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**ENLIVEN**  
**ENHANCED LEARNING AND  
TEACHING IN INTERNATIONAL  
VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS**

**Ewald Hiebl/Christian Gruber**

## **Creating Podcasts**

1. [How to find interesting topics for a podcast](#)
2. [How to collect material and create ideas](#)
3. [How to structure a podcast](#)
4. [How to write and design a podcast](#)
5. [How to control and evaluate the own work](#)
6. [How to do good interviews](#)

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01/2023

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# 1. How to find interesting topics for a podcast

## Information text

Hello! Thank you for entering the “Enliven-PodCast-World”. Maybe you’ve thought about producing your own podcast or your department or organization would like you to put one together. Either way, you are interested in how to create a podcast. But what topics do you want to broadcast and how do you draw an audience? We want to give you some hints on how to find interesting topics for your podcast and on how to talk to and entertain your listeners.

Sometimes you have to be serious, sometimes you can be funny. It’ll depend on the subject. But you’ll definitely have to get this sorted before you start. Podcast listeners are usually interested in a variety of topics. You’ll always have an audience. But don’t start your podcast off with a highly specialized subject. It’s better to start with an overview story.

And don’t forget to have a focus. For example: If you want to create a podcast about cars, start with the art of driving or a popular race car driver, a classic car with an iconic design. The next step is to lead into the topic you’re going to cover in the current episode. “Why are British race cars green? And how did they create this particular finish?” This will get your audience interested and then you can segue into your topic of current problems in the production of car finishes. And now it’s time to invite an expert onto your podcast, so you’ll have some outside voices to signal the broader importance of your topic.

At the end of your episode, you should sum up the most important points and, if possible, end with a sense of humour: “But Bond, James Bond almost always drove a silver Aston Martin!”

Podcasts are made for listeners and viewers, not just for their makers. So think of what might be of interest to them. It might be current issues like a jubilee or an event that is attracting a lot of attention or topics that are being discussed in the public or in the media. If you have access to press agency announcements, use them. Otherwise, read, listen, watch and surf the media that you have access to. Think of the social environment of your target group. What are they talking about? What are they reading and watching? What is of interest to them?

In order to have a clear focus on what you want to tell them or show them, try to sum up your podcast in ten lines. Professional media use this as a press release. You could use it to promote your podcast.

Austrian Broadcasting Corporation, Channel Ö1, 05/01/2022, 21.00

**400 Years PLUS. Between Church and State. 400 Years of Paris  
Lodron University Salzburg**

Design: Ewald Hiebl

The University of Salzburg looks back on an eventful history in 2022. It was founded exactly 400 years ago. After Vienna and Graz, it is the third oldest university in Austria. But in 1810, the Benedictine University established by Archbishop Paris Lodron was dissolved.

The people of Salzburg had to wait more than 150 years until a new State University was re-established in 1962.

Many stories can be told. About the internationality of the students since its founding until today, about the increasing number of women, first among the students, only hesitantly among the teachers. There were and are financial bottlenecks and a lack of space, but also internationally significant research and teaching for broad sections of the population.

So the three golden rules for an interesting podcast are: define a target group; find an interesting, clearly defined topic; and think of the interests of your audience.

## Assignments

Watch the video podcast on "[How to find interesting topics for a podcast](#)" or listen to the [audio podcast](#) or read the text above. Try to accomplish the following task:

1. Find a clearly defined topic and define three different target groups for your podcast. What are the differences in telling your story to the three different groups. Comment on this in a short text.
2. Sum up an idea for a podcast in ten lines.

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## 2. How to collect material and create ideas

### Information text

Podcasts don't just start with the first word that that comes out of your mouth. They need a lot of preparation. Hello and welcome to the Enliven-Podcast-World. You have to know a lot about the things that you're going to talk about. You have to collect information and material, just like you do in science journalism and newspaper journalism, to try to find the best sources for information. Books, magazines, newspapers, websites. Everything is allowed. Use your local library or online resources. Be an expert in what you're going to talk about.

But podcasts need more than a written script. You have to find elements that attract your audience's attention. You need to give them variety. So you'll need more than just words. You have to be creative. Variatio delectat is a motto from ancient rhetorics that is still valid today.

Since you're dealing with listeners, sound will be the most important element. If you're preparing a podcast, you can do interviews, record sounds, noises and music. You can also record quotations from famous people or books to enliven your podcast. If you're doing a studio talk, be sure to invite interesting people who are good at telling stories.

If you use elements that you haven't produced yourself, always keep the question of copyrights in mind! There are a lot of audio libraries where you can get sounds or music, sometimes even for free if you check the right Creative Commons Licenses.

To sum it up: Prepare your podcast by collecting information, sounds, music, interview partners and much more before you start producing it. This will enliven the finished product.

## Assignments

Watch the video podcast on "[How to collect material and create ideas](#)" or listen to the [audio podcast](#) or read the text above. Try to accomplish the following task:

1. Choose a topic and find at least three books or book chapters, three articles in (online) quality papers and three websites that contain relevant information. Comment on your choice. Why did you choose these sources. Comment on the quality of your sources. Why are they appropriate for your podcast.
2. Find at least three online resources that provide free audio material (sounds, music) that you can use for your podcast.

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### 3. How to structure a podcast

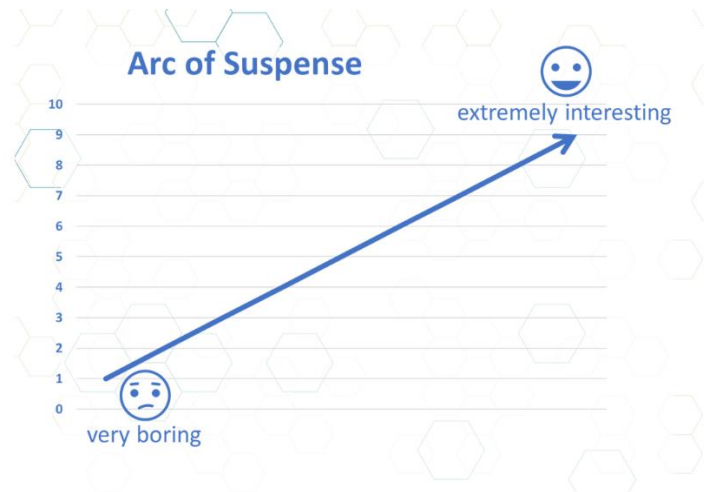
#### Information text

Hello and welcome to our enliven podcast world! Wait! Wait! Don't drive off. Stay right here with us. We want to tell you how to structure a podcast. Start with a highlight, something interesting, or with a question. Describe a scene, the first seconds are often decisive for whether your listeners are going to stay with you or keep on surfing the endless worlds of the internet.

Try to build suspense and maintain it. Ideally, your listeners' interest will keep increasing. On a scale from 1 to 10, imagine that 10 is as interesting as it gets and 1 is devastatingly boring. If you start your podcast at a 2 and arrive at a 4 after a quarter of the total length of your podcast, your listeners won't stick around to hear the highlights that come later.



Remember: Ideally, their interest will increase steadily. This might look like an ascending line.



But honestly. Do you think somebody would listen to a boring podcast hoping that it'll suddenly become more interesting?

So realistically you want to start and end with something special and have a few highlights in the middle of your podcast in order to attract the interest of you listeners.



You can give a brief overview at the beginning if you're planning a longer podcast. And the end of your podcast is just as important as the beginning. Your listeners will remember what you tell them at the end and your podcast will leave a lasting impression. Sum up the most important facts, make a joke or tell a moving story.

Before you create your podcast, collect all your material. If you do interviews, it is useful to get an overview of what people have said. So, a transcript with timestamps is a good start. You can also mark the most interesting parts in bold or coloured font.

### The Art of Driving, interview with M.A., 24.9.2022 ¶

¶

Q: When for the first time in a car? ¶

0,05: 6-years-old, cart-racing-with-dad, from-the-beginning-huge-interest, then-regularly, in-a-group-of-children, courses, art-of-driving, hints, cost-a-lot-of-money, huge-interest, center-of-the-children's-world, more-than-school, soon-first-competitions, quite-successful, first-victories ↵  
1,22 ¶

Q: Remember first big victory? ¶

1,34: it-was-at-the-age-of-11, junior-racing-cup, not-the-best-car, huge-luck, biggest-favourite-had-engine-damage, wonderful-feeling, top-of-the-podium, trophy-still-on-a-special-place-in-house, from-then-on-I-knew-I-will-stay-in-racing ↵  
2,46 ¶

Q: When did racing become your profession? ¶

2,58: first-parallel-to-highschool, but-did-not-go-to-college, not-possible, because-racing-became-profession, slightly, age-16-18, lot-of-travels, across-continents, training, interviews, developing-car, raising-money, no-other-job, no-school, university-possible, age-of-18-profession-definitely-car-driver ¶

If your podcast is based on interviews or material that you've collected, you'll start creating a manuscript by sorting your material. You don't need to stick to the order in which your interview was recorded. Remember: Put highlights at the beginning and the end of your podcast and keep it interesting all the way through. Try to find a story you want to tell.

### The Art of Driving, Podcast, 24.9.2022 ¶

¶

*Signation* ¶

*Sound of a Formula 1 Car* ¶

I

**M.A. 3** ↵

1,34: it-was-at-the-age-of-11, junior-racing-cup, not-the-best-car, huge-luck, biggest-favourite-had-engine-damage, wonderful-feeling, top-of-the-podium, trophy-still-on-a-special-place-in-house, from-then-on-I-knew-I-will-stay-in-racing ↵  
2,46 ¶

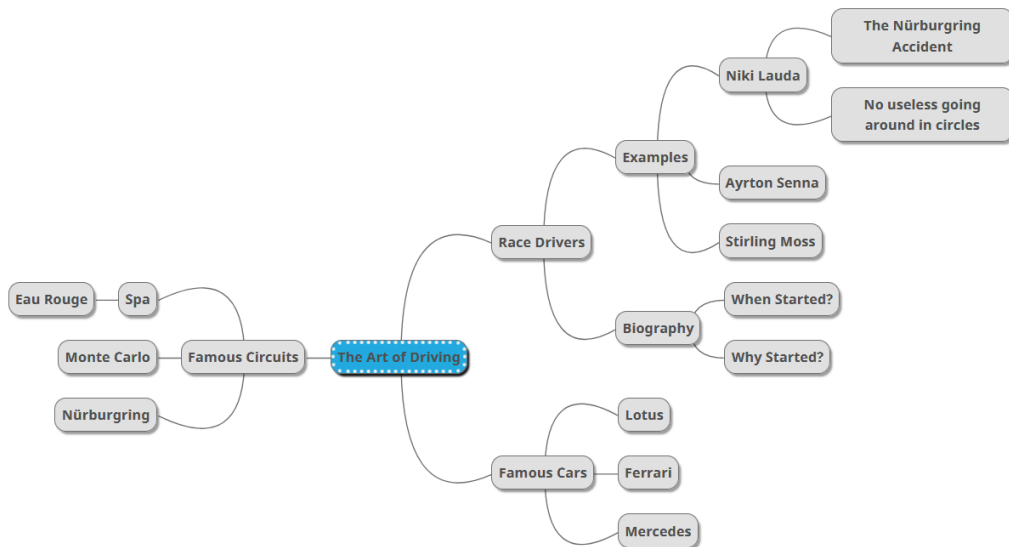
M.A. still-remembers-well-the-feeling-he-had, when-he-won-a-car-race-for-the-first-time. He-was-11-years-old-and-he-has-not-been-the-favourite. All-of-the-famous-driver-remember-their-first-victory, also N.L. ¶

**N.L. 2** ↵

5,34: bought-better-car-with-the-money-left, last-chance-to-be-successful, last-chance-to-fulfil-a-child's-dream, 17-years-old, first-victory, slight-rain, wonderful-feeling, very-proud-and-self-conscious-then. ↵  
6,12 ¶



You can also use mindmaps to structure your podcast. They'll give you a dynamic tool that you can easily adapt and change.



Before you start recording your podcast, you'll need a kind of a script. How detailed it is depends on your style and personal preferences. Sometimes just a few notes are enough; sometimes you need a detailed text. But never just start talking.

And keep in mind the golden rules: Start with highlights, keep up the suspense, have an overview of your collected material, tell a story and end with a highlight when you're crossing the finish line of your podcast.

## Assignments

Watch the video podcast on [“How to structure a podcast”](#) or listen to the [audio podcast](#) or read the text above. Try to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Define a topic and create a mind map in order to structure your podcast.
2. Think of three ways to find an interesting begin for your podcast. Describe them in a short text or write the begin of a manuscript.
3. Think of three ways to end your podcast. Describe them in a short text or write the final part of a manuscript.

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## 4. How to write and design a podcast

### Information text

Hello and welcome to our enliven podcast world! Words and sounds are the essential tools of a podcast. Podcasts tell a story, and that story needs to be interesting, even fascinating.

But how do you get listeners interested? You can try to present contrasts. Good and bad. Big or small. Present two things and describe their differences. These things can be real, but they could also be ideas or thoughts. By contrasting two different possibilities you can raise awareness and suspense. Describe a kind of competition and let your listeners know who won the race. Or if it was a draw.

Podcasts only work with sounds. You don't have pictures to illustrate what you're saying. But this doesn't put you at a disadvantage. You can produce the pictures by using a vivid description.

Describe a scene in all its facets: how it looks, how it sounds, how it smells, how it tastes. Use a lot of adjectives and verbs. Describe the ear-splitting sounds of car race, the smell of gasoline and burnt rubber. Of course, you can use sound effects to lend support to the impression you're giving. But you'll want to use them sparingly.

Use experiences that your listeners may have had. Think of their everyday lives, their vacations, their feelings. And if you want to explain difficult issues, try to tell stories that illustrate them.

Create metaphors, use allegories or parables.

If you have difficulty finding the right words or the right stories, just sit down and write down what comes into your mind when you think about an issue or even a simple word. For example the word "revolution". What do you see when you close your eyes? A crowd of people, hands raised, shouting, chanting, waving flags, singing songs, somebody addressing an audience, burning buildings. Write it down and you'll have your metaphors or your parable.

You can also use a thesaurus or a simple web search to get ideas. Searching for pictures will often give you lots of ideas for evocative language.

To sum it up with three golden rules. First: You can get your audience interested by presenting contrasts. The good, the bad and even the ugly. Second: Create pictures in the minds of you listeners by using vivid descriptions that speak to their experiences. Third: Look for evocative words through association or searching on the web.

Picture our hand going up and waving goodbye. Have a great day!



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## Assignments

Watch the video podcast on [“How to write and design a podcast”](#) or listen to the [audio podcast](#) or read the text above. Try to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Try to find a topic for a podcast where you can use a dialectic method (pointing out contrasts). Name the contrasts and sum up your result in a short text.
2. Describe a scenery in all its facets (how it looks, how it smells, how it tastes, the wind etc.). Write it down as you would do in a manuscript.
3. Do a web search on a topic in order to find pictures that you can use for describing scenes. Which pictures do you find? What do they show? Write a short summary on your experience with this web search.
4. Find examples in the text above where hints and suggestion how to write and design a podcasts are used.

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## 5. How to control and evaluate the own work

### Information text

Hello and welcome to the Enliven-Podcast-World. So your podcast was a success. You found an interesting topic for your target group. You collected a lot of interesting information, found good sounds, and did great interviews with smart people with sparkling personalities. You started and ended with highlights. You maintained suspense and told an interesting story. You succeeded in using evocative language and created pictures in the minds of your audience.

Before you publish your podcast, listen to it once or twice all the way through. You could also ask somebody to give you a feedback before you send it out to the world. Now it's done. Your podcast is available in the far reaches of the internet or has been broadcast on the radio. You've crossed the finish line. Mission accomplished!

Really? Mission accomplished? Think of the people who cross a real finish line. What do they do after the race? They evaluate the mission they've just accomplished, and they prepare for the next one. And this is exactly what you need to do. Don't just stop at the finish line. Reflect on your work and the working process. What was good, what could have been better? Take notes and adapt your style of working if necessary. But also note down your successes.

If you got feedback, take it seriously. This doesn't mean you have to accept every little bit of criticism. But think about it and reflect. Try to be as honest with yourself as possible.

This will improve your next podcast. Even if the last one was already excellent.

## Assignments

Listen to the audio podcast on ["How to control and evaluate the own work"](#) or read the text above.

Try to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Find a podcast in the internet/on a streaming platform and imagine that the producer asked you for feedback. Sum up the good points and what could have been done better. Write down your feedback.
1. Take one of the last texts that you have written (seminar paper, a piece of literature...) and reflect on it as if you were the editor of an anthology. Correct it and write a feedback. What would you change? ‘

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## 6. How to do good interviews

### Information text

Hello and welcome to the Enliven-Podcast-World. There's no tried-and-true formula for conducting good interviews. So much depends on the personality of the interviewer and the setting. But also on the goal of the interview. Do you want to gain specific information from an expert or are you interested in the everyday life of a particular person?

A good rule of thumb is not to start directly with the first question. Take your time to chat briefly. It can engage in small talk or a talk about the goal and the topic of the interview. In any case, talking off the record will jump start your conversation and take the edge off. But this is only possible for interviewees who have enough time. For those with a tight schedule, you'll need to start immediately with the most important topics.

If you aren't doing a live interview, tell the interviewee that you can cut out any bloopers and even correct statements. For especially nervous interviewees, this can be of great help. Don't ask yes-or-no questions if you want to make people talk and don't ask leading questions that already suggest an answer, like: "Are you just as big a fan of the fantastic Enliven project as I am?"

Be sure that your interviewee feels relaxed and that there are no disturbances. If there's a possible source of noise such as an open window, a door or some kind of device, don't put your interviewee in front of it; instead, make sure that it's behind your back.

So, we wish you all the best with your interview. Just remember the most important advice: Stay relaxed.

### Assignments

Listen to the audio podcast on "[How to do good interviews](#)" or read the text above. Try to accomplish the following tasks:

2. Choose a topic and imagine a virtual interviewee. Write a questionnaire. In which order would you ask the questions. Which kind of questions would you ask? Write it down.
3. If you have the possibility do an interview and think of the advices given above. Sum up your experience. What were your successes, have there been problems? What did work very well? What would you do different next time? Sum it up in a short text.

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