Podcast Introduction and Mission

Welcome to the Startup Support Surgery podcast, where we light the entrepreneurial spark in medics and healthcare professionals. Join me, Dr. Jo Watkins, GP, business coach and co-founder of The How People, on a journey to discover where your medical know-how meets the business world.

This will help you find some clarity on how to balance work, passions and family, so that you can gain more freedom and control over your life but also continue to help people, which is actually why most of us went into medicine to start with.

Embarking on this entrepreneurial adventure is not easy. It is a roller coaster of emotions, but it's hugely rewarding and exciting in the process. Drawing in on my 20 years of blending medicine and business as a GP, I am here to share experiences, insights and lessons.

Expect lively chats, expert interviews and real life stories from medics who have taken their own path. Let's break free from traditional healthcare norms and explore more innovative ways of making a real difference to people's health and wellbeing, along with paving the way for a brighter future for us as healthcare professionals.

Oh, don't miss my free PDF called From Stethoscope to Startup, which is an 11-page guide in the show notes full of practical help and advice.

Origin of the Masterclass Recording

This is your roadmap to kick-starting your journey with us. Enjoy the Show. Hello there, hope you are well. We have got another solo episode today. This is really fun.

I actually found this in the depths of my Google Drive over the last couple of weeks that I've been trying to sort out and get organized. this is a recording of a masterclass session that i held for my amazing business group called Like-Hearted Leaders, which is run by Claire Perry-Louise.

We meet every Friday at 8.30. They are an incredible bunch of people. they are business people, entrepreneurs, people that have all sorts of different backgrounds, but who come together to support each other in the most amazing, supportive space.

Now, back in November 2022, I had been invited on to a podcast with Dr Rachel Morris, We Are Not a Frog podcast. She had invited me on and we had done a recording.

Now, the reason I met her initially was actually through Alan Wick, who is one of the members of LHL. He had suggested that we connected, we got on really well, and we had a really lovely chat.

She invited me on the podcast. So, a couple of days before recording this talk, I had recorded the Podcast with Rachel. Now during that podcast, which was mostly about the How People, Granola, my different business journeys, She started talking about the transferable skills and the information that I had around entrepreneurship and being a doctor and she was saying how important she thought that was and how much information and support I have to offer other people.

And when I came off that podcast, I thought, you know what, she's absolutely right. I'd already been supporting and mentoring Nares Freighter and a couple of other people really informally.

But doing that pod cast and having that conversation with her gave me the confidence to go out there and share much more of what was in my head. So we're talking like coming up to two and half years ago.

On the way home, I remember thinking, well, how can I put this together? You know, How could I Put this advice together in a talk? And around the same time, Claire had asked for somebody to do a masterclass on the Friday.

So it was literally the Same week. She said, Does anyone want to Do a Masterclass? I thought, you know what? I'll give it a go. I'll Give it ago. I put myself in A deeply uncomfortable situation, which is talking to a bunch of really established, amazing business people and entrepreneurs, and I will share with them my reflections and thoughts on what this takes.

And I'll just see how it goes. And that's what I did. Actually, retrospectively, I was nowhere near ready. I absolutely getting scrappy. But Claire made me feel so welcome.

She made my feel, so capable and I knew that they all had my backs. And actually, if I can't share it in that safe space to get me started, then when was I going to do it?

So I got really, really scrappy.

Introducing the ICE Framework

I go brave and did a masterclass on that Friday to an amazing bunch of people and it was recorded. So, I'm going share the exact time. The first 20 minutes that I ever did any kind of, you know, thought leadership or suggestions around online business or how to go about getting out there into the world.

This was the first time I've ever shared anything. And I'm going to share it with you now on the podcast. So imagine two and a half years ago, here I am, on zoom recording this with a bit of a live audience and the feedback was fantastic and it gave me great confidence to go out there and do some more talks for the SLM to do more.

Talks out that bring together my group program to get out and help other people. and as a result now to be doing these interviews and recording these episodes of the podcast.

So I thought I'd share that with you today. Any questions, please let me know. Send me an email on joe at bendyourlegs.com or send me a direct message on LinkedIn.

I hope you enjoy. Okay, this morning we have the amazing Jo Watkins, who's giving us a lightning talk, and it's going to be called, well, it is called the ICE Framework.

Building an online business without getting frozen in inaction. Six areas to focus on as you get started or wherever you are on your journey. Over to you, Jo.

Good morning. Thank you very much for having me. And that sounds like a suitably boring way to start your Friday morning, doesn't it? But Hopefully there'll be something in here for you to take away.

So thanks for the encouragement to come on and talk to you all. As a GP and going through medical school, I've been programmed to absolutely love an acronym as a way of remembering things by.

In fact, that was kind of my go-to at medical schools. I wasn't much use for anything else, but if you had to remember something, i would make up a song, a rhyme, or poem or anything.

And retrospectively, that was probably my first entrepreneurial thought when I was at medical school was to write a book about this. But obviously that didn't happen because that's not what you do when you're at Medical School.

You carry on being a doctor. Um, but different acronyms and words mean different things to different groups of people. And we all have different ways of things, you know, connecting with us.

Now for me, I, Generally, in my normal life means a lot of fun. As many of you know, my husband's an anaesthetist and I'm a GP and after taking a year out and traveling with our family on the top left, our four kids, when we

returned to the UK, Dave negotiated his hours and we now work for nine months and spend three months away, often in Canada.

where we have fairly icy conditions on a regular basis, and we spend lots of time in the snow. And returning from that year, I set up a business with a great friend of mine in The Middle, Polly Crook, after a lot of soul searching, to work out what I really wanted to do.

That business is called The How People. We created a lots in-person events initially. When Covid came along, we had to cancel everything and pivot into the online space.

And we now run online courses for year six children in schools, as well as a growing community for teenage girls, 11 to 14. And, we deal with health and wellbeing, relationships, life skills, and we absolutely love it.

So, living in the sea, Living in Wales by the Sea means we spend a lot of time diving into icy cold water and having a lots of fun with it So what's this all about?

Well, when I started my GP journey into entrepreneurship, I had absolutely no idea what I was doing. And 16 years ago I realized that this world of business and this word of medicine meant very different things.

But there were acronyms in all of them. I gather within the corporate world, ICE means Impact Confidence and Ease and is used as a scoring system.

Identify Your Super Customer

for prioritization of projects or something. And in the GP consultation, it means ideas, concerns, and expectations. That is what you should elicit from every GP Consultation.

So it kind of has different meanings in both of those worlds. What is all of this about? Basically, over the last year, I've had lots of emails, messages, phone calls, texts, voice notes from doctors in particular, but lots people wanting to sort of pick my brains about business startups, what to do, how to take your business online.

And I realized that particularly doctors are really frightened of this move into business because we don't know anything about it. We're basically starting from scratch.

I started mentoring three GPs back in March who already had businesses and wanted to take them online. And then recently I've had more emails from startups, but I haven't really known what to do about it.

But on Tuesday, I connected with a GP who is sort of leading the way of coaching and general practice who was connected to me by Alan, who's one of the godfathers of this organization, LHL.

And she invited me to come on her podcast because she said, you know, there's a lot of information here that you're giving me about the transferable and the non-transferable skills between medicine and business.

And I thought, do you what, of course there is, and that's something that is really personal to me and only I can really talk about having been in both different establishments.

So I realised I needed a bit of a plan as to how to talk to doctors and other therapists or professionals or healthcare professionals who were wanting to establish businesses in the online space.

And car journeys and train journeys seem to be my only place to become creative these days because my dog walks have gone. The music was on and I love a cheesy tune, so I tried to think how I could bring it all together.

I'm a little bit of a 90s fan. And then I decided that I could manage to fit a business framework around the epic tune that is Ice Ice Baby by Vanilla Ice.

So could I combine fun business and a medical acronym all in one framework to help people that are starting an online business? Claire had a slot and I thought, do you know what?

Let's just do it.

Inbox: Build an Email List

I'm going to run through six things that think are really, really important and that I could almost start again in our business because some of these we did from the off without realizing what we were doing and others I wish we could now do again.

So the first thing is to identify who you are talking to. identifying your super customer. And we may all have different groups of super customers, but we need to know exactly who we are talking to, who are we talking and what we're offering them, because the language that we going to use for our different group of some supercustomer will vary.

So for how our business for people, I have got an image in my mind of a little boy in a year six classroom His name, where he lives, what he struggles with, with what his parents do, What his teacher is concerned about and how he feels.

And every time I create something for a school, I think about him. Each time. I write contact for the membership. Think about a girl called Emily who's 12, who struggles.

With her self-esteem. You know, everything about this girl and these two people are my super customer children, but they also have a teacher who is. Concerned on a caregiver that's concerned.

So each time I write content, I think about either the boy, the girl, or the teacher or parent. How are they feeling? How they are showing up? Are they anxious?

Worrying? Frustrated? What language are using? Concerns do they have? And what is really, really going on for them? So by specifically identifying them I find that really helpful in everything that I create for the.

The next one is inbox and interestingly I just had a chat with ackee about this. When we start our own businesses, we tend to, or certainly the medics that I speak to tend, to get really caught up in social media, which platforms they should be on, how many times they Should be posting.

But actually, it's all, you know, that concept of vanity metrics for social Media, likes, comments, shares, none of that data is yours really to do anything with.

If you want to build an online business or an in-person business, really, but an on-line business particularly, you need to build an email list.

Consistency and Clarity in Marketing

You need capture emails of people that are interested in your products and bring people into your world in exchange for an e-mail address so that you can continue to make offers to them, help them and serve them in other ways.

So there are all sorts of ways of bringing people into your world. But if you don't have an email, then you aren't growing a business that you're able to then continue to offer and exchange information to them.

So make this a priority. It's better to have 100 emails from your super customers than it is to 2,000 followers or a thousand people on your email list who don't actually want the product that you're selling.

And that's the problem that we made, that was the issue that had at the beginning. We were just collecting people, we weren't thinking about who we were collecting.

So we're much more targeted now and we separate our list for schools and teenagers. But I'm sure several of you here are on our email lists and you haven't got teenagers and probably wonder why you are getting the email.

It's just something that I wish we'd done differently. We go on to this Cs, so consistency. This is something we've talked about within this community before.

It's showing up regularly for your email list or on social media or LinkedIn, trying to make it a habit, to trying make a regular thing so that people are looking forward to what's coming next.

You know, we know when they're coming and we actually look out for them. So if you can be consistent and regular in your either in both in you're posting and your emails, the we were quite erratic with social media at the beginning.

And what I found is just we've got a really simple framework so that when we're not feeling particularly creative or we are not selling something, We're still showing up on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

You know, we do a motivational quote on a Monday, and we did a testimonial on Tuesday. Just simple stuff that means you're like, okay, it's Tuesday, I'm not feeling particularly creative, but I am going to post this anyway.

Do what is achievable for you and be consistent, not erratic. And have a think about which platform your super customers are on, because you can't do everything everywhere.

So LinkedIn is an area that we really need to concentrate on because that's where schools are, that where any investors may be when we look towards investment.

Instagram is where parents are and the teenagers themselves, so the language difference we need use on both of those platforms, but you can't do everything.

So choose one and do it well. The next C is clarity. And that's around your messaging, speaking to your super customer, making sure that your language is fitting with what they're looking for.

What do they want to change? What problems are they having? Be clear and concise and see how you can help them with that transformation. Again, that is something I wish we had been clearer with at the beginning, rather than trying to be everything to everyone.

Now, again, this is about showing up. This is showing on social media, on LinkedIn, showing in real life, and showing your emails.

Engage Authentically and Evolve

We've heard it from Dave Hyatt, but it's about being authentic. It's being you, being true to yourself, human, genuine. It's really, really about being proactive and putting yourself out there and connecting with other people, but also being a value to other, people being helpful to the people and being each other's cheerleaders.

Now this community is just amazing for that. And I've met some incredible people through this and when we all met out in West Wales with the book launch last year, I absolutely loved it.

I felt like I was meeting lifelong friends, Within this community is Tanya Lynch, who is somebody that, you know, we connected, I don't even know how long it was, but I think it through Twitter.

We exchanged a few tweets and then we realised we lived near each other and she came over and met me. And we have been each others supporters and champions ever since.

we keep in touch, send eachother voice notes. we know that we've got each other's backs. And actually I would go as far as to say that if, you know, I've go five people that I really, really trust about certain business ideas or struggles that was having and she's certainly one of them.

There's another girl that have met through social media and connecting with her who would equally be up there. So it's not necessarily always your oldest friends in life that you need when you run a business.

You need those people that support you who understand what you're doing. So engage with people and you never know where that's gonna take you. The last E, you'll be glad to know, is evolve or evolution.

And this is really about the fact that businesses and people evolve and that is okay. I didn't really even know what personal growth was until a few years ago when I became obsessed with listening to podcasts and basically learning to sort of coach myself into what I wanted my life to look like, having spent my whole life through my education at school and then through medical school.

And then, through the conveyor belt that is becoming a GP, I don't think I'd ever thought about what wanted. I was just ticking boxes and doing what everyone else expected me to do.

So, personal growth and evolution is absolutely wonderful. And business evolution hits you. COVID meant that we took this direction into the online business world, which was actually what I'd wanted to happen all along.

I wanted an online that I could run when we were away traveling with the family. But when started our in-person events, we became connected with some amazing people and we started doing a lot of surfing and climbing and all sorts of outdoor stuff in South Wales with girls, But I wanted to make this an online scalable product so I could reach and help teenage girls and people in year six wherever they are in the country, not just in our locality.

So evolution of business comes by seeing opportunities, developing new products, offers and ideas, and just generally giving it a go. Also think about the evolution of your clients.

You're moving people through that know, like, and trust. They've got to know who you are. they've gotta start liking what you're doing before they trust you and invest in you.

So ideas evolve, businesses evolve and people evolve. And you need to respond to this and not fight it. So that's nearly it. So just to recap, the eyes-to-eyes baby framework, identify your super customer, build your email list, be consistent in what you're delivering on social media or to your e-mail list.

Try and be clear in your messaging to you super-customer.

Top Tips and Final Ask

Engage as much as possible with other people on Social Media and Be Authentic and yourself and don't fight personal and business evolution because it's really really important and never ever ever forget to have a little bit of fun so my three top tips is first of all when you finish this call and you work on your own at home go to Spotify put vanilla ice on and dance around your kitchen is tip number one and in the words of the man himself these are the three things i'm going to lead you with Stop.

If you want to run an online business, stop waiting for everything to be perfect. Stop worrying about software websites, this, just get on and do it. Collaborate over competition.

Look for those people that are doing similar things to you. Dig them out, connect with them, champion them and try and work together because Beautiful things come from people working together.

And then listen. Listen to your super customers. What do they want? What they need? How can you help them? But most of all, listen to you guts and your heart.

If that is telling you to evolve and change as a person or as business, then just do it because your gut is normally right. That is it. So that's all I have to say.

Excellent. Jay, thank you so much. I just want to highlight you massively. One, you did it. Lightning talk, 15, 20

minutes. Perfect. I love the fact that you shared your story.

That was amazing as well. And also I'd like to say sometimes in the group we do this give and we offer to give something to the community and then we have an ask.

In that ask, you've given to us. So I'd like to give you an opportunity to have an ask. And now if it's like, I want to get connected to Branson, just say it, because you never know who knows who.

Like you, crazily, have some crazy connections, which you would not even think I would have. But anyway, so do you have a ask, Jo, as you're kind of, it can be anything.

It could be. I think my ask would be that when, when we come out and we say, right, we need to program into every year six classroom in the country, we're going to need probably some funding and backers for that.

So once we put that together, if everyone in this community can look in their community and see who might be interested in getting an amazing program to help 11, 12 year olds with the stuff they really need to learn about in school, not the staff that they currently learn then that would be amazing because that will help so many young people with what is now becoming a norm for having anxiety and issues as they turn 12, 13 and they get handed their first phone.

So I feel so passionate that this should be on the curriculum, but we're going to need money, backing and clout to do that. I hope this episode has sparked some new ideas or challenged your thinking.

Transitioning from medicine to business is not easy. It's about adapting our skills while embracing the unknowns of entrepreneurship. it can be nerve wracking but remember you are not alone on this journey.

Please feel free to reach out to me via direct message on LinkedIn or Instagram or just shoot me an email at joe at bendylegs.com for support and don't forget to grab the free PDF from the show notes from stethoscope to start up, which is your go to guide and resource for diving into entrepreneurship.

Many thanks for tuning in. I will see you next time. Thanks for spending your precious time with me. This has been a Monkey Pants Productions Podcast.