

Live captioning by Ai-Media

(Video plays)

SPEAKER:

Recording in progress.

MARIA BARONE:

Welcome! I'm already seeing some comments that we had substantial issues with the audio. I'm seeing lots of thumbs up so thank you so much. Hi, I'm Maria Barone. I'm fortunate to be a staff member here at Yoga Alliance.

I'm so excited to be here as part of your continued learning education. I'm here to help host and openness workshop on how to How to Develop an Effective Workshop.

I will be answering any questions in the chat. And the location poll will pop up. Thank you.

HARI-KIRTANA DAS:

Greetings everyone. It's a great pleasure for me to be here with you today. Thank you very much for joining me for this workshop.

I'm going to share my screen with you. This is perhaps the most metal workshop I've ever done because it is one on how to develop an effective workshop.

The first thing I would like to do is encourage you to pull up the Q&A window and tell me what your biggest challenge is, when you start thinking about how you are going to develop a workshop, whatever is the big obstacle that you need to overcome to create the kind of workshop that you know you can offer to your students, whatever that is, go ahead and pop that into the Q&A. We will come back to the answers to this question after I share with you what we are going to explore today.

We will start with the connection between developing your workshop and marketing your workshop. These are actually two sides of the same coin. And in addition to many years of experience as a teacher, both in person and online, someone who has done many workshops, and teacher trainings, in a previous life, I also had a career in marketing.

I'm gonna show you how to approach workshop development from a strategic marketing standpoint. In the course of doing that, you'll find out what kind of workshops people want, how do we find out, what are the definings, how to structure your development process, how to turn your sales pitch into a story, and how to turn your story into a workshop.

That may sound backwards and very counterintuitive because you may be thinking, "how am I going to have a sales pitch that I turn into a story before I even created a workshop that the story is about and that the sales pitch is selling?" You are going to find out.

I hope you will stick around until the end of our presentation today because if you do, you will get something that you probably were not expecting.

Alright, let's come back to your biggest challenge. What are we seeing popping up in the Q&A?

MARIA BARONE:

we are seeing a lot of marketing. A few things saying the same thing but also imposter syndrome.

HARI-KIRTANA DAS:

Great. Thank you all very much for sharing this with us. I hope that we are going to cover a lot of how to overcome these obstacles and what I already have plans. Keep an eye out for anything that I have not anticipated specifically that you want to hear about.

Remind me as we get towards the end of the presentation, if there's something that I did not get to talk about, just remind us what that is.

Why do we need a system for developing workshops in the first place? There are some real advantages to having a system for developing your workshops. It's gonna save you time. A lot of time. And as we move through my presentation, I think you will see just how much time you can save when you got a system, when you particularly use the system I will share with you, to develop your workshops.

It will ensure profitability. It's always nice to just give it away, or breakeven, but even better is to actually make some money doing your workshop because that after all is your specialty and something you should be compensated for in a way that reflects the value of what it is you are offering.

It will support consistency in your workshop presentations. When you deliver a message or product consistently, that actually is really helpful in developing your reputation as a workshop leader.

It will ensure the effectiveness of your workshop, it will actually help you reach your goal and get people what it is that they expect to get based on what you told them you are going to experience.

What exactly do we mean by effective? This is after all a workshop on how to develop an effective workshop, so let's just make sure that we define our terms here. What does a successful outcome look like?

For starters, people show up! If no one comes, then obviously it's not a success. So people showing up is the first clue that we are on the road to a successful outcome and that we will have an effective outcome.

Second, they have fun. This is the first rule in my trainings. Why? Everything else is included and having fun and second, they will come back. And third they will tell their friends how much fun it was and they will tell all of their friends.

Make sure you are designing a workshop that's going to be fun. It will take everyone on an adventure. In the course of doing so, everyone who comes to your workshop is going to learn something and discover something new.

They are going to learn a new way of doing something and thinking about something. In the best possible case, they will learn something new about themselves.

They are going to have an experience of what they have learned. In yoga philosophy, there are two kinds of knowledge: (unknown term) and (unknown term). Theoretical knowledge and experience knowledge. Experience derived from actually doing the thing.

Science as well as an art and you want to make sure that there is some way, somehow, even if your workshop is about something abstract, like yoga philosophy, it's something that they can do in your workshop in order to make this a visceral experience.

They get what they expected in the workshop is as advertised. It lives up to their expectations. They came in with an expectation and that was met. And they got something they didn't expect as well. Something beyond what they came in hoping for, something they did not imagine.

Here's a way to look at this: you got a product. You are doing a workshop about the chakras or some element of the body that needs to be cared for or strengthened, or loosened up or something.

What is your workshop's Dharma? What is the essential thing that makes her workshop what it is? That's your core product.

Wrapped around that is the expected product. You walk into a workshop about something and you expect to get a handout, or you expect to do a particular kind of pose, have something that you recently expect to get. And then there's the surprise, when someone gets something beyond their expectation.

This would be a complete workshop: the core product, what's expected, and what's beyond expected. Here's an exercise that you can generate off the top.

First, identify the core product, the defining elements that make your workshop a workshop about such and such, whatever it may be. Then write out everything you would expect to get if you were attending your own workshop.

Then, think of something, information, resources, opportunities - something that you can add that would be an unexpected value to your workshop. Try that but try it later because we will move on. Screenshot this if you would like or make a note.

Here we go. We will talk about the connection between developing the workshops and marketing your workshop.

Developing your workshop as a function of strategic marketing. This is a little different from marketing communications. A lot of times only think of marketing, we think about getting the word out but strategic marketing is a little different. It means connecting the dots between your solution, your mission, your gift and what your customer is looking for. What they need to have fulfilled. What do they want to learn. What problem are they trying to solve.

First find out what kind of workshops people actually want, what workshops people are actually looking for. The way I do it, I just ask! The easiest way to find out. Just ask.

As people who come to your classes. Before your class when people are coming in or after class when people are going out, especially regulars.

As people, "hey, what kind of workshop are you looking for? What kind would you like to enjoy taking with me in particular? What kind of workshop are you looking for that you are not finding?"

As her fellow teachers and colleagues. "What kind of workshops are you thinking about offering people? What are you hearing people asking for?" If you know a teacher that brings something different to the same table, maybe you will find an opportunity to collaborate.

You don't have to worry about competing with your colleagues over workshops. Think of them more as collaborators. They should be your supportive community. And you can do the same for them.

Ask studio managers what workshops are selling and where they say the demand, which workshops are the studio offering that is really bringing in the greatest response? Same question to the owner. If you are teaching at a studio, "what kind of workshops do you want the studio known for?"

As the studio owner what kind of workshop is really aligned with the vision of what the studio or thanks their place ought to be.

And if you have a mailing list, which I strongly encourage you to do, as the people were coming to your website. The best place to put this question is in a PS near the sign off. "I'm planning to do some workshops in the next few months. What type would you like me to really offer?"

It's one of these email marketing tricks that really works. But this does not the question of what kind of workshop should you offer. Just because someone says that this is what they want, doesn't mean that this is necessarily what they are qualified to offer.

You are qualified to offer something and this leads to the issue of imposter syndrome that came up in the Q&A. I will address it right here. Remember: you are the world's foremost authority on your personal experience. Your workshop should be based on your personal experience and not some book knowledge that you are trying to wrap your head around just like everybody else.

If you speak from the authority of their personal experience, there is no possibility of you being an

imposter and therefore no good reason for you to feel like one.

Here's how you can determine what kind of workshop you should offer. Think about yourself and your own experience: what needs did you have for problem did you want to solve? Did you have an injury that you needed to recover from? Did you have an eating disorder that you need to take cure? Did you have a particular kind of knowledge that you wanted to acquire and you can find the source of that knowledge that was really resonated with you are working for you?

What need did you have, what problem did you want to solve? How did you do it? How did you meet that need and solve that problem? What kind of diet did you adopt in order to fix something with your health? Having to do with what you eat?

How did you recover from an injury?

Another thing you can ask yourself is what your life's mission is? What is your purpose in your life? What are you doing to make a contribution to the world? The world wants to know.

Another way to ask this kind of question is what special gift that you have that only you can offer to the world? You've got something in the world needs it.

Here's how you do the math. Your solution, your mission, your special gift that only you have, plus what people are looking for, what they want and need - put that together and you have your workshop.

Let's stop here and take a few questions and comments. That was a fair amount that we just went through. Maria, but if he seen coming in through the Q&A box?

MARIA:

there's really not a lot. The word dharma keeps popping up, what is it that then you are here for and what you want to share? Lots of hearts and stars.

HARI-KIRTANA DAS:

That's very encouraging. Thank you all out there the internet for your encouraging responses, and also for continuing to all things into the Q&A that either answer on the fly or make sure we come back to.

MARIA BARONE:

We did get one more question. They asked to pop back to the strategic marketing slide real quick. We will also share the slides afterwards.

HARI-KIRTANA DAS:

We will have the slides for your review when you go to check out the replay that will be on the Yoga Alliance site sometime shortly after. I think what you're asking for is the slide. What strategic marketing means. If this is not direct, please let me know.

This is our definition of strategic marketing. Insofar as creating a training course for teacher training, solution, how you solve the problem, your mission in life - connect that to what your customer is looking for, meaning your students, you put these two things together and you're going to be to figure out how to meet that need. Is this what we were looking for? I hope so.

I will zip back down to wherever I was at. If you need to revisit that in some way then just let me know.

We continue with an easy mistake to make. This is something that I used to do and something that may have done, something you may still do. We think that our development process begins with creating a workshop and then after we have created a workshop, we sell the workshop.

Nope. Actually, what we really want to do is reverse the process. When we reverse the process, you will actually create three steps, not just two, but it's going to be three steps here are the three steps that I recommend:

Step one: make the poster. Step two: sell the poster. Step three: make the movie.

Believe it or not, this is the most important thing I am going to tell you during the course of this workshop. Sell your workshop first, then create it. This will save you a lot of time because you will know that you are actually going to do this workshop.

How many times have we created workshops and thought they were great, want to try and solve them, only three people signed up, and we didn't end up doing the workshop that we created.

What you should do instead is first, sell the workshop to the venue, to the studio manager or studio owner, whoever's going to be giving you a platform. Sell them on it and then promote it. Let's just say you need a people to sign up.

There are three kinds of people in the world: the people who sign up right away, the people who dribble in, and most people wait until the last minute to sign up. Let's say you need 8 people.

If more people sign up right away, you know you will get those extra for people to be at the minimum. The essence of your workshop. Don't spend your time developing workshop that you have not already sold to someone.

As we said earlier, developing a workshop function of marketing. It also saves time. It automatically generates marketing medications or studio website for your website and social media, etc.

Marketing communications is actually how you develop your workshop concept an outline. In other words, before you figure out everything you were going to do and say in your workshop, you want to make a clear concept and basic outline for it. This is how you will do that.

That brings us on how to structure the development process. We begin a step one in making the poster. How do we make the poster? You will write a clear and concise description of what it is, what is

your workshop.

Simple beats clever every time. Just say it! What is it? Then, who is it for? If we try to be all things to all people, we end up being nothing to nobody. Who is your target audience? Whose problem resolving? Who has a particular need or desire that this workshop specifically addresses.

The more specific you are, the more successful your workshop will be. Then, what makes it different? The technical term for this is meaningful differentiation. There are plenty of Yoga Teachers doing workshops on the chakras, and planning on how to structure this muscle or get this connective tissue to move like this - whatever it is you are offering. There are plenty others doing the same thing. What makes your workshop unique?

What will people get by taking your workshop that they will not by taking someone else's on the same topic? Your experience will make all the difference.

Make bullet points. How is this workshop going to function? What's the take away? What's the value statement here? How are you going to feel is a very good way to think about this.

What do you get? A feeling you did not have before, preferably a really good one. If you think about what you get in terms of how you will feel, or what new thing that you will have that you didn't have before, you do this: clear and concise description of these five things and now you got your poster.

Once you got poster, you need to sell the poster. How do you sell the poster? That brings us to how to turn your sales pitch into a story. Those five things that we discovered, that's the essence of your sales pitch but you want to do it, you want to present it in such a way so that you're telling a story.

Here's how you turn the sales pitch into a story, so that you can sell the poster. State the main point of your workshop as the answer to a question you know your students are already asking.

Status self-evident truth. Everyone will just accept it, that is obviously true. Then, call out the problem, the obstacle that's keeping your students from experiencing the self-evident truth that you just stated.

Next, state the question you wish your students were asking. Odds are the reason they haven't solved the problem that they are trying to solve is because they are not asking the right question. Your workshop is going to be reframing of the problem, that they need solved, or the desire that they are trying to fulfill in a way that they just haven't thought of before.

This will be the Aha! Moment. Then ask the most gratifying, pain relieving, what if question. What if you had this and experience that? What if there was something that magically solves your problem?

State the actions that will make the what if scenario come true, corresponding to how it works. And then you will restate that main point is the big take away.

Here is an example of exactly what I mean. You may have thought is very complicated but I am going

to tell you the story that I told Yoga Alliance in order to sell the poster I made to convince them to let me do this workshop.

So what I want you to do is follow the bouncing ball and listen to what I am saying. And then just follow along.

Here's our starting point. Hold on. Let me share my screen. There you go. State the main point of your workshop, follow the bouncing ball while you listen to me.

The key to designing an effective workshop is to take a systematic approach to solving a problem that really matters to your students. Great workshops can be life-changing experiences when participants walk away with something that they really need and couldn't find anywhere else.

The problem for many teachers is that we focus on delivering or developing content for lack of a system that can help us focus on delivering results, the obstacles that many teachers either the absence of workshop design strategy, or a strategy focused on content development, rather than on creating value for students.

The question we should be asking ourselves is what's the special gift that I have that someone else in the world really needs? It may be useful information, useful life experience or teaching technique, but odds are it's a combination of things.

What if you had a system that helps you identify the most valuable thing and match that with the most important goals that your students want to achieve. You will learn the connection between developing your workshop, how to find what kind of workshops people want, how to know what kind of workshop you should offer, how to structure your development process, how to turn your sales pitch into a story, and how to turn your story into workshop.

You'll come away with a systematic approach to workshop development that will ensure your students get everything they hope for and more when they come to your workshop. The end.

That's an example on how you turn it out. Two paragraphs that will be sent and that's exactly the process I used to create this workshop. And then Yoga Alliance edited it down to a more concise paragraph with fewer bullet points.

Now you got a story but now you have to turn it into a workshop. Now I hope you see why I am suggesting to do it in this order: sales pitch to story to workshop. Now you have to create the substance.

It is now time to make the movie. When you make the movie, you want to shoot the lasting first. This may seem backwards design. You heard part of this: start with the end in mind. But it's also not right.

Why? You know where you want your students to end up. You also know their starting point and whether they're coming from. You know the problem that they need to solve or the desire they want

fulfilled. Those are the easy things. Now you will work towards the middle.

You should the middle since third and that's actually the hard part. Here's what it looks like.

Step one: the story ends and student expense a meaningful transformation. Step two: the story begins and you meet the students where they are at. Now you will fill in what happens in between.

You go back towards the end and there's something that has to happen in order for your student to get past the last hurdle that stands between them and the meaningful transformation that they want to experience.

So the final push. Figure out what is the last thing that has to happen before they experience that meaningful transformation and then go back to the beginning.

How are you going to change the situation? What new situation are going to present them with? You will give them a glimpse of what's possible.

So the first up after you meet your students where they are is to present them with the new situation. That new situation is what's possible. Then go back towards the end. Before that final push, your students will have to face their fear, the thing that's holding them back, the competing narrative that tells them the way they've always done things, they don't need to solve the problem - no. You need to be able to help them face their fear of meaningful transformation before they are going to be ready to push past the final obstacle.

What has to happen before that? Progress, moving towards a different way of being. You have to show them that you can move in this direction and be successful. So gradually, step-by-step, make progress towards that meaningful transformation to give them confidence to overcome whatever is holding them back and get to the last element of the workshop that will create the transformation.

This is a structure of a great workshop: story begins, the students were there at. New situation and a glimpse of what's possible. Make progress towards a different way of being and face their fear and make a full commitment to the transformation, push past the final obstacle, and end up as a changed person.

If this sounds like screenwriting or the plot of Star Wars, it is. In order to write this great screenplay, you will write from the end and towards the middle.

Here's what we have looked at in this workshop. We talked about the connection between developing your workshop and marketing your workshop. How to find out what kind of workshops people want, just ask. How to know what kind of workshop you should offer, figure out your special gift or problem that you solve and how you solved it. And then connected to what your students are looking for. How to develop your process: make the poster, sell the poster, make the movie.

We looked at a structure that you can use to transform the outline of the basic description, the sales

pitch elements into a story, and then how to turn your story into your workshop.

This was a lot and just about 45 minutes. If you want more help working through this and if you want to make, if you've got a course in mind or workshop that you want to develop, and you want to make more of an investment in making sure it's a super thing, write to me. That information is going to show up in the Q&A in any second now if it's not there already.

I will happy to hear from you and discuss the possibilities of my working with you in order to help you to workshop that you know you have the potential to offer to your students, or training, course, whatever it might be.

Did you stick around until the end? If you are still here, that's great. Here's something you are not expecting: starting on September 13, Wednesday at 12 noon, I will be offering a free monthly online study group, community conversation and I hope you can join us for that.

What is it? It's a free monthly study group. Who is it for? People who take company on being with people who share this connection in the world. How is it different? For one thing it's free. And it's an opportunity to connect with an online community, maybe you've never met before.

The real difference here is that the purpose of these conversations is to connect elements of yoga tradition to real life through discussion and live Q&A.

How does it work? Via Zoom. On the second Wednesday of every month at 12 PM, starting on September 13, the way it works is you sign up by saying you need emails but the updated link, and very importantly, I will pick topics based on your input.

The first topic will be based on my input and we will talk about the obstacles to (unknown term). What do you get? You get the opportunity to hear a variety of voices talking about how we can connect spiritual ideas found in traditional yoga philosophy to real life in the modern world.

So, there you go and I hope this gives you an extra example on how to construct your workshop. What I do now? How does it work? Go to hari-kirtana.com/community-conversations.

That's another link that am confident appeared in the chat or Q&A, somewhere where it will be convenient for you.

We have plenty of time to discuss questions and hear any comments. Let's take a look at the specific things that people are asking, perhaps I didn't address specifically with the issue was. When we got?

MARIA BARONE:

I will start with the most relevant one right now. Timing, how do you plan for longer sessions? We've got some specific questions about more than an hour, since most of us are used to teaching one hour courses. And maybe even some advice on time management based on participants, might be very

engaged in asking a lot of questions that may derail the topics.

HARI-KIRTANA DAS:

We have two questions. How do we manage time? Just insofar as how do we create enough content to fill more than 75 minute classes. We have another 45 minutes if we have a workshop - how well I did that?

The other question is how do you manage problem participants, who would like to take the seat of the teacher or like the sound of their voice? These are good questions.

The first question is... If you are offering a workshop that expands on an element that shows up in your classes, particular set of poses or focus on a part of the body, or particular injury that you want to heal from, something that you would normally put in a class, now is your chance to magnify it.

Step one might be to tell the story. The way I structure my 75, or 95 minute classes if I'm really lucky, is I start with it just as a conversational thing about what happened to me lately and how anybody could have an expense like that. "Here's what yoga wisdom has to say about this sort of experience." We will look at that experience through the lens of yoga wisdom, that changes the whole experience for me.

In a regular class that taught can take more than five minutes. I come from a yoga tradition talks on yoga philosophy last for 45 minutes to an hour and I had to figure out on not how to do that.

I found five minutes to work, and a class for the vast majority will be active and I still need some type of chanting. In a workshop, you are not restrained to five minutes. You can tell the same story and stretch out and get into the details. Tell the story on this workshop and what problem is solved for yourself. And how you're going to help everyone who has come to the workshop.

Here's an important point: don't get everybody warmed up tell the story, and then continue. I've been in classes with teachers who ought to have known better. We are just standing down the mat after warming up as she starts to tell the story - don't do that.

You can have rest poses or breaks but make sure you keep them short enough that people don't cool down if it's a physical class.

Preparation is everything. Once you know what you want to do, do it yourself and do it several times.

There are books or resources online that you can look at and do your research. Learn everything there is to know about this pose, this condition, and what poses are helpful for it, etc.

Do all of the poses that warm you up and prepare you for it.

Do all the processes that complement it after. If it's more abstract speaking in less movement, then you want to design activities, you don't want to just be talking... Think of things for people to do.

And if it's applicable, break people up into groups. Let's say you got a dozen people in your workshop, get three or four people together to work on something, then come back and share with the group. You do that and now you'll be reading about getting everything done in the two hours and not how you will feel the two hours. Give people things to do.

Now, the student who wants to take over the mic. If you're doing a workshop on Zoom - that's easy, you can just meet them or throw them out. I have no qualms about doing and I can give them their money back if they want. It's not easy to do that in person, which is not to say I have not done it - it's doable but it's just harder.

What you get the idea that they will not stop and it's going to be a time management problem, it will be a big distraction and waste everyone else's time, and waste everyone else's money - interrupt them.

Here's a good way to do it: while they are talking, as soon as they, they have to breed sometime, as soon as they take a breath, say, "knock knock." That will probably that will disrupt the flow what they are saying. Hopefully someone will say, "who's there?" You say, "interrupting cow." If they start to speak again, interrupt him. That will stand them enough that you can then take over again.

The idea is find a way. But they say something, I listen for something I can use as a jumping off point, and then I will say that's a great point. What you just said is really important and then I will speak about that point in whatever way is actually of value to the rest of the students and I will immediately make that point, "going on to thing X,"

If whoever it is says they've got something more to say about it, that's when I will say, "Share after the class. Share after the workshop." That's a good way to take the wind out of their sales and take back the seat of the teacher, and move on with your workshop so that you can get everything done in time, so people can continue to get the value that you are bringing as a teacher, not what they are trying to contribute.

That's my answer to those two things. Interrupting cow. What else? I hope that answers those two questions.

MARIA BARONE:

Your humor is so well received. I think it's good to have different options

HARI-KIRTANA DAS:

It may be funny but it is true.

MARIA BARONE:

A couple questions specific to the distance-learning and digital space: how do you keep interest in attending virtually and how do you utilize social media? You mentioned using your billing must and asking your live students.

HARI-KIRTANA DAS:

I stopped teaching Asuna classes online about six months into the pandemic. I couldn't see anything and I don't teach the classes and I don't recommend doing Asana workshops online where you have to see what your students are doing.

If they have to see you demonstrating stuff that's fine but otherwise you really need to be there to see what people are doing in order to make sure they are doing what you are asking them to do, that they will hurt themselves, and such like that.

Online space is great for yoga philosophy. If you do a yoga philosophy workshop in person at a yoga studio, odds are three people will show up - at least that's been my experience and I'm a relatively well experienced yoga philosophy teacher.

Online, that's a whole other story. Because you can stretch beyond your local geography and a surprising number of people will be interested in what you have to say. So that's my feeling about the space.

As far as how you use social media, what I plan on doing, which I have been very remiss in the last few months, is really stepping up my game in YouTube and creating YouTube videos that are both longform, 18 minutes in length, and short form, short, whatever modern young people call these things, they last three minutes - I'm learning all that stuff because I'm old.

Remember, YouTube is the second biggest search engine in the world behind Google. Posting things to Instagram and giving a description. Using ChatGPT, whatever it's called, to figure out how to write it and what keywords are really helpful.

Alright. Do we have time for anything else? Are we about to turn into a pumpkin?

Thank you all so much for being here. You all have my email if you have any questions. Keep those letters and messages coming in. Thank you very much!

Be well everyone!

(End of webinar)