30 original podcast segment ideas

30 segments | 90 minutes of selected segments | Timing is a planning estimate.

The One Question (1 min)

Give the episode one concrete question to answer.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. State a question listeners can recognize.
2. Explain why it matters in one sentence.
3. Promise to return to it at the close.

Opening: What is one decision you would like to make more clearly after this episode?

Adaptation: For a gardening show: Which plant suits the light you actually have?

Two Scenes (2 min)

Contrast the starting situation with the desired outcome.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Describe one real starting situation.
2. Describe the desired change without promising results.
3. Name the question between those two scenes.

Opening: Picture the moment before you begin. What would you like to look different?

Adaptation: For design: compare a vague brief with a clear agreed scope.

Small Observation (2 min)

Turn an ordinary observation into a useful conversation.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Share a specific observation from your own experience.
2. Separate what you saw from what you infer.
3. Ask what the observation might help explain.

Opening: I noticed something small this week, and it raised a bigger question.

Adaptation: For food: describe a kitchen habit and ask why it helps.

Starting Assumption (2 min)

Make one assumption visible before the discussion.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. State the assumption as a tentative belief.
2. Say what evidence could change your view.
3. Invite the guest or co-host to test it.

Opening: I am starting with this assumption. What would make you challenge it?

Adaptation: For travel: test the assumption that the fastest route is always best.

The Week in One Choice (3 min)

Start with a decision rather than a long personal update.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Choose one recent decision you can discuss publicly.
2. Explain the available options.
3. Say which question the episode will explore.

Opening: The decision that stayed with me this week was this one.

Adaptation: For running: explain why you changed one training session.

Scope Swap (3 min)

Clarify a request by changing one constraint.

Format: cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Describe an illustrative request and its constraint.
2. Ask the other speaker to change one constraint.
3. Compare how the plan changes.

Opening: Keep the goal, but change the time available. What would you do first?

Adaptation: For design: keep the brief but halve the available production time.

Defend and Switch (5 min)

Explore two sides without turning opinions into facts.

Format: cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. Choose a low-stakes question with two plausible answers.
2. Give each speaker one minute to explain a side, then switch.
3. End by naming the trade-off rather than a forced winner.

Opening: You take this side first. Then we will swap and see what we missed.

Adaptation: For books: compare reading a novel in print with listening to it.

Rank and Reveal (4 min)

Reveal different priorities behind the same choices.

Format: cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. Prepare three relevant options.
2. Each speaker ranks them before hearing the other.
3. Compare the reason behind the biggest difference.

Opening: Put these three options in order. Which criterion decided your first place?

Adaptation: For photography: rank portability, low-light ability and price.

Constraint Draw (4 min)

Create useful solutions within a playful limitation.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. Prepare three constraints and pick one.
2. Design a small solution within it.
3. Explain where the solution would stop working.

Opening: Today's constraint is this. How would you solve the problem within it?

Adaptation: For cooking: plan a meal with one pan and a short ingredient list.

Keep, Change, Drop (3 min)

Sort habits into decisions worth explaining.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Pick three habits or tools you have actually used.
2. Choose one to keep, one to change and one to stop.
3. Explain the criterion behind each choice.

Opening: What would you keep, change and drop from your current process?

Adaptation: For productivity: review three parts of your weekly planning routine.

Decision Replay (4 min)

Explore the reasoning behind a guest's actual decision.

Format: interview; preparation: low

1. Ask the guest to choose a decision they can discuss.
2. Rewind to the options they saw at the time.
3. Ask what they know now that they did not know then.

Opening: Take us back to the moment you had to choose. What options did you see?

Adaptation: For independent work: explore how a guest agreed a project scope.

Show Your Working (5 min)

Make a guest's process concrete.

Format: interview; preparation: low

1. Choose one small task with the guest.
2. Ask them to describe the first three actions.
3. Ask which detail a beginner usually misses.

Opening: If we watched you start this task, what would we see first?

Adaptation: For music: walk through preparing a rehearsal rather than assuming a performance

history.

Changed My Mind (4 min)

Discover how a view evolved without assuming a dramatic story.

Format: interview, cohost; preparation: low

1. Ask whether the speaker has changed a relevant view.
2. If so, ask what influenced the change; otherwise explore a current uncertainty.
3. Identify what remains unsettled.

Opening: Is there a view on this topic you have revised, or are still unsure about?

Adaptation: For teaching: discuss a classroom approach the guest has reconsidered.

The Better Question (2 min)

Let the guest improve the conversation's framing.

Format: interview; preparation: low

1. Offer the question you planned to ask.
2. Ask whether another question would be more useful.
3. Follow the revised question and explain why it helped.

Opening: What should I be asking about this that I have not asked yet?

Adaptation: For software: move from tool choice to the problem a team needs to solve.

The Boundary Case (3 min)

Explain when a recommendation may not fit.

Format: interview, cohost; preparation: low

1. Restate the speaker's actual recommendation.
2. Ask for a situation where it may fail.
3. Name the signal that calls for another approach.

Opening: Where would you hesitate to apply that advice?

Adaptation: For fitness: ask a qualified guest about the limits of a general training suggestion.

Listener Fork in the Road (4 min)

Answer a real listener choice with transparent assumptions.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. Use a listener submission with permission and remove private details.
2. Compare two options using stated assumptions.
3. Explain what additional context would change the answer.

Opening: A listener is choosing between these options. Here is what we know and what is missing.

Adaptation: For hobbies: compare two starter projects using the listener's stated time and

equipment.

Voice Note and Response (3 min)

Give a short listener contribution a focused reply.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. Obtain permission to use a short recording.
2. Play it or read an approved transcript.
3. Respond to one clear question and credit the contributor as agreed.

Opening: We have permission to share this listener's question. Let's focus on the decision behind it.

Adaptation: For local history: respond to a submitted question without assuming the story is verified.

Try It and Report Back (3 min)

Follow up on a small experiment without promising improvement.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. Offer a low-risk experiment listeners can choose to try.
2. State what they should observe.
3. In a later episode, share permitted responses and acknowledge the small sample.

Opening: If you choose to try this, notice what changes and what does not.

Adaptation: For drawing: try a short observation exercise and report what felt different.

Your Definition (3 min)

Compare what a familiar term means to different people.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. Ask listeners for short definitions in advance.
2. Read a few with permission.
3. Compare the differences and state your working definition.

Opening: We asked what this word means to you. These answers show why we should define it.

Adaptation: For design: compare what different people mean by a finished brief.

Question Return (2 min)

Close the loop on a question from an earlier episode.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. Find a real previously asked question.
2. Explain what new information is available.
3. State what is answered and what remains unknown.

Opening: We left this question open last time. Here is what we can add now.

Adaptation: For technology: revisit a documented product question using a dated primary source.

One Worked Example (5 min)

Teach one process through a concrete case.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. Label the case as real with permission or clearly illustrative.
2. Walk through the starting situation and three actions.
3. Explain the result or expected check without inventing outcomes.

Opening: Let's make this concrete with one example and show each decision.

Adaptation: For design: turn a fictional vague request into a project checklist.

Term in Plain Words (2 min)

Explain one useful term without a glossary lecture.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Name a term used in this episode.
2. Explain it in familiar words and give an example.
3. Show a nearby concept it is easy to confuse with it.

Opening: When we say this term, here is what we mean and what we do not mean.

Adaptation: For audio: distinguish sample rate from bit depth using verified definitions.

Source Check (4 min)

Make the evidence behind one claim visible.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. Choose a claim and retrieve its original source.
2. Check the date, method and actual wording.
3. Explain what the source supports and what it leaves uncertain.

Opening: Before we repeat this claim, let's look at what its source actually says.

Adaptation: For science: compare a headline with the original paper's finding.

The First Useful Step (3 min)

Reduce a broad subject to a manageable starting action.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Define a specific beginner situation.
2. Offer one small action and explain its purpose.
3. Name a check the listener can use before continuing.

Opening: If you were starting from this situation, what is the first useful thing to do?

Adaptation: For gardening: inspect available light before choosing plants.

Mistake Map (4 min)

Explain an actual or illustrative error without shaming someone.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Describe an approved real case or label a fictional one.
2. Trace the assumption that led to the error.
3. Suggest a check that might reveal it sooner.

Opening: Here is an example of a process going off course. Which assumption should we inspect?

Adaptation: For design: use a fictional handoff missing a file specification.

The One-Line Recap (1 min)

End with the episode's actual takeaway.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Return to the opening question.
2. Summarize only what the episode established.
3. Leave one clear thought to remember.

Opening: If you remember one thing from this conversation, let it be this.

Adaptation: For interviews: recap the guest's stated point without adding a new claim.

The Next Question (2 min)

Make an unresolved question a useful ending.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Name a question the episode did not settle.
2. Explain why it needs more evidence or another perspective.
3. Invite a focused response or identify what you will investigate.

Opening: The question we are leaving open is this. What evidence would help answer it?

Adaptation: For history: name the missing source rather than filling the gap with speculation.

One Small Commitment (2 min)

Turn reflection into an optional, specific next step.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Choose one action connected to the episode.
2. Make the scope and timing realistic.
3. Invite listeners to decide whether it fits them.

Opening: One small thing I plan to try before we next record is this.

Adaptation: For reading: set aside a short session to compare two passages.

The Credit Trail (2 min)

Recognize actual sources and contributors while helping listeners explore.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: medium

1. List the actual resources used.
2. Explain what each contributed and confirm the links.
3. Credit people and music according to permission or license terms.

Opening: If you want to explore further, these are the sources we actually used.

Adaptation: For reporting: point to the primary documents linked in the show notes.

Before and After the Conversation (3 min)

Reflect on what the discussion changed or clarified.

Format: solo, cohost, interview; preparation: low

1. Restate your original question or uncertainty.
2. Name what the actual discussion clarified.
3. Say what you would still like to test.

Opening: At the start I wondered about this. Here is what is clearer now.

Adaptation: For co-hosts: each offers one clarification without forcing agreement.