



SPI 334

How to Conduct an Unforgettable Interview— with Andrew Warner

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Andrew Warner: And so, when you came on the first question I said to you, the first thing I brought up was I said I didn't have you on because passive income just felt so phony to me. It felt like, "I'm going to show you how to make money while you sleep," and in reality anyone who cares about making money while they sleep doesn't have the heart to do the work while they're awake. And then, it was only through time that I got to know what you were about and that I had tremendous respect and I felt that I was wrong in doing it. But I wanted to bring up the Passive Income name. I wanted to understand that, and so I brought that up.

Pat Flynn: You are listening to Andrew Warner, host of the very popular podcast and show, [Mixergy](http://Mixergy.com), which you can find at Mixergy.com. He's on as a guest today to talk about how he's built his show, how he approaches interviews, and how he gets the juiciest of details from his guests in a very comfortable and respectful way. This is a great show for anybody out there who's interested in podcasts and interviewing, or having guests on your show, or your blog, or your video channel, what have you.

You're going to learn some amazing tips, including one of the most mind-blowing tips that I've ever heard in a very long time, in which Andrew talks about how he was able to get Seth Godin on his podcast very, very early on. It's a tactic and tip that we can all use, not to get Seth Godin on, but to get your top influencer in your space to say yes to coming on your show without being sleazy and by providing a lot of value. He gives us the very specific ways to do that that are beyond anything I've heard of before and it's pretty genius, so I hope you stick around and listen for that.

What you were just hearing is Andrew talking about the first time that he and I spoke, which was [when I was invited on Mixergy as a guest](#). It was a very nerve-wracking moment for me because Andrew is known as a very hardcore, very genuine, very honest and authentic interviewer. He's the one that I go to when I want to get the deep, golden answers from the people who are on his show. He just has this way of making that happen. We talk more about that situation and how that was a pivotal moment in my life, and we

talk about a lot more things to help you in your business too. Make sure you stick around. Make sure you [subscribe](#) to the show if you haven't already. Let's cue the intro.

Announcer: Welcome to the Smart Passive Income Podcast, where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And now your host—he studied public speaking by watching over 500 TED Talks and comedy bits—Pat Flynn!

Pat Flynn: Hey, thank you for joining me today in Session 334 of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. I've been looking forward to this particular show for a very long time because now I get to have Andrew, host of [Mixergy.com](#), on my show. I'm excited about it too, so I try to ask some very deep questions, and honestly it's one of the most honest and authentic interviews I've done in a while. You can just tell that Andrew really wants to make sure that he tells the full truth behind how he got started, and what exactly he did to grow his business, and really what his inspiration is. Andrew, if you're listening to this, I appreciate you, brother, and I look forward to hearing the response from the audience. For those of you listening in, I appreciate you. Now is the time to put that phone in your pocket or turn that volume a little bit higher in your car, or perhaps do a couple extra reps for me at the gym. Wherever you're listening, thank you. Enjoy the show.

Mr. Andrew Warner, thank you so much for coming on the SPI Podcast today. How are you doing?

Andrew Warner: I'm doing great. Thanks for having me here.

Pat Flynn: I'm excited and a little nervous because, I don't know if you know this, but when I was interviewed on your show, Mixergy, it was probably the most nervous I've ever been in my life, besides the moment when I asked my wife to marry me.

Andrew Warner: Hm, really? No, I didn't know that. And then I hit you with one of the most challenging questions, and most personally potentially hurtful questions I've ever asked anyone.

Pat Flynn: And I hope that I was able to respond in a way that was smart for who I was and my brand. I love that you challenged me, and it today is still the most favorite interview I've ever done because you asked those kinds of questions. I definitely want to dive into—especially for all the podcasters in the audience right now, and even if you're not a podcaster and you're listening, I want you to pay attention to how Andrew approaches his job and his work and how he approaches these conversations that he has with people to get the golden information from them for everybody's benefit. We'll talk about the business you've created as well, but I'd love to start in the beginning. Before Mixergy, before you started interviewing other entrepreneurs, what were you doing and who were you at that time?

Andrew Warner: I'm going to go back a little bit further because I'll be honest with you, I'm a little intimidated about being on with you because every detail of everything you touch is so neatly, perfectly organized. Even the fact that you did this ten year anniversary show about being let go, the music stopped at the key point where you were going to make a statement. It stopped and there was no music as you talked, and then it picked back up in tempo later when you announced that you were doing this Kickstarter campaign. All those little details you take into account, and I'm not a detail-oriented person. In my conversations, what I try to do is tap into my heart. What do I feel in the moment? Tap actually into my fear, what am I afraid of in the moment, and let that out. And so, considering how organized you are, I said, "Am I even going to be able to survive this? What is this about?" It's so weird that my brain goes like that.

Here's what I did. I went to my second monitor, my second computer, and I brought up this Evernote folder that I have full of everything that I had on my wall growing up as a kid. I hired somebody to come in and take all the stuff that was on my wall and all the little keepsakes that I kept and scan them in so that I could always have them. I'm looking at it to just reconnect with who I was so that I could be genuine with you.

Pat Flynn: Thank you.

Andrew Warner: What I see is old Businessweek magazine cover stories, articles about NeXT, the computer company from back then, TV shows about successful people like Teddy Roosevelt. That's who I was as a kid. I grew up in New York and it's okay to aspire to do something big in New York, and so I aspired. There's a part of me also that internally wanted to. I'd read about all these people growing up as a kid, and one thing that just happened to flash on my screen right now was a spreadsheet that I created in Microsoft Excel with the little products that my brother and I sold. You can see for the first few months there was no revenue, no revenue, and then it picks up, and I had that up on my wall. That's who I was before I started interviewing, this guy who just aspired to do something as big as all these people that I admired.

Pat Flynn: Well, a lot of kids have a lot of ambitions, and many times we talk to kids and they want to be a baseball player, firefighter, an astronaut. Why business?

Andrew Warner: I think it's okay to aspire to be that, because if you walk into a store there's a teeshirt that's going to sell. I just dropped my kid off yesterday at school; I saw so many Batman teeshirts and superman teeshirts. It's okay to aspire to be that. Our society encourages you to do that. I think there are a lot of people who say, "Hey, I saw that eleven year-old selling lemonade on the corner. How do I get to do that?" I think there are a lot of people who want that. I think there are a lot of people who see these big buildings, who see Elon Musk, who see you driving in a Tesla and say, "Who made that Tesla? I like that he's driving a Tesla. How did he get to earn that Tesla?" and we just don't encourage that. I felt in a very real way at the time that nobody encouraged it, nobody cared about it.

Pat Flynn: That business that you had with your brother, what were you selling?

Andrew Warner: The first one, the one that I had up here, was we just created a bunch of little apps. One was a spell check app before there was universal spell check on a computer. The other one was something called EZPone, E-Z and then P-O-N-E, that before Skype allowed

you to make calls to each other. As I look at that, I'm very proud of the fact that we hit \$40,000 in monthly sales there with those little products. And then that—

Pat Flynn: How old were you?

Andrew Warner: This was like, twenty.

Pat Flynn: Wow.

Andrew Warner: Twenty-one, actually. It was right after school. But I see everything about who I am in that chart. I see the excitement over the success. I see the ambition to see those charts go up. But I also see my personal limitation, that in that we created EZPone, I was very proud that that and those other products sold \$40,000 a month. I would have been really excited, and I envisioned getting to \$80,000 a month. What I didn't say was, could this be the next, or not the next Skype—could this replace the phone company? Could this actually be the next new thing?

One of the things I've learned living in San Francisco is we always make fun of people who live here for every little thing they do is going to change the world. Every little thing they do is not just a little thing, it's something revolutionary. There's something to be said about that that I wish that I had had the eyes at the time to see bigger. I'm trying to do that, and I think San Francisco's bringing that out of me.

Pat Flynn: That's really interesting. Do you feel that reflects certain questions that you ask people who come on your show? It very much reminds me of the question you had asked me about, "Hey, Pat. You're doing all these little niche sites and security guard training sites. Why not create the next Excel?" is what you had asked me, which kind of aligns with what you just mentioned there. Is there a reason why you think you didn't think bigger back then and we should all think that big?

Andrew Warner: I think I didn't think bigger because I imagined that everything has

to just work its way up. I remember saying, “I’m going to be the person who by forty is going to have \$1 million, not by twenty.” This idea that I’m not going to get rich overnight, it’s going to happen over time. I had this vision that eventually I would change the world. I actually think that one of the things I’ve learned from San Francisco is forget the eventually. Just say, “Yes, I’m going to change the world,” and let the world make fun of you for being one of those guys. I do wish I had that.

I didn’t recognize that I asked you that. The truth was that when you and I did the interview, I was just trying to figure out where I was now. I was trying to understand, “Is it okay to be someone different than the guy who had all those things up on his wall? Is it okay to . . . Are there other options? What’s the menu in the world? What do I want?”

Pat Flynn: Now, how did you transition from apps and programs like that to what you do now? You have become known as one of the top interviewers, and in my eyes the top interviewer. I love listening to your show because I always know I’m going to get something different, and I always know that I’m going to get the truth. Another interesting thing that I am reminded of just now is two of my friends from high school, I won’t mention their names right now, but people could probably go and dig in and find this interview. They were featured on Mixergy for their app company. It was just—sorry guys if you’re listening to this—one of the most cringeworthy episodes I’ve ever listened to because you were able to dig in and realize that these were just two dudes who were just scrappily putting things together. They didn’t even really know exactly how things were going. I was reading the comments and I was trying to defend them. I was like, “No, these are my friends.” But then I was like, “You know what? Andrew brought the truth out. The truth is these guys, they figured out a way to make money, and they had really no idea how it all happened and where they’re going to go.” Do you remember that interview?

Andrew Warner: I think I do. I think I have a sense of who they are. They ended up doing okay for themselves—

Pat Flynn: Oh, absolutely.

Andrew Warner: —if I'm thinking of the same people, right?

Pat Flynn: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, they're still doing very well in the app industry, which is very, very competitive now. But what I'm getting at is you have this way of uncovering in these interviews some of the most important information that we can all learn from. How did you become such a great interviewer? Where does that come from? Is that a skill that we can all learn, or is that unique to you?

Andrew Warner: I hired somebody to watch my interviews. I'll tell you, I didn't know where this came from. I actually for a long time was beating myself up for the reason that this worked. I thought it was a flaw of mine. I hired someone to go through the transcripts of each week's interview and give me feedback point by point, and I created this Google Doc of all the things that I learned from him.

At one point I just said, "I'm just so tired of it. I'm just so tired." He goes, "What are you tired of?" I said, "I'm so tired of being the vulnerable guy. Every other interviewer is just like, they build up your reputation by being someone bigger. And look at this, in the transcript I talk about how I can't figure it out or I don't have the answer, and nobody aspires to put someone like that on their wall the way that I put Sumner Redstone on my wall. I'm tired of being that guy. And look, in comparison, the person that I'm interviewing gets to be the hero and I'm the person who's so flawed. Why do I have to be such a flawed wimp all the time in these interviews?" He said, "Give me a minute." I said, "I just poured my heart out, you need a minute? Can you just say something?" He said, "Give me a minute." I just kept going through the transcript.

One of the things I disliked about him was he didn't do his homework. He didn't go and read the transcript ahead of time, but at least he was a fast reader who could go through every transcript super fast on the call. He said, "Scroll down a little bit." You know in Google Docs if you click on someone's face you can go to where their mouse is? I did that and he goes, "You see this?" He says,

“You, up there in the transcript, you had real vulnerability, and the guest responded by being strong. But notice how later on the guest went and got vulnerable. The guest went in and started to talk about themselves and started to say things that they wouldn’t say otherwise.” He said, “If you’re expecting that because you are vulnerable, immediately someone is going to tell the truth of who they are that they don’t want to share with anyone, you’re wrong. It’s not going to happen that way. But if you give it time, you’re creating the atmosphere where people can really be themselves and get vulnerable.”

And so, the answer is that that I just really want to get to know the entrepreneur. I really want to get to know beyond the BS. I really do admire the people who I have on. And I think that by being vulnerable, I get to do that. The start of the podcast was this post that I did, and anyone can see it, Mixergy.com/i-failed, where I said I poured money into this invitation site and it didn’t work and I admit failure. I’ve got to close it down so I can just start fresh, and I’m just going to interview people to understand how to never fail like this again. That was the mission, to see what they’re really doing.

Pat Flynn: Who was your first interview, do you remember?

Andrew Warner: The very first interview was a guy named Michael DeRouche who happened to come to an event that I did. He was a chiropractor who was just killing it in SEO. In the SEO world, people knew about him back when people didn’t even care that search engine optimization, SEO, was a thing. I said, “If everyone knew who was coming to my events,” because I was organizing events using my invitation software, “they’d want to come to my events. They’d want to organize events. They’d want to get to know people.” So I interviewed him, I liked it, and then I just kept interviewing other people.

The one that turned me though, was after this collection of software companies I created an online invitation and email marketing company. We got to over 20 million email addresses. We were doing about 400,000 online invitations a day, excuse me, greeting

cards a day. People would just send greeting cards to each other. One of the people who, I don't know how many millions in sales she did for us, but Roslyn Resnick would represent our email list and sell it to companies like IBM. I always wanted to know how she got where she was. I got a little bit of a sense of it, but it's kind of weird in conversation at dinner to say, "So, how did you get so rich?"

But in the interview I got to ask Roslyn about how she started and I got to ask her about how she built up and how she figured out her business model. At the end of it, I remember Olivia and I were still dating and she happened to be in my house at the time. I said, "Olivia, I . . ." No, I called her because I was so excited. I said, "Olivia, I know what I want to do with the rest of my life." I just loved that I got to understand all this about a woman who I had known for years.

Pat Flynn: That's so cool. How do you have the courage to ask certain questions that many other people wouldn't dare ask? I think this is why many other people come to you when they want to listen to others entrepreneurs and their stories because you feel . . . I don't know if you're comfortable, but it seems like you're comfortable asking those kinds of questions. Where, even with me, I worry about a response a person might have if I were to kind of poke a little bit further than I should.

Andrew Warner: I tell the guest my reason and I get buy-in ahead of time. So throughout the interviews, you can see that I say, "I want to understand how you failed because sometimes I feel like a failure, and I can't step out of it. I want to understand how big this business got because I want to know how big a business like that can get." I tell them the reason and I give the answer. We all know about the Robert Cialdini book, Influence where he talks about how someone cut in line in the copier by saying, "I need to cut in line because—" whatever, and if you say the reason, people are more likely to give it to you.

The thing that I discovered was—I read baby books after we had our first child about four years ago. In some of them, they say even

if the kid is a year, even if they're a year and a half, just tell them the reason. I said this to my wife. My wife is very into like . . . She'll read a book and she'll actually implement it. So she went into our kid's room one time when he was sleeping, and Shepherd was a kid who would scream a lot if he didn't get his way. She went in and she said, "Now, Shepherd, I need you to sleep because you need to have your energy so tomorrow morning you'll have time to play with your friend Calyn. So go to sleep now and then mommy's going to come and help you in the morning." To a kid that can't speak, it feels like a silly thing to do, but she was fully bought in and she did it. Sure enough, he went to sleep and I saw this multiple times.

So when you give someone the reason, they're more likely to do that.

Pat Flynn: I love that. Having two kids myself, I've heard that same advice as well. My wife April and I, we implement that too. There's always a reason, right? My wife and I, coming from a very traditional Asian parents, we were always told no but not the reason behind it. "Just don't do that," or "that's bad for you." There's no reason ever. So we always felt a little resentment as a result, versus if there's clear logic and a reason behind it. I love that.

So giving the person, the guest on the other end, a reason for why you're asking those kinds of questions, you can't really counter that if there's an actual reason that makes sense.

Andrew Warner: It's really meaningful and it doesn't have to be more than a sentence. I used to listen to Charlie Rose, and he used to be so long-winded that Saturday Night Live had this sketch about how he could never get the question out. Eventually the guest would say, "Get the question out already." Anyway, eventually he got so good and I listened to see why he did it because I was a bad conversationalist. I could just find myself rambling the conversation. What I noticed was some of his best questions, he'd repeat over and over, and they would be one or three words. Like my favorite one was "because?" And he would just say "because" like that. He would just have the discipline to just leave it at that.

So you could just say one sentence like, “Can you tell me why you closed your company down, because I know at some point I’m going to have to figure out why or whether I should close my company down?” So now you say something that’s really painful for someone, and say “this is why I want to understand,” and they could buy into it or they could say, “Look, I can’t tell you that, but here’s what I can say.”

All right. So that’s one. Here’s another one that’s a secret that no one’s going to know if they just listen to my interviews. Before you came on, I specifically said to you, “Pat, there’s a reason why I didn’t have you on. I could tell you now. I think it’s important to bring it on because it helps me understand who you are. Do you mind if I bring it on? Do you trust me enough to bring it on without telling you ahead of time or would you rather find out about it?”

Pat Flynn: Yeah.

Andrew Warner: Then I launched into it. You actually said, “I trust you.” And I know that’s a big trust and I know that’s important. So when you came on, the first question I said to you . . . The first thing I brought up was I said I didn’t have you one because passive income just felt so phony to me. It felt like, “I’m going to show you how to make money while you sleep,” and in reality, anyone who cares about making money while they sleep doesn’t have the heart to do the work while they’re awake. Then it was only through time that I got to know what you were about and I had tremendous respect and I felt that I was wrong in doing it. But I wanted to bring out the Passive Income name. I wanted to understand that. So I brought that up.

Pat Flynn: I’m very thankful you did that because it made me realize that that was likely how other people perceived me and the brand as well. So that really brought it to light, and we’ve become good friends ever since and we’ve hung out at conferences and whatnot together. You’re one of my favorite people. You always bring up this fact that—this is just random—that I have this like, organizer in my backpack and you needed a cord one day. For whatever reason, that just impressed you that I had this really quick capability to give

you the cord you needed because, I don't know, I'm just like a nerd like that.

Andrew Warner: Let's not brush over that. I was at Podcast Movement, a conference that was really well organized, and I went up to the stage and they didn't have my cable because they didn't have cables. I asked you, "Do you have the cable that will connect my computer to the presentation?" Not only did you have it, where they didn't, but you had an organizer with every potential cable to connect in so there was no doubt that you'd be okay. And you also added one other thing. You said, "Andrew, you can keep it." So it was organization that you can see the difference between the two of us. I just walked in expecting that they were going to have it set up. I knew that I could have something delivered the next day for my presentation if I needed to, but that's the way I operate. What I admire about you was you had the organizer and it's not just that. I've invited you to dinners at events before you speak. You say, "I'm going to go back to my room and I'm going to prepare." It's like, the level of detail and care is tremendous.

Pat Flynn: Thank you. I think a lot of that comes because I am a little bit scared and nervous about things. I want to make sure that I set myself up for success and stack as many things in my favor as possible, which is why that organizer's there, right? I don't want to give myself a chance to not have something. I want to have as much control over the situation as possible, basically is what I'm trying to say.

Well, going back to the interviewing, I've learned a lot of strategies and tips from you that I've implemented onto this show, and one of those is the idea of A, listening, and B, following up, being very genuinely curious about the why, just like the example you mentioned earlier. You throw in the why, plus the reason, which I think is genius. But a lot of interviewers, especially people who are just starting out, want to go question to question to question to question without the in between questions. That's something that I learned from you. How do you know what follow up questions to ask next? I think "why" and "how come" are just universal follow up questions, but you seem to, in your interview, know exactly what the

audience is thinking, and you just seem to ask the same questions that I'm thinking.

Andrew Warner: Here's why. Let me show you something. Give me a sec. I won't go very far.

Pat Flynn: For those of you listening, Andrew just left the room and now he's back.

Andrew Warner: Just went behind the computer. Do you know this book?

Pat Flynn: Dale Carnegie: *How To Win Friends And Influence People*. Let me show you on my screen here. For those of you listening, I'm throwing up the same book.

Andrew Warner: There's the original cover. I think that's the original cover.

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm.

Andrew Warner: I was really bad at communicating with people because I kept reading about these people who were jerks, right? Guys like Sumner Redstone, Steve Jobs, were on my wall growing up. They were just jerks. So I thought that's the way you have to be, and if you want to be a jerk, it's easy. Understanding how to talk to people and getting them to care is hard. So I couldn't get a job. Once I did finally get a job, it was an internship because I couldn't tell the person that I needed to get paid and I needed money at that point in my life. Then once I got that job, I couldn't do anything.

I remember she invited me . . . Stephanie Winston invited me to breakfast and I sat there at breakfast. She said, "What you need to do now is schmooze the other people at breakfast because we have to get them as clients." I didn't know how to schmooze them. I'm a fast eater usually. I sat there and I slowly cut my eggs and slowly kept looking down. If anyone asked me a question, I answered it very quickly and quietly and then I went back to looking at my eggs. The next day I said to her, "What do we have next?" She said, "I think you're actually not the person who I want to waste

your time with breakfast. Instead, can you make me some copies?" I thought, "This is a problem, right? I'm never going to get great opportunities." I watched these idiots who didn't care about work go and get better and better jobs because they knew how to hang out.

So I got this book, *How To Win Friends and Influence People*. It taught me how to have conversations with people. It got me other jobs that were really helpful. Then I remember talking to my friend Michael from college, and I used everything I learned in this book. It's like, be interested in other people. If you want to be interesting, be interested. So I listened to him, and he went on and on about how he had these comic books and how he made breakfast and how he loved cooking food really great. I thought this was a win in the Dale Carnegie world, because Dale Carnegie says "express an interest," and I did. This person obviously liked me because I let him talk about his breakfast that he loves to cook. But I didn't like me, and I didn't like the conversation. I was bored.

I said, "You know what, the other thing I need to do is ask myself, what am I genuinely interested in about that person? What is it that I really care about?" I tried to walk in to every conversation with that. So one of the things that I asked you was, I think . . . I don't remember. It was something along the—it will always sound artificial unless it's genuinely the thing. But it might have been something like, "How did someone who looks so dark have a name like Flynn?" That's not what I was saying, but it was something about your heritage and about your name that was I genuinely curious about at dinner. When I tap into what I'm genuinely curious about, it's hard for me not to have follow-up questions. When I come to you about asking you about your family to understand my family and my kid relationships, it's hard for me not to have a follow up question. So I try to tap into, what am I genuinely interested in? What do I really care about?

Pat Flynn:

My dad being Irish, and my mom being Filipino, that's the darkness and the Flynn. But anyway, so how much preparation do you do before an interview to unlock that genuine curiosity? There's two sides of the coin, right? There's people who will read the books of

the authors who are coming on and they will study them and they will listen to the other interviews that they've been on so that they can bring something new to the table, versus in my camp, I don't do a ton of research, because I don't want to be more advanced than what my audience is when they're sitting and listening to the podcast, so that I can better fill their shoes. Where do you land on that spectrum?

Andrew Warner: I land in as much research as I possibly could, and as much internal understanding, as much introspection as I can. I got so good at doing research and having a good research team that I stopped caring about what I care about, and that made the interviews thorough but not as meaningful.

So to give you a sense of the kind of research that I do, I used to call up guests like randomly and say, "Hey, look, you're about to be on." I knew that no one was listening so I couldn't say it's going to be recorded in front of a big audience. I say, "It's going to be online forever. So I want what we leave behind to be meaningful to you, your kids." Even to this day, Gregg Spiridellis, he says that when I told him that the interview was going to be listened to by his kids and grandkids to understand how he created JibJab, this online cartoon company that exploded, he felt a sense of meaning in the interview. And the reason I said it is because that was my focus, but also I had no audience. I couldn't say, "Hey, Gregg. There's going to be . . ."

So anyway, I called up people and said, "Hey, this is going to be left behind forever. Can we just go over some of the questions that I'm going to ask you?" Then what I would do, was it gave me an opportunity if the answer was boring to say, "Hang on. Let's cut it right there because . . ." Now it's not being saved forever with me interrupting. And so I would do that a lot with people and then I would guide them to stories because stories are what interest people. You're never going to remember the point that I said about care about what you're interested in in addition to what other people are interested in, but you will remember my story about the guy who told me about eggs and was excited to tell me about his

comic book collection. I wasn't. And through that, the message of care about yourself too and what you're genuinely interested in will come through.

So the way that people remember is through stories. So I kept hunting for stories. If they would say something like, "You have to care about your audience," I'd say, "Tell me about a time where you cared in a way that would be unusual." I would just take down these notes and figure out where they're boring and where they're interesting. Where they give me real specifics and where they don't. Anyway, eventually, one of my audience members, Owen from Sweet Process, he said, "You could have someone do this for you." I said, "No, I can't." He said, "Yes, you can." I said, "No, I can't." He challenged me, and I said, "You know what, one of the things I believe in is starting really badly and improving." So I made a list of ten questions that I would want to know and I gave it to someone else. I said, "Can you go and ask my guest this?" They started asking those questions and they were good. Then I start to sharpen them and say, "Guide them towards questions. Here's a way to do that." Excuse me, guide them towards stories, and here's a way to do that. We ended up with a good pre-interview process.

So here's what happened recently though. We had Scott Svenson. Most people listening are not going to know who Scott Svenson is, but he's the guy who created a company called Seattle Coffee in the UK. He built it up. Within three years, he sold it for, I think over \$100 million to Starbucks. Then Starbucks used that as a foundation for Starbucks in Europe. He became so well-known, him and his wife, that they were celebrities in the UK. Then he came to the U.S. where he started MOD Pizza, and MOD Pizza is an incredible success story of make your own pizza. Let me see, what is it . . .

You know what, I won't have the exact numbers, but he's doing tens of millions of dollars with these businesses, with MOD Pizza. The fact that he's a celebrity though, means that my pre-interviewer asked questions that we could've researched, not in the U.S., nobody would know him in the U.S., but go into the UK papers. So what I said we need to do was "let's find someone to do research

for the pre-interviewer so this never happens again. I never want to waste the next guy's time like Scott by asking questions that were online." So now we take a list of questions. We give them to Fancy Hands, and for \$6.00 per, they will fill in our basic questions. So the pre-interviewer has the basics and doesn't have to go and ask the same thing over again. So that's the way that I work.

Now, that got so good that I was full of research, full of information, and the problem was nobody cares about research. That's not where you get the heart of the interview. That's not why you care about . . . Why you like my interviews. You didn't like my interviews because I researched the name of your high school band, right? You liked my interview because I genuinely cared about what I was into. So I've been reminding myself of that, and trying to tap into that in every interview lately.

Pat Flynn: Do you follow the same motive with who you have on the show? Just who is most interesting at the time to you, who you're most curious about, or do you have another way to pre-select who's going to be on your show?

Andrew Warner: My problem is I love everyone and I would care about everyone. You came to one of the dinners that I did before. I think it was Converted 2016, that conference. You might have looked around the table and seen great people, but there were eighteen of them or something because I couldn't say no to people. So finally, someone who I work with, Megan, Megan is in charge of helping me organize dinners for events. What I say to her is, "Megan, tell me no a lot. I know it's going to be great people. I'm going to want everybody out. Please tell me no so the table doesn't get so crowded that we don't get to know each other." One of the things that she's doing is telling me no. Same thing with guests. I have to say to my people, "Please, tell me no." Because once you get the heart of Dale Carnegie, of being curious about other people, and then you say, "What do I really care about?", how do you not care about everyone?

Pat Flynn: Mm-hmm, that's true. Megan's great, by the way. We've been talking to schedule this interview. She's fantastic.

Andrew Warner: Oh that's right. Yeah.

Pat Flynn: When it comes to getting people on your show, your show is popular enough now where you can just say, "Hey, I'd love to have you on the show." Most people are going to say yes if they're smart and the schedules align, obviously. For those who are just starting out, brand new podcasters, they worry about people even giving them the light of day for their brand new show that has very little audience size. What tips might you recommend for those who are just starting out in the interviewing scene, in terms of who to select and how to get a person to say yes to come on the show?

Andrew Warner: First of all, I would say that you absolutely should be doing interviews. I think that there's a sense that, "I shouldn't be doing interviews. Everyone's doing interviews." I'll tell you what. The benefits of doing interviews are, first of all, you get to learn from someone else while you're doing the work. Second, you don't have to be the expert. Third, you coach ideas out of people that they couldn't come up with on their own because you're genuinely curious about them.

Finally, the rubbing off factor. I was listening to a conservative talk show host do a podcast, and he's a firebrand, firebrand, firebrand. Then he interviewed someone who was on the polar opposite of him. I thought, "Huh." Because he's interviewing someone who's considered a libertarian—or not a libertarian, but someone who's anti-god, this guy is pro-god. Because he interviewed someone who is an atheist, I felt like, "Oh. This guy's sitting down with him. He's not such a crazy conservative. We're fine. I could listen to him more." Anyways, so there's a benefit to that.

Having said that, if you're starting out doing interviews, whether it's for podcast or blogging, how do you get anyone to pay attention? That's a problem I had in the beginning. What I did was I would go to bigger sites and say to them, "If I get this person to do an

interview with me and pull out the seven points or the seven steps to do whatever, will you let me publish it on your site?" They'd say, "Well, we don't know you, but yes." If you could get whoever it is that I was after, they'd say, "Yeah. Absolutely we'll do it." I think that's a really beneficial way of doing things, to say to a bigger property, "I'm going to do an interview with this guest for you and then also put the interview on your site."

Pat Flynn: You're not interviewing the owner of that blog or publication. You're interviewing somebody else and capitalizing on that.

Andrew Warner: Yeah. I'll be more concrete. I didn't think I could get Seth Godin, so I went to Mashable and I said, "Hey, if I get Seth Godin to talk about all the different ways you can do well even though the economy is bad, would you be okay with that?" They said, "Seth Godin? He can talk about anything. Absolutely. Go for it." I went to Seth Godin and I said to him, "Seth, can I interview you about the seven ways that people can do well in a bad economy? I'll publish that answer on Mashable. Since we're recording it, I'll also publish the recording on my podcast." He said, "Yeah, absolutely." So we recorded it, and it gave me some guidance for what to talk about and what to pull out. Then it gave me some guidance for how to turn that into a blog post for Mashable. Then it gave me a recording that I was able to put on my site.

Pat Flynn: That's genius. I love that. I think we all know we need to, when we're asking for something, provide value in some way. I think a lot of beginners don't feel like they have value to give, but I love that sort of marrying of those two pieces together to create value for both sides, actually. You become a connector, which is fantastic.

What are some of the most memorable interviews that you've had and why?

Andrew Warner: I'll tell you about one that's going to be published soon. It's with a guy named Barry Stamos. The reason that that one means so much to me is because I was getting back into what I cared about. I interviewed him about how he started this company, where he

had no money, but he said, “What I’m going to do is . . . People don’t know how to write good email. They don’t know how to write persuasive copy, especially bigger companies. They have big budgets, but they don’t know how to do email well. I’m going to write a few blog posts about how to do email well, and then I’m going to offer my services to any big company to create their content.” Then he ended up creating content for some of the biggest companies out there and selling it for, I don’t know how many millions, but I remember in the interview I specifically said, “Did you personally get millions of dollars from the sale of this business?” And he said, “Yes, I did. And there was also an earnout.”

The reason that that matters to me is not so much that part, but later what he did is he created a company called 1heart, where it’s all about how entrepreneurs should tap into their emotion and tap into their happiness. The truth is Pat, I’ve really been wrestling with this. For most of my life, I believed that I shouldn’t be happy, that happiness was actually . . . That I shouldn’t optimize for happiness, that optimizing for happiness means there’s times when I’m so exhausted, to go back and work after that is tough. That’s not making me happy in the moment, but I’m optimizing for long term success.

I think it’s in the beginning of your podcast where you say something that feels like it’s just kind of riffed, or the voiceover guy does it. It feels like it’s just a throwaway line. It’s something like, “Work hard now so that later you can sit back and reap the fruits of what you sow.” It’s not “sit back and relax,” which I like, it’s “reap the fruits.”

A lot of the people I admire worked really hard, and then they later on got to reap what they sowed. I don’t want to optimize for happiness. What I’ve been noticing, Pat, is that in a lot of my conversations with people on my team, I’m so tense, so firey, so argh, that how could they enjoy working with me? How could they want to come to work every day feeling inspired if this is who I am all the time on the calls? I’m trying to figure out, “Is this who I still want to be? Is this who I chose to be, or is this who I happen to be?”

In the conversation, I pushed back on him a lot on that. I know that he knew it was coming from a good place. “Who cares about having a heart?” I know one of the things that he said was . . . I said, “I’d rather have money than this short term happiness,” and he said, “Well, how good is money? How important is it?” I said to him, “Barry, it’s really important.” He said, “No. You’re happy making money in the moment, and then after that, it’s just gone. That feeling is fleeting.” I said, “No, it’s not.”

I said, “Barry, after my kids are asleep, even if they splash water out of the bathtub when I tell them not to, even if they scream forever that they don’t want to sleep before they finally go to sleep, even if they throw the food on the floor and I have to pick it up because I couldn’t get them to clean it up, after they go to sleep, I look at photos from the day because I still love them, instead of saying, “I want to forget I’m a dad for a little bit.” After that, I might look at my portfolio to see how I’m doing with my Merrill Lynch account, and that brings me happiness also to see that my stocks are up and my account is big.”

I like that I got to talk to him about that. I like that I get to bring this genuine feeling up and then hear from him. What’s the alternative?

Pat Flynn: I love that. You’d mentioned earlier when you were bringing up Barry, you said you really love this interview because it got you back to what you really cared about. What do you mean by that?

Andrew Warner: The research was good; the heart was even stronger. The part where it was, “What do I genuinely care about?” was I think stronger than our research. Now my research was good. He said that he was on this website. I went back and found it. He said his website was doing this. I went back and I looked at it. Everything that I could, I went back and I researched. And there were a bunch of stuff that he said he did that I couldn’t find and I brought it up to him. So that was good, but I got back to asking what I really care about. I got back to figuring out the meaning of life as entrepreneur. It wasn’t just through this interview, but that’s representative of how I did that.

Pat Flynn: A lot of entrepreneurs, we lose the why behind what we do, or we kind of forget why we started in the first place. It sounds like, that in order to get back to it means you had to have lost it at one point. Why do you think that was removed at one point?

Andrew Warner: You know what it is, Pat? I'm someone who genuinely wants to make a lot of money, wants to have a lot of impact, wants to have ideas that outlive him, and I work so hard for it, like all the time. I'm not as successful as Sumner Redstone. Sumner Redstone's the guy who took Viacom from a nothing company and made himself a billionaire and made that into a multi-billion dollar company that eventually owned CBS and others. I just happened to see him in the clippings and stuff on my wall. I said, "Is it worth it?" I sacrifice so much of myself. Is it worth it to have sacrificed it for this? If I didn't get there at this point in my life, what do I want? Where is the answer for me? Am I still going through the plays that I wrote when I was a kid with those pictures up on my wall? Is it worth it, or am I just . . . Part of me thinks I'm the guy who lived that cliché about if you reach for the stars, you might . . . If you reach for the . . . What was it? Reach for the—

Pat Flynn: Stars, at least you might hit the moon, or something like that.

Andrew Warner: Yeah, or reach for the moon, you might hit the stars. Yeah, right. Reach for the stars, you might hit the moon. I did that, but is that worth it? Is that really the better way to approach life? I don't know. I don't know. I'm at a point where I'm going through and trying to figure that out. I don't have to figure it out by myself. I can get to ask other people about it and see where they are.

Not just in interviews, but because of my interviews, I've gotten to know people like Ryan Holiday. I remember I went for a run with him when I was in Austin. One of the things he said was, "People keep telling you to think back to who you were as a kid and what did your kid self want." He goes, "What topic in life would you go to a kid and ask for life advice on? Kids don't know jack, including you, so why would you want to do that?" I thought that was pretty interesting, but I do think I know a lot. I actually think I took a big bet. I didn't

lose at all. I did well, but I didn't become a billionaire. There's a part of me that's dealing with that.

Pat Flynn: Well, you're helping a lot of us, and I want to thank you for that.

Andrew Warner: I don't feel that I am. I don't feel like I'm doing enough of it. Will people remember me the way they remember Dale Carnegie? No. That bothers me. I'm feeling like I'm going to keep pushing myself to reach that level of impact, but will I get it? I don't know. Will I be okay if I don't get it, or am I going to feel like it's been a wasted life? Do I want to risk wasting my life? I don't know.

Pat Flynn: That's the question. Do you have to be the next Dale Carnegie?

Andrew Warner: Do I have to? You know what? The truth is there's a part of me that still wants to. There's a part of me that, even though I'm wrestling with this question, in my heart of hearts I think, "No. What you're looking for is an excuse to get back to who you really are, which is yes, you do want to be remembered long after you die. Yes, you do want to have more money. No matter how much you have, you want to have more of it. Yes, you do care about those things."

Pat Flynn: Thank you for being open and honest about all this. The last question I want to ask you, which I've always wanted to ask you, is we all listen to you—and if you aren't listening to Andrew, go check out [Mixergy](#), obviously. We'll have all the links in the show notes and whatnot. Who are you listening to? Who are you pulling inspiration from these days?

Andrew Warner: I go through a very eclectic—I try to listen to as many voices as I can, as many different types of podcasts as I can. I have no interest in politics, but there was some conservative guy . . . How do I even find him? I guess I listened . . . Oh, there he is. His name is—he's very polarizing, so people are going to hate me for even saying it. What is his name? Ben Shapiro. Very conservative, but then I also listen to, on the other side, I listen to Pod Save America, very liberal. I listen to podcasts about tech. I listen to podcasts about sports, even though I hate sports.

Pat Flynn: Why are you listening?

Andrew Warner: But if you're looking for some recommendations . . . What I try to do is just get as much variety as possible. We all live in a bubble that we claim Facebook and Google create for us, but the truth is we create our own bubble. We're the ones who are just going through our own life doing the same thing, listening to the same stories over and over again. I try to vary that. If you want some business podcasts to recommend, I could suggest some for you.

Pat Flynn: One or two would be fantastic.

Andrew Warner: Here's actually one that I think no one's going to recognize because . . . I just hit play on it by accident.

Pat Flynn: That's all right.

Andrew Warner: [Business Wars](#). Business Wars. Listen to the Netflix story on Business Wars, where you find out why Netflix beat Blockbuster. It's interesting, and it's a story that's well told. Another one is [30 for 30 Podcasts](#). They did a really good series of episodes on Bikram yoga. The reason I like the Bikram yoga one is because it's a guy who came in with an idea and he spread it. Then also, he came in with some stories that were lies and he spread those too. How does the truth, how do lies, how does a mission spread?

Pat Flynn: Amazing. Andrew, I want to talk to you for like five hours, and I'm sure we will at one point sometime, the next time we meet each other. I don't know if you're going to be at Podcast Movement or not, but I'm sure we'll see each other. For everybody listening, where should they go right now to dig deeper into what you have going on?

Andrew Warner: You know what I'd love to do? I told you that when I talked to the interviewer, every time he taught me something, I'd add it to a Google Doc with a list of techniques for getting people to open up, having good conversations. I'd love to give it to people. If they go to Mixergy.com/flynn, I will give it to them. They'll get it from my chat

bot.

Pat Flynn: Wow. So, deep inside the research of how you've become a better interviewer, right there?

Andrew Warner: It's just a list of techniques that when somebody comes in and does a pre-interview for me, I say, "I know you think that people won't talk to you because you're not me. It's techniques. It's not me that does it. Here's a list from a Google Doc that I used to keep up when I was doing interviews." Mixergy.com/flynn, and I'll give it to them there.

Pat Flynn: Thanks, Andrew. Man, we appreciate you so much. Looking forward to sending people your way. I'm looking forward to seeing you again in person and hanging out again.

Andrew Warner: Thanks a lot. Thanks for having me on.

Pat Flynn: Alright. I hope you enjoyed that interview with Andrew Warner from Mixergy. You can find him at Mixergy.com. All the links and resources mentioned in this episode you can find at SmartPassiveIncome.com/session334. Make sure to give Andrew a shoutout on Twitter as well [@Mixergy](https://twitter.com/Mixergy) if you have a chance, because I just would love to know what you thought about this episode. Andrew, thank you again for being vulnerable and honest with us today.

Thanks again for listening all the way through. I appreciate you. Make sure you hit [subscribe](#) if you haven't already. By the way, if you want to get some live training from me, you can see all of my upcoming live trainings at SmartPassiveIncome.com/live. I want to help you out, answer some questions in person for you. They're totally free to join. There are opportunities and deals that usually are inserted in there as well for some of my premium stuff too, so you get a lot of bonuses if you show up live. Make sure you hang out with me at SmartPassiveIncome.com/live during our next training sessions. You'll see the dates and times there. Thank you again, cheers, and I'll see you in the next episode. Bye.



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