Podcasts

Idea In Short

Management consulting lifestyle entails incessant travel. The dead time i.e. time spent on non-billable [unproductive] work is quite enormous! Podcasts offer a compelling, indirect alternative to putting dead-time to productive use.

Management consultants are go-getters. However, one of the greatest downsides of the consulting lifestyle is the incessant travel. The dead time is quite enormous! Count the number of hours spent getting to and / or from the airport / train station, waiting for departure, travel time, etc. You get the picture. All told, you spend at least 10 - 14 hours per week doing non-billable hours that sink your utilisation. Of course, you can process your email backlog, review client presentations, clean up your notebook, etc. to make your dead time productive. Yet, there are times when these alternatives are not feasible. Podcasts, however, offer a compelling alternative. Through podcasts, you can not only make the most of your dead time, but also gain insights that you can deploy in your engagements.

Business

The Economist

I've been reading The Economist every week since 2004 when I graduated with a Masters degree in Digital Communications from the University of Kiel. I've been listening to The Economist Podcast since 2017. The Economist was founded in 1843 to throw white light on the subjects within its range. Economist podcasts feature excellent analysis in a simple and accessible format. Among the subscribers is Larry Ellison, Oracle Corporation's Executive Chairman, who once said:

> I used to have an opinion, now I just read the Economist

HBR Ideacast

Ever since I started contemplating about an MBA, I have been reading Harvard Business Review and watching the Ideacast. In my opinion, this is a de rigeur for Management Consultants. This is a weekly podcast featuring the leading thinkers in business and management. This podcast features interviews with industry professionals, scientists and journalists. Usually, this podcast covers one general topic or issue per episode. Although it's categorised as a management and marketing podcast, it covers much more. Regardless whether you're a fresh university graduate, an experienced manager or an executive, you'll benefit from the practical advice, in-depth discussions, navigating business situations or life in general.

Cold Call

This is a recent (since 2020) addition to the list of podcasts I listen to. Cold Call distills Harvard Business School's legendary case studies into podcast form. Sometimes feared, occasionally dreaded, but always a teaching moment, the cold call is a hallmark of the MBA program, not only at Harvard Business School, but also at other renowned business schools world-wide. Experiencing a cold call – when a professor randomly selects a student to answer a question in class without warning – is a rite of passage for all business school students. While the cold call may seem daunting, answering the professor's question thoughtfully and succinctly, and proving you did, in fact, do the reading, is a fulfilling experience. In this podcast, HBS professors discuss the cases they've written and I personally learn something new from each podcast.

Master in Business

This is a recent addition to the list of podcasts I follow. In this podcast, Bloomberg Opinion columnist Barry Ritholtz looks at the people and ideas that shape markets, investing and business. Masters in Business [MIB] is the most popular podcast on the Bloomberg Radio network. Business.com called MIB:

> One of my favorite business podcasts . . . his roster of guests is outstanding. Every week, he sits down with one of the titans of the financial industry and has a thoughtful, entertaining, "Marc Maron WTF"-style discussion about how they got to where they are and what influenced them along the way.

Entrepreneurship

a16z

As a Management Consultant, Entrepreneur and Blogger, I'm always looking for insightful ideas. I also keep a tab on the developments in the startup ecosystem and venture capital. I also follow Andreessen Horowitz, a private American venture capital firm, founded by Marc Andreessen and Ben Horowitz. The company is headquartered in Menlo Park, California. The firm runs a16z Podcast. The podcast covers trends in technology, culture trends, news, and future, especially how software eats the world'. It features industry experts, business leaders, and other interesting thinkers and voices from around the world. Multiple episodes are released every week.

Stanford's Entrepreneurial Thought Leaders

I like Stanford's Entrepreneurial Thought Leaders podcasts. They bring in divergent thinkers in business and outside of business. The speakers provide interesting perspectives about their unique paths to success. I love hearing insights from a variety of accomplished people. And, Stanford really does an excellent job at curating the best people with insightful thinking. The speakers are all greatly successful and share some incredible insights. Particularlly the interview with Tom Kelley of IDEO is one I've listened to several times. You're sure to come away inspired and with some new useful knowledge to grow yourself and your business.

Management

Manager Tools

Manager Tools Podcast, founded in 2005, is a weekly audio podcast by Michael Auzenne and Mark Horstman, which focuses on career advice and helping managers become more effective. Perhaps the best podcast to learn the every day tactics of managing other people. I believe I have listened to every single podcast over the past year. I have been a manager for a few years and I love the advice and the tools. This podcast has helped me in my career and my personal life. The podcast covers several things you don't learn at a business school.

Choiceology

Choiceology is an original podcast from Charles Schwab. It explores the lessons of behavioural economics and exposes the psychological traps that lead to expensive mistakes. Wharton professor Katy Milkman shares stories of irrational decision making--from historical blunders to the kinds of everyday errors that could affect your future. The podcast incorporates concepts from sociology. But, it does so in a concise, relevant manner that provides insight. It is highly entertaining, very well spoken in clear and compelling English. Insightful, and full of new discoveries. Highly recommended!

Freakonomics Radio

In 2009, I read the book Freakonomics by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner. Ever since I discovered Freakonomics Radio in 2015, I've become a big fan of this podcast. According to the podcast:

> Freakonomics Radio tells you things you always thought you knew (but didn't) and things you never thought you wanted to know (but do) — from the economics of sleep to how to become great at just about anything. Dubner speaks with Nobel laureates and provocateurs, intellectuals and entrepreneurs, and various other underachievers. Special features include series like "The Secret Life of a C.E.O." as well as a live game show, "Tell Me Something I Don't Know."

Personal Development

TED Talks

> Ideas worth spreading.

That's how the non-profit TED describes its mission. TED began in 1984 as a conference where TED (an abbreviation for Technology, Entertainment and Design) converged. Today, TED covers almost all topics from science and business to global issues. The episodes are usually in the form of short, powerful talks that span 18 minutes or less. Interestingly, one of my key takeaways from watching TED Talks is that the speakers neither drill down into details. Nor, do they take the proverbial helicopter view. Instead, they simplify without ever becoming simplistic.

IDEO U Creative Confidence Podcast

The IDEO U Creative Confidence Series hosts candid conversations with some of today's most inspiring change makers and design thinkers who believe in leading through creativity. Hosts Suzanne Gibbs Howard and Coe Leta Stafford, co-managing directors of IDEO U, speak with guests about their approach to leadership, creativity, innovation, and growth. Get insight into their success through personal stories, tips and tricks, and learn how to bring a human-centered approach to your own work.

Kwik Brain

According to the podcast description:

> Kwik Brain is a fun, fast-paced show designed to help busy people learn and achieve anything in a fraction of the time! Your coach, Jim Kwik (his real name), is the brain & memory trainer to elite mental performers, including many of the world's leading CEO's and celebrities. In this easy to digest bite-sized podcast, you will discover Kwik's favorite shortcuts to read faster, remember more, and 'supercharge' your greatest wealth-building asset: your brain.

Jim Kwik is the founder of KwikLearning.com, a widely recognized world leader in speed-reading, memory improvement, brain performance, and accelerated learning with students in over 150 countries. This podcast share simple, actionable tools that help sharpen your mind and enhance your focus.

The Tony Robbins Podcast

Interestingly, I discovered this podcast when Michael Scott mentions an event by Tony Robbins in an episode of The Office. I've since been following this podcast for a couple of years now. A quote in the podcast's description appealed to me:

> Why live an ordinary life, when you can live an extraordinary one?

Tony Robbins is a life & business strategist, who has helped over 50 million people from 100 countries create real and lasting change in their lives. In this podcast, he shares proven

strategies and tactics that consultants can leverage to achieve massive results in their personal lives, clients' business, health and finances.

Summary

As consultants, our mindsets are the foundation of our thinking, learning, and behaviour. Awakening our mindsets will empower us to improve and enhance our success as consultants. In today's Digital economy that's inundated with tangential recommendations, sifting through the diverse information sources and finding trustworthy options can be a daunting, time-consuming task. With all the opinions and hearsay that can bombard consultants, education is, unquestionably, a key component to consulting success. Podcasts make amazing listening material for commutes, travel, and listening for when you don''t feel like taking out a book. Subscribing and listening to discourses from some of the world''s greatest minds and most successful entrepreneurs will set you up for long-term success.