the extremes too much and kind of stand out. But it's really just kind of ostracizing them out of your story.

## **How James filters would-be podcast guests**

**James:** They're not my story, that's for sure. And just on that, because I care a lot about who I have on this show, right? I say no to just about everybody. And if someone is on the show, that should mean something to my audience. I think they already know that just because that person is there, they've already passed a minimum level of filters for me.

You know, I'll go and research the person's work, I google their reputation, I'll ask people who know them if this person's any good or not. And if I don't know that, I'll always declare that on the show. Like, I'll say, I just met this person, we've never had any discussion. And then they'll know, okay, you can't accept them into the safe, guaranteed checklist thing.

But part of what I do on the show is [I have the same people over](#) and over and over and over again, like 10, 12 times, and we get to know them over time. And a lot of them are my partners, and I wouldn't go into partnership with someone unless I have a strong, deep level of trust.

So that means we do skip a lot of the origin story, because if the purpose of the origin story was just to establish if this person can be trusted to lead me, then that's already a tick in the box. So it's a very interesting situation we've had here. I imagine if you're dealing with cold audiences, and you're running paid traffic, you're going to have to do a lot of work in those first phases.

**Colin:** And I think, well, the mistake that most people make is they'll either lean too heavy on the credibility, because they're trying to prove to the audience, like maybe they're a cold audience for a lot of people, they're trying to prove to the audience that, hey, I know what I'm talking about. And that's usually because they're still learning to trust themselves that they know what they're talking about as well. And that's okay.

**James:** But sometimes it's not. [laughs]

**Colin:** Well, it's off putting, it is off putting as a listener.

### **Three levels of certainty around your offer**

**James:** I got an email yesterday from someone who's wanting a coach. They have just come into the market, they're helping people with lead gen, you know, lead demand generation, and traffic and conversions and stuff, but they have no traffic conversions or customers, and they want a coach to help them.

And I'm like, Well hang on a minute. Have you tried doing your specialty on yourself first, before you come and ask someone like me to wave a magical unicorn fairy wand that will automatically make you - like, I just think there is some danger. Some people are so blind to the obvious, they really probably shouldn't be putting themselves out there for those sorts of things, just yet.

**Colin:** I agree. For me, I kind of break it down into three levels of that, because I think a lot of people struggle with certainty around their offers. And you bring so much certainty because the level of proof that you have in your life, and the level of testing you've brought to your actual methodology, whether you doubt it or not, for a minute, you know that there's just this truckload of proof.

And so for me, there's three levels. The first level is, they've had a personal transformation. So in other words, they've been through their own process. And they've got a result. So that's a personal transformation, which is great.

**James:** And a sample size of one.

**Colin:** Exactly. It's a sample size of one. We don't know if this is going to scale yet.

**James:** Yeah, still questionable.

**Colin:** Exactly. The second level is when they've actually spent the time to have process proof. And what I mean by that is, they're clear on their process, they're clear on the structure, they've taken what they've gone through and built unconsciously, and made it extremely conscious and clear. And so at least they know how to talk about what they do, as opposed to just, I've been through it, and it's awesome.

**James:** Well, I think you're describing a scenario there where a lot of successful people are not good teachers, because they don't really know what they're actually doing. And they haven't distilled it. And I think there's some people who are way better than others at engineering their processes and frameworks, and there's good example, you and I know plenty of those people, they're really good at what they do. And they're really good at documenting it and being able to teach it.

**Colin:** Yeah, yeah. And that's a skill you can learn.

**James:** Yes, you can.

**Colin:** Anyone can learn that, you know, if you're struggling with that, you can learn that. And that is, I mean, the conversion story is just that, like, it's a process that I have gone through personally and documented. And then tested it, which is the third phase. The third phase is, do you have social proof? And so that is, is this actually replicatable and scalable with other people? And are we getting a statistically sound level of results with the group of people that we're seeing?

And usually, what I recommend for people to do is, you know, they'll do like a beta version of their offer. That is, like, you roll up your freaking sleeves, and you work your ass off for your clients, you know? Not like, oh, I don't know if I can handle too many clients. And it's like, no, you do like, low price, work your ass off, actually deliver results.

And then, when you combine the three together of the personal transformation, the process proof, and then the social proof, that's when you start to get offer certainty. And then you just keep building that as you go through the years.

### **Please don't call it "beta"**

**James:** I love that. I mean, maybe from now on, I'll convince you to change the name of that. I think beta is codename for sh\*t. It's the sh\*t version of something.

**Colin:** [laughs] The founder's version.

**James:** No, there is a name, there's a name I use, my listeners will be screaming at the speakers, right? I think of TV studios and whatever, when they want to test something out, they call it a pilot. So they put a pilot episode and then the studio runs it. And then they see the reaction. And then they decide if they want to commit to a full scale production.

And I like the word pilot because everyone on the pilot knows that it's a pilot. There's an impetus on making it work and succeed. But there's also the possibility that it may not go beyond the pilot. And I think that's a reasonable expectation to set for the person delivering and also the person receiving.

**Colin:** I love that. I've never heard someone explain the first version of that. I mean, in the US, I've never heard someone use the word pilot. I've never heard someone use the word pilot before. I love that.

**James:** Yeah, lots of my clients, they'll do a pilot program. Like, if someone wants to start a group coaching program, they might run a pilot program for three months. And then at the end of three months or close to the end, they can decide if that's something they'd like to continue to do. Put it into full-scale production, or stop it. In some cases, they're like, Oh, I don't like doing this.

It's how my coaching started, I piloted it just to see what happens. And even in nautical terms, a pilot boat, you know, helps the big tanker out through the harbor without bashing the sides of the harbor or the boat. It's a lovely term.

## Banking for self esteem

Other things relating to what you just said, I'm going to share a couple of techniques that have helped me, and I'm going to sort of ask you for some more depth on your story formula for conversions.

One is, in the beginning, when someone sent me something nice, an email, or whatever, I would always screenshot it. And I just had automation on my Apple device that would take the screenshot and put it into a Dropbox folder. And I've got screenshots for the last whatever, how many years, so if I ever got a moment of self-doubt, or there was any kind of troll or whatever, I could always go and look at my screenshots. And it's just for me, it's just a personal self-esteem bank.

**Colin:** You're talking about your client testimonials, right? Like the results that people have got.

**James:** Pretty much, but it's the private things people say when they're not doing an American style, Pop Vox testimonial. I don't like those ones. You know, if you ever have your brand on the back screen, and lots of videos of people saying lovely things about all the stuff they're going to do, just put it in the bin, that's useless.

I don't care about the stuff that customer's going to do. I don't care how hyped they are at your event, that's meaningless. Tell me what they've done. Show me what they've done. Like, get that story out there.

**Colin:** You get the DM of like, Dude, I just like, used that system, and we just created this result.

**James:** Exactly, screenshot, screenshot, it goes in my little bank stuff. Now, I'm not saying publish the screenshots. You absolutely, if you intend to do that, you need to get permission to do that. A lot of people do this with Facebook comments and stuff. Do not do that unless you ask the person.

## The right customers are your best validation

Another system I've used to fast track it is by combining a net promoter score, when we have a - Nice Reply is the system we use, if we get a 10, that person will usually be like, Hey, would you like to share about that on my podcast? So I'll have a case study machine off the back of it. So we're automatically ticking the boxes of yes, the results are proven. This person is able to generate these kind of results.

I think one of the litmus tests for a product or service is somewhere in the sales process, if they could say, Listen, speak to one of my customers, speak to some of my customers about how I've been helping them and whatever they say, I'll go by that. That is the score that I'll be judged by. Not my impression of how well I think I'm helping people, but what do they say? Because if you can generate that, then you're good enough to go to market and be bold with it for sure.

**Colin:** And I think, I know for me, you know, it's taken years to really feel confident and congruent with asking people to invest in themselves. It really has.

**James:** I like how you said that. That's such a distinction that most people don't really understand.





**Colin:** Yeah, well, I mean, for me, when I'm presenting an offer, an offer is not me asking for money. An offer is me asking the audience if they align with what the offer will create. And it's asking them to enter a place of full commitment to themselves. And the money is just one of the currencies of that commitment.

There's many currencies - there's money, there's time, there's effort, there's confidentiality, there's energy, there's intention, like, there's so many currencies in the offer. But when they enter that offer, I protect the offer. Like, if someone's a douchebag in that offer, they're out. Like, it's a sacred place for me.

And so, when I'm presenting an offer to an audience, I'm not saying I want your money, I'm saying I've created a space that holds a sacred place of transformation. If you're after this outcome, I've created this space for you. And to enter this space, there is commitment that's required, and that is money, time, effort, confidentiality, all the things. Do you want to enter?

**James:** I like that. I like being clear on filters. It goes against the trend of, Hey, if you buy this and for whatever reason, even for no reason, you can get a full refund, you know, and they're just trying to get the sales. I don't like that, that way of selling. It provides unresourceful customers a huge crutch, where they can place blame on anything but themselves, which is really where the main differentiator of someone's success will be, providing - because I know someone's already tweeting right now - providing you offer something with integrity, and it's good.

There's some sh\*tty salespeople who sell stuff, and then will let the customer blame themselves when it was - the customer was never going to succeed in the first place. I hate that too. So if you have integrity, if you've built yourself up to the point where you've got a bank of customers who would swear by the results they've gotten, and you feel good about what you're doing, then you can be in a position where you help people become more responsible.

And when they pay you, it's like that, you know, the slide of your kids in your house, and like, they don't really care for the fact that this is buying Colin's next swimming pool, or that it's helping his Tesla payment or whatever, I don't know if you drive a Tesla, I just threw that out there. They're buying it to invest in themselves, to be better off. That's it.

## **The presentation-building process**

So let's just do this, this will be the most helpful part, hopefully, for someone, because everything up to now has been really good. If I've got an established product, I'm really good at what I do, I've sent out an email, and I've got a bunch of prospects who have committed to come along to hear me talk to them next week, on a live presentation online, what is my process to build that presentation? Because that's where we're at for a lot of my audience.

**Colin:** Do we have four hours? [laughs]

**James:** Well, that's okay. If we had to build the presentation and jump out of the plane with a parachute before it hits the ground, what's the 4:64? What four percent of things would, you know, absolutely must be there?

**Colin:** Absolutely. Okay. So for me, first of all, you have to start with the offer. So the offer is the outcome. And so you always start with the offer and you build back. And that's if you're going to make an offer. Right?

**James:** And you probably should make an offer, right?

**Colin:** Yeah, at least like a next step of, Hey, do you want to book a phone call? Do you want to do a strategy session? Like, it doesn't have to be a direct, what I'll call, I'll call it a sharp sell. So there's three types of presentations. There's a sharp sell, which is direct to offer, there is a soft sell, which is like a book a call or a download a PDF. And then there's a no sell, which is a classic keynote. Because I teach selling on stage.

**James:** Well, even in my paid community where someone's already paid to be there, and I'm delivering their fulfillment, like, I'm delivering their content, I still acknowledge them for coming, appreciate them for being a member. And I look forward to catching up with them on the next training. That will be like the softest of sells. But it's me making sure that, you know, remind them that a great way that they can continue to be better off is to continue being a member, because I'm in the subscription world.

**Colin:** Beautiful. So it's like the open loop of like, what's the next step? So first of all, you start with the offer. And then for me, there's four big elements of every presentation.

## **Touch their hearts from the start**

The first element is you have to work out, how do I touch their hearts right at the start? And so that is your story, we talked about your conversion story, if people want to find out more they can go to your link. Your story is a big part of it, if it's done really well.



There's also this idea of, how do you show them that what you're about to talk about is really relevant and important right now? So it's not like, you know, nice to know, it's necessary to know right now. And really, that you understand them. I think most people get a presentation wrong because they think that it's about them presenting content.

But it's first of all, it's showing to the audience that you get them, that with integrity, you deeply understand them. And that's why I think if sales is done well, it's actually a very beautiful process, because you deeply understand your audience, you're doing a good thing for them because you can actually meet a need.

And if they're the right fit, and they're in the right position and ready to commit, the right season of their life, it can transform their world. I know it has for me. I wouldn't be living in America if it wasn't for programs that I joined. I deadset would not be living in America if I didn't join programs.

**James:** And you want to live in America, right?

**Colin:** Yeah.

**James:** Yeah, I'm just checking.

**Colin:** Yeah, at the moment I do. [laughs] We'll say that again. So we've been here five years now. So it's still weird.

**James:** I'm lucky because I've landed in paradise. I've found the place in the world where I love the most. So for me, like, anything else seems less appealing.

**Colin:** Yeah, well, I'm in Newport Beach, which is a beautiful spot. It's a really beautiful place. And so, I definitely picked a good spot. It's expensive, but I mean, Australia is expensive anyway. So people complain about taxes and stuff here. And I'm like, it's more expensive in Sydney than it is living here. So, anyway.

**James:** Sydney is the most expensive city in the world on the latest data that I saw, it's always up there with Paris, London, or whatever. I now live in Queensland. But it's just, we'll keep it a secret.

**Colin:** I think I would choose Queensland if I came back.

**James:** Yeah, just between you and me, we'll keep it a secret.

**Colin:** Yeah, totally, totally. But yeah, I mean, we always had it on our heart to come to America. So we did the leap. But it's been great. Like, the opportunities we've had has been mind-blowing. And so the first part is, you touch people's hearts. Yeah. I mean, there's like, there's nine steps for that, but I'm not really going to go through all the notes here.

**James:** It's okay. We'll put a link, [JamesSchramko.com/storyformula](http://JamesSchramko.com/storyformula), so you can learn more about Colin's stuff. And you would expect it, I don't know if it's on that page or after, there will be an offer where you can go deeper. But you've already heard Colin's philosophy around that. And I believe Colin, you seem quite sincere about how you operate in that space. I really like that. Is this what they mean when they say heart-centered? Are you a heart-centered entrepreneur?

**Colin:** That's so funny. That's so funny. I never use that language in my copy.

**James:** You wouldn't describe yourself as...

**Colin:** But I definitely attract a lot of that, I would say. And it's actually - I attract - there's a lot of women in my program, like I sometimes joke and say, it could be called the sisterhood. And I actually, I have attracted some very big influencers who I've coached. And I think it's because the way I pitch is not aggressive. It's not like bro marketing.

**James:** Yeah, and I know exactly what you're talking about. I've got lots of women in my program as well, who they've actually, I'm somewhere in the middle like Goldilocks, right? They're definitely not attracted to the bro marketing and all the aggressive sales. And I'm not either.

But also in the very women centric worlds, there's a little bit of, you know, emotion and cattiness and cliques that they want to move away from too, they're like a centered sort of in the middle, somewhere on the middle, sweet spot approach.

**Colin:** Yeah, I love it. So yeah, so the first part I'm talking about is really just touching people's hearts. That's the first part.

### **How do you shift people's minds?**

The second part is shifting their minds. And so what most people do is they try to teach people's minds. So which is remember, we talked about a mistake if they go to their course and then they pull the content, they're like, what's awesome in my course, let's put it in.

But the goal of the presentation is to actually prepare people to commit to themselves. And so it's not about just teaching content. Sure, you should teach them helpful content, absolutely. But you have to keep in mind this idea of, you have to shift the beliefs and the resistances that people have to commit to themselves and commit to the next level, in order for them to actually say yes to the offer on the next thing, and that's actually valuable in itself.

**James:** Oh, my God, I mean, I couldn't be more resonating with that. On Monday, this week, I had a coaching call. It was the first onboarding diagnostic for an annual member of my intensive program. And I do this, like we do a pre diagnostic that I prepare and I look through, but there's a common in there that really stuck out to me. And it was relating to self-confidence and in sort of buried deep feelings of not being good enough or whatever.

We spent three quarters of the call me deconstructing the historical belief system and rebuilding it. And then the last part of the call on a few first tactics to try and then so that we could come back and more, but I think it would have been a huge mistake to go tactical or fully strategic, because anything we would have done would have been hampered by the entrepreneur's ability to navigate his own business and his own life.

**Colin:** And he's sitting there with the handbrake on.

**James:** Huge breakthrough. In fact, I'll go so far as to say, my hypothesis is that that one call will be a life-changer, because the prior interaction I had with this individual was many years ago, and I did a metaphor back then with this person in real life, and it demonstrated, I can't say what it is because it's too easy to pick who it is and I want to protect their privacy, but had a dramatic impact to the point where they're basically, this is the next phase of the journey now. But it's all about that person.

And I know that I put about a quarter of what I do normally is on that person. But I'm really pleased to hear you say this, because you're backing up what I've always known to be true, that the business or the entrepreneur in a small business like us - we're tiny businesses, micro businesses - is really only going to be good to the extent that the founder can get on that mind train.

**Colin:** Absolutely. And a lot of what most people think good selling is, is that, oh it's about just presenting desire, creating desire for the offer, or yes, it's part of that, but 50 percent of it is also taking the handbrake off, is removing the resistances. And in fact, most people are ready to run as soon as you remove the resistances. And so that work you did with that client, that new client, I mean, they're probably excited already to move forward. But they couldn't, because they had the resistances.

**James:** I had a catch-up today. It's like the freight train is unleashed. It's just like, on a tear. And that's like, it's so exciting for me to see that. That's how I get joy from what I do, to witness that. And to be a part of it is, it's just great. It's just being a good human. And so my definition of selling is simply helping people be better off, right? Then that's okay. This person absolutely should be in that program and needed to be there, and will get profound outcomes from that decision to come on.

## Now equip their hands

**Colin:** Beautiful. And so just for the listeners to go back to what we were saying, I said, you've got to shift their minds, which is what we were talking about then, then you've got to equip their hands. Now, you've got to be careful with this one.

What most people do is they do too much equipping of hands, and they actually lose the sale. And it actually does the listener a disservice, because if you give them too many things to do, they're not going to do them anyway, because they're not committed. And so it's like that whole thing of, I mean, James, you probably had your brain picked 250,000 times in your life.

**James:** There's another expression I hate.

**Colin:** Right. Can I pick your brain? It's like, oh, great...

**James:** Oh, just get out a knife and just cut me open now, I can stick the fork, and it's such a horrific expression. It's like that expression, Oh, there's enough room around here to swing a cat. Like, are you the kind of person who swings cats by the tail? Or when someone says to me, Oh, there's more than one way to skin a cat, like holy crap. Not only have you skinned a cat, you've done it more than once.

**Colin:** And you're using that metaphor.

**James:** This is outrageous. So we have to be careful with the words we use. But yes, people have definitely sidled up to me and wanted to glean knowledge from me on many occasions.

**Colin:** Yeah. And so, what I recommend is you teach content that creates decisions. And I mean, that's a whole nother 30 minutes.

**James:** Well, I get it. And thanks to Caroline Plunkett, you know, back in the early 90s, when she was my boss, and I'd say, Hey, Caroline, what's the dealer code for Boyded Lakemba? And she'd say, It's in the drawer, look it up. I'm like, But you know the code, you could just tell me. She goes, I could tell you, but you'll keep asking me the code. But if you know where to look it up, you'll never ask me again. And I'm like, d\*mn!



So it was like, I hated that at the time, but it was such a valuable lesson. And as a coach, it's pretty tempting sometimes to just drop the answer in front of someone. However, I might make them earn the answer. And they'll learn how to think, which is the most incredible skill. And I do this with my team too, my team know how to think, because we've learned how to think and not just to regurgitate, copy, repeat, you know, or shortcut things.

## **Finally, move their feet**

**Colin:** Yeah, I love that. And then the final step is moving their feet. And that is the pitch, right? That's transitioning to the pitch and actually making the offer, whether it's a direct sell, a sharp sell, or whether it's a next step, or book a call or something like that. So for me, you start with the offer, you start with the offer, and then you build back and you touch their hearts, you shift their minds, you equip their hands and you move their feet. That's like the general overarching flow of what I go through.

**James:** I like that, and I appreciate it so much.

## **Why you don't want people picking your brain**

I've got a very specific question. I told a client of mine I would ask you this, because I've been looking forward to our call. He gives away this whole sort of treasure trove of stuff. So he runs paid traffic to a treasure trove of all these downloads, that's probably gigabytes worth of stuff.

And then he has a lot of trouble later on the back end trying to sell them into the membership. And I felt there was an issue with that. And I'm curious to know what you think about that, given the equip their hands, I think he's equipped a small village for the next decade.

**Colin:** Well, it's the picking-the-brain thing. It is. Someone comes to you and says, Can I pick your brain? They spend two hours with you. You buy the coffee, right? They don't buy the coffee.

**James:** Oh, yeah. Just never. I say no. I found an easy out.

**Colin:** You buy the coffee. Two months later, you catch up with them. Oh, how'd you go with the stuff, like, I gave you everything? They're like, Oh. I just haven't had a chance to do anything yet. I mean, that's my answer, is they just haven't had a chance to do anything.

**James:** Where it stopped for me was, you know - and I'm a generous person, right - where it stopped for me was one day when I was down there putting aside my life, gearing someone with massive Intel and buying them the coffee, I missed out on my surf. I missed out on my surf and that crossed the line, man, you don't cross that line.

**Colin:** Oh, that'll never happen again.

**James:** It doesn't happen again. Now it'd be like, Colin, I'm more than happy to answer a couple of questions. But if we were to go down to the coffee shop and I buy you coffee or whatever, what is it that you would actually want me to help you with? And you tell me and then I'd answer it and then we're done. So we're good. We just shortcut the whole thing.

**Colin:** Totally. Then you get to surf, and you don't have to pay for the coffee.

**James:** I don't want to miss the surf. And it's really been the greatest thing, the greatest blessing to have that in my life to guide the filters and structures. I'm on this search for finding more and more leverage in a way that doesn't seem difficult for other people or whatever. But once you get your routines and your systems and your core filter, it works.

So start with your offer, touch their hearts, shift their mind, equip hands, move their feet. I love this. Of course, we'll put the link up there, [JamesSchramko.com/storyformula](http://JamesSchramko.com/storyformula). Colin Boyd, this has been episode 966. I appreciate getting to know you better, because I mean, I've observed your dancing videos, we've had a little bit of private chat back and forth. I know you're also a surfer. So that puts you in a rare elite.

## Some parting advice

What advice would you have for someone who's listened this far to this episode, apart from renaming their beta program pilot?

**Colin:** [laughs] So good. It would be to stop picking people's brains. And just to commit to yourself on the next level. I know for me, anything that's happened in my life has always been through a courageous decision. And there's probably something that they've been thinking about that they're scared of doing. And when it comes down to it, it's back - I mean, being an entrepreneur is backing yourself, it is being willing to back yourself.

And so whether that's you working out what your core story is going to be so that you can share it on your next Facebook Live, you've been scared to do that, or whatever that next scary thing is, like, I just think that's usually the path forward. And so that's my encouragement for them. And I've got to say to you, James, I know you're a legend in the online space, and I've been watching your stuff for years, and it's just a privilege to be on the podcast.

**James:** Well, thanks, Colin. That's really nice of you to say that. Of course, it never feels like that to me. I'm just me. Just chatting to interesting people. So we'll put this one up there. JamesSchramko.com. If you enjoyed this episode, or you think it's useful for someone, if you know someone who's doing a presentation or about to do a presentation, then make sure you put them in touch with Colin, because I feel like he's really good at this. I've seen who he's been working with. And just even from this episode, we've had enough of a glimpse that he really knows what he's talking about. Thank you so much.

**Colin:** Thanks, James.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a black smartphone. The phone's screen is a solid blue color. The person is wearing a black leather watch on their left wrist. In the background, a silver laptop is open on a wooden desk, with its keyboard and screen visible. The lighting is soft and focused on the hand and phone.

**JAMES SCHRAMKO**

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