

The Guest Scorecard

Score every guest before you book. A great guest ≠ a great episode.

GUEST

WORKING TITLE

Write it without the guest's name.

DATE

THE QUESTION	0 POINTS	1 POINT	2 POINTS	SCORE
01 · STORY What's the one story only they can tell?	Only general expertise	A strong topic, but no specific moment	A specific moment, turning point or conflict	
02 · PROMISE Can you title the episode without their name?	Only works with their name	The title is a topic	The title is a reason to press play	
03 · PAYOFF What will a stranger walk away with?	Not sure	Something general	A specific insight, tool or feeling	
04 · DELIVERY Can they tell it well? <i>Watch a past clip or do a 10-minute pre-interview.</i>	Rehearsed, flat or full of jargon	Solid, but safe	Vivid, candid and specific	
05 · TIMING Why does your audience need it now?	No clear reason	Evergreen	Timely or urgent for your audience	
				TOTAL / 10

THE VERDICT

- 9-10** Book them.
- 6-8** Pre-interview first. Sharpen the angle, then book.
- 0-5** Pass, or find a different story.

RED FLAGS · ANY ONE MEANS PAUSE

- ☐ Every answer circles back to their company.
- ☐ It's the same talk they've given on other shows.
- ☐ They can't name one specific moment.
- ☐ Your main reason is "they'll promote it."
- ☐ You can't say what the episode is about in one sentence.

Bonus, never the deciding factor: Will they share it? Plan as if they won't.

☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No

HOW TO USE IT · Score before you send the invite, not after you record. If the working title still needs the guest's name to sound interesting, you don't have an episode yet.

The 10-Minute *Pre-Interview*

The questions I ask before I book anyone.

1

“What’s a moment that changed how you think about [their topic]?”

Finds the story.

LISTEN FOR A specific time, place or person. General lessons aren’t stories.

2

“What do people usually get wrong about your work?”

Finds the tension and a fresh angle.

LISTEN FOR Their energy rising. An opinion they’ll defend.

3

“What’s something you’ve never said on a podcast?”

Tests whether you’ll get anything new.

LISTEN FOR A pause, then candor. If they can’t answer, that’s an answer.

4

“Tell me that story again, in 60 seconds.”

Tests delivery.

LISTEN FOR A clear beginning, a turn and an ending. Details, not jargon.

5

“If a stranger remembered one thing from our conversation, what should it be?”

Defines the payoff.

LISTEN FOR Something a listener can use, rethink or feel.

THE TELL

Listen for the moment they stop sounding rehearsed: a pause, a laugh, a detail they didn’t plan to share.

That’s your episode.

TURN IT INTO AN EPISODE

The story of _____, and what it taught them about

_____.

Working title, no guest name: _____