

Episode 168: Interview Fatigue. It's Real! Here's How To Prepare For It.

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Dr. Mark T. Wade: Interviews. All you do is sit around and talk. That's not a hard work. Well, that's what you think until you hit interview fatigue point. Here's what to know and how to prepare for it. Hey, there's summit hosts, I'm Dr. Mark T. Wade founder of Virtual Summits Software and your host here on the Virtual Summit Podcast. Now, before we jump into this episode, I just want to remind you to check out all of our amazing resources over at <http://virtualsummits.com>. Everything from getting started with a One-Day Summit to Interview like a Pro. And don't forget to check out our Summit Genesis Workshop, our three day virtual intensive idea to launch with your summit. So check it out. Now today's episode, I thought it would be really, um, relevant to talk about interview fatigue, because I am in the middle of it right now. You may tell my voice is a little bit different.

Dr. Mark: It's a little bit more hoarse. My energy's a little bit less, or you may be able to feel it in my voice. There's just a little bit less pump to it now it's because I'm facing a very real scenario that most summit hosts will experience when preparing for the summit. It's not something we talk about regularly or openly. Um, it gets mentioned occasionally when summit coaches are saying, Oh, limit your summits. You know, your first summit, you should all probably only do like 20 or 25 interviews, but nobody really goes in depth into it. And it is interview fatigue. It's a real thing. It really happens. And we really experience it. Now, if you're doing anywhere over about 25 interviews in less than a month's worth of time, you are most likely going to experience it. And what is it? So interview fatigue essentially is when you hit a point where you've been doing interviews and you are just fatigued, you have this brain fog mentally, you kind of feel drained and it doesn't matter if you've had enough sleep or not enough sleep.

Dr. Mark: You're just tired. Your voice starts to get weak. You start to lose your voice. You start to get hoarse. Um, and you just start to lose a little bit of your motivation. Cause there's a few things that are involved in this that we don't actually really talk about it. Or at least we don't consider or think about before we jump into our interviews. That being is just because you are doing your summit interviews does not mean the rest of the world, your other company, or your actual company and your home life stops. It does it. We kind of think, Ooh, okay, I'm going to do the summer. I'm going to put these interviews out here. I'm going to get them done. And that's what I'm going to do for the week. Well, you will do that for the week, but you're still going to have to take care of other responsibilities and obligations that are happening that week as well.

Dr. Mark: Even if you block off your calendar and just do those interviews, you may not have other meetings. You may not have others interview sessions or things like that outside of your summit, but you're still going to have other responsibilities. You're still going to have to answer emails. You're still going to have to respond to messages. Maybe you do a live every week and do a live training in your Facebook groups. Or, you know, maybe you have a team that you need to coordinate with and plan their schedules for, or, you

know, maybe there's just other aspects, paying bills, paying payroll, et cetera. Plus family life, you know, hanging out with your family, your kids, or other expectation or responsibilities you have at home. These all play into this sense of interview fatigue. Now, as I said, what happens is you essentially hit a point and this may be sooner for some later for others.

Dr. Mark: Depends on how you set up your interviews. I'm going to talk about some of the aspects of how we feel. Then I'm going to give you some tips on how to overcome it. Now this is not a negative thing. I'm not trying to talk you out of doing a summit. I'm trying to tell you what's happening or going to happen and what's to come so you can prepare and plan for it. Okay? Cause if we prepare and plan for it, then we can easily overcome and adapt to it. So essentially, if you are doing back-to-back inner root interviews for more than a few hours at a time each day, you're going to get to a point within the first couple of days where you're just gonna start to feel drained. You're going to lose the motivation. You had to actually do the interviews. You're going to start to feel overwhelmed.

Dr. Mark: You're going to start to feel that maybe this isn't worth the time you're going to start to get a little cranky. You're going to lose that motivation. You're going to start to feel daunting. Like how am I ever going to get through all of these also, because the other aspects is, if you're doing a summit, you're not just doing interviews. You're also probably building out some of the summit materials, the promotional materials, the back and forth with your speakers, the getting them to fill out their speaker, interview forms or their speaker details. All of those aspects are all happening simultaneously. On top of the other aspects, you're dealing with your body's going to start to feel the aspects of the interview fatigue. You're going to be exuding a lot of energy for extended periods of time. You're going to be talking. Your voice is going to start to get weak and feel worn out and start to get hoarse.

Dr. Mark: Now all of this is normal and it can be prevented probably not completely, but at least you can set yourself up for success with it to at least not have it be as bad because here's the deal. At the end of the day, you have to show up for each of those, with the exact same level of excitement and enthusiasm and motivation for interview 10, as you did interview one. And if you don't, your audience is going to see it is going to start to it. It's going to play into the success of your summit and your speakers are going to feel it. They're going to be like, right. Wasn't that best that wasn't the best interview I've ever had in them. They're not going to be excited as excited to promote it. So yeah, I have to show up no matter whether it's your first interview of the day or your 10th interview of the day, you don't Mark 10 interviews in one day.

Dr. Mark: Is that impossible? Yes it is. And I actually have this week, I have three, 10 hour interview, days back to back to back. Now I'm not going to say I'm actually going to recommend you don't do what I'm doing on your first or probably even yeah. Your second interview. I've been doing this for about seven years now and we've quite a few summits. So I knew what I was getting into. And I've made some preparations in, in, in some reasons, in some ways to take care of myself. But the reason this impacts us is because you're having to think critically for an extended period of time. Your brain, from a neurological standpoint, your brain is actually burning through resources, calories,

energies at a rapid rate, which is going to start to affect your frontal cortex, which is how you interact with behavior and people in your essentially a personality aspect.

Dr. Mark: How we, how we are moods, if you will. And you're going to start to feel depleted. And so there's things we need to do to ensure that one, we let our families know what's going on and to expect, you know, dad or mom, and be a little cranky today, potentially. And as well as what we can do to supplement our body, keep us prepared and ready to go. So there is a thing called interview endurance, which can happen after you start to get through. Especially if you're doing these back to back to back multiple days in a row, you will start to get to a point where you're like, Ooh, I got this one, you're going to be more in a flow. You're going to be more of a routine. You're going to have things set up. You're going to your brain is not going to have to worry about as many of the other things, items that are happening as they are going to in the first couple of interviews, like is the tech gonna work?

Dr. Mark: Is the, you know, the internet still going is how do I introduce the speaker or how, what are they going to say? When they come on all of these things, your brain is processing at the beginning. Once you get to interview 10, 12, 15, 20, et cetera, your brain's like we got this, let's go. So that will happen. You'll get to a point where you have what you have. I feel like is interview endurance where you're like, wow, man, these last six interviews, weren't nearly as tough as the other six interviews. Now with that being said, just to kind of let you in on where I'm at, why I decided to talk, talk about this is I'm on week three of a hundred interview summit. Okay. So I've planned this out for five weeks. Um, I have one week of break in the middle, which I just got off of.

Dr. Mark: And then I have, I have essentially stacked everything else. I'm averaging essentially three, uh, four days a week, eight interviews a day. Now this week I've actually got three, 10 hour days, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, I've got 10 interviews each day. Monday I set my day a little bit lighter because I only have half a day. Cause I do all of my team trainings and meetings in the morning on Mondays. And then Friday I have half a day stacked there. So essentially I've got four days of full interviews. Now at this point done three weeks, we have almost, um, 80 interviews completed. So I'm pretty close to where I need to be. Now I'm hoping to get it all done in four weeks. I've actually set up a fifth week for any overflow reschedules or um, any late kind of additions that I want to bring in to the summit.

Dr. Mark: Uh, now, as far as tips, suggestions, things you can do. The first thing I'm going to tell you to do is don't try and do a hundred interviews. Now. I'm not saying you shouldn't ever do a hundred interviews. It could be a massive summit, but there's two things to consider when you're doing that. One more is not always better. Now I'm not just setting up a mega mega summit with a hundred something interviews I've actually designed it so that each day is a one day summit back to back to back. Now it takes a lot of thought and planning because every single day has a specific lineup of people that they, that are only being highlighted certain people on that day. So each day is a one day summit. So one I've overcome, uh, essentially the overwhelm by saying, Hey, look, you can come in.

Dr. Mark: You're gonna have one day. You're gonna have a little bit each day or binge out on the whole thing if you want. The other aspect of that is you really don't need to have a hundred speakers. If your topic is, um, specific enough and focused on the problem, you can get away with 20 to 25 speakers. And if it's your first summit trying to take on more than about 25 to 30 speakers is going to be pretty overwhelming. You're going to have a lot on your plate. You're not really gonna know how to handle it, your first go around. So just take that first one and do less. I actually usually recommend people start with a One-Day Summit. The reason I say start with a One-Day Summit, you're dealing with five to maybe 10 speakers. All of the aspects of it are going to be simpler, easier and quicker.

Dr. Mark: It's one, it's more forgiving as well, but then you're going to know the process. You're going to have it down like a breeze. Then you can move on to a multi-day summit and you're not going to have any issues with it because you know exactly what to expect and how to plan for it. So the first thing is limit your interviews. Okay. Don't try and do a hundred interviews on your first summit. If you've never run a summit before, the next thing I'm gonna recommend is batch recording. So, so important to do batch recording. Why? Well, if you got an interview at 8:00 AM and then 10:00 AM and then 2:00 PM and then 4:00 PM and then 7:00 PM, your entire day is essentially shot already. You're going to do that interview and you've got to get up. Energy-wise mentally, et cetera for that one at eight. And then again, the one at seven, the problem is when the interview ends, you've got that hour to two hours of downtime and that's when you're going to start to feel tired, we're fatigued or worn out.

Dr. Mark: If you have them back to back, you really don't have the mental, you don't have the time to get tired. You are just go, go go. Now you may be running on adrenaline on some of those last ones, but it's still better than getting down and having to come back up, getting down. That'll essentially wear you out quicker. Now, how do you batch record? So batch record means you're going to set your interviews up so that the speakers are being interviewed or recorded essentially 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM, 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM, 10:00 AM to 11. Am you like, well, Mark, how do you do that? You set that up by using a calendar and invite that allows your speakers to sign up and pick a spot. But the thing is you set your schedule so there's only a few spots available. So if you're going to do 20 speakers, you might set it up for two weeks at the beginning.

Dr. Mark: Okay? Now you need to set it a little bit in advance, further down the road so your speakers have time because if you're trying to do it next week, your speaker schedules may be busy as well. But if you set it out for two, three, four weeks from now, you've got two weeks. You pick Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and you pick like three hours back to back. Each of those days, that's nine hours, ok? Nine hours on three weeks. That's 27 hours. So there's plenty of time. If you're only doing 20 speakers now, here's what you do. Some of those times are not going to work for your speakers. So instead of going well, I'm just going to open the whole day and let them choose what works. You wait till your speakers say, well, there's no times left. Now you have one of two options.

Dr. Mark: Now you can add another one or two hours at the end of those days that you've already got. So if you went from nine to 12, you then add another two hours from 12 to two, and now those spots are open, but they're open right there where your other speakers

are already at. Or what you could essentially do is you could, if you only have one speaker, that's saying it's not working for the schedule. You can just take that speaker and coordinate with them with your schedule individually, but batch recording. And then if you're doing mega summit, like mine, a hundred speakers, I started out, I only opened up 35 spots. Well, it's a hundred speakers. You know how like that's obviously there's not enough spots of course, but I wanted to force as many people into that schedule as possible. So now I essentially have on Tuesday, I have from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, nonstop with zero breaks, all speakers back to back to back, but it didn't start off by me.

Dr. Mark: Opening 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. I started off by opening 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. Then I opened a few more spots and then a few more spots. And then once, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday were completely full, I then opened up some spots on Mondays and Fridays because I didn't want again, have one or two people on Monday, one or two people on Friday. I wanted them all batch together. So batching is one of the most powerful things you can do because it'll get you through it. You haven't backed back and you're not having to come back and get back up later on in the evening.

Dr. Mark: Now with that being said, give yourself some time. If you're doing three or four days of interviews back to back, make sure you have some time off. So I schedule Friday afternoon through Sunday off through Saturday, Sunday, I prepped for the next one. So that gives me an complete day of Friday and Saturday to just like relaxed. And I don't think about interviews to recover, et cetera. Now what you could do is you could actually go, I'm going to do interviews Monday, Tuesday, take Wednesday off Thursday, Friday, or give yourself half a day in the morning off half a day in the afternoon on another day off, essentially you want to give yourself some time off to rest and recover. Now some of these next suggestions are gonna be like, Oh Mark, what are you a doctor? Well, technically yes I am. But it really is important on how you take care of yourself.

Dr. Mark: If you're going to be going into long interview days and stuff. Okay? So some of this is about how you take care of yourself. Okay? You need to sleep. You need to make sure you're getting adequate amounts of sleep. This is for multiple reasons. Your brain needs to be sharp. If you're going to do quality interviews, you need to be able to think and respond quickly and at a high level, high capacity. So your brain needs to be sharp. But also your voice. If you're not sleeping, your voice is going to get fatigued. Your body's going to get fatigued. Your immune system will break down and then you could end up even getting sick, like the flu or something like that. So you need to sleep. You need to hydrate. You need to make sure you're getting as much water in your body as possible and you need to rest your voice.

Dr. Mark: So on the days you're not doing interviews, don't schedule other meetings. Don't have big long sessions with your team, do something, content creation or something. Don't do a training in your Facebook group, do something that allows you your voice to rest. While you do other things. Now, while you're doing your interviews, if you batch these and you have four or five hours or 10 hours, like I do back to back, you need to have supplements and things and snacks. All of this with you. If your voice starts to get fatigued, you need to be able to have things like I have, you know, um, high quality

lozenges. I have this thing called an Entertainer's Secret, which is for dry and hoarse, dry throats and hoarse voices. I have water here with me. I have, um, in the, well I'll come back to that. I have snacks as well.

Dr. Mark: Like if I'm back to back, you're like Mark, you got eight or 10 hours of interviews. How, where do you eat? Where do you go to the bathroom? Usually one or two of these interviews. We'll finish up a little bit early. I can quickly run to the bathroom, come back. Or if I start to get hungry, I can have some snacks. I'll have a lunch prepared and ready for me. So I can just run over and eat it so that I'm not taking a bunch of time. So it doesn't mean that you don't have time to eat, drink or use the restroom obviously just means you have a very short amount of time to do it. So you need to be prepared in advance for it. Have water and snacks here with you. So you don't have to get up and go do it. You can just snack in between your interview.

Dr. Mark: Um, you know, I pick the time where you're like, I'm going to end this interview just a little bit quicker. I'm going to run over the bathroom, go ahead, have your lunch prepared to have your snacks prepared, um, supplements as well. And it's really good. You know, again, your immune system can weaken over time if you're doing a lot of this high energy long hour work. So make sure you're taking healthy supplements, you know, vitamin D, vitamin C, things like that. Additionally, watch out for the things that dehydrate you. Okay? Coffee and alcohol are two big ones. Coffee is one of my favorite things in the world. I love having a cup of coffee in the morning, but for the last month, each morning, what I have instead is tea. It's not my favorite thing, but it does help me in the morning. You know?

Dr. Mark: So I don't feel like I'm completely giving up coffee. Um, I have tea. Tea does not dehydrate. The caffeination and um, the beans and coffee can cause your voice to be, uh, to go hoarse, to, to, to wear out your voice. And it dehydrates you coffee and alcohol are two big ones. So don't have a big bender the night before your interview day, um, prepare to have something different in the morning, other than coffee, tea, something like that. Obviously you need to know your body. I know mine that if I drink coffee in the morning before I have a bunch of interviews, by the end of the day, my voice is going to be of course, and hurting. So limit things that dehydrate you. Prepare in advance, not just the food, not just your lunch and not just the times you're going to take bathroom breaks, but prepare your things you need for your interview in advance.

Dr. Mark: If you're back to back, you don't have time to be running over and preparing your notes for the next speaker that needs to happen the evening in advance or the day in advance. So prepare the things you need. Make sure you're set ups, ready. Test it. Have it good to go. So you're ready for your interviews. When I mentioned snacks, I should also mention brain food. Again, your brain is the thing that's actually, depletes. You're tapping in that energy. That brainpower is rapidly depleting, the nutrients and substances that you need in your brain. So eat things that are healthy for your brain high in fats like avocados. Um, some vitamin D's really great. You know, some, um, uh, uh, some, some fruits and things like that that are really going to be good for your brain to help you stay at a high level. Also prepare when I say prepare in advance, also prepare for a fatigue or drop in willpower.

Dr. Mark: You might be like, well, Mark, this has been proven. It's been researched. Willpower is kind of like a muscle. So if you are a binger and you're like Mark, when I get tired or angry or whatever, eat a bucket of ice cream know in advance that at the end of your interview days, you are going to be fatigued both physically, mentally, and your willpower. So if you need to make sure that week that you're doing interviews, you know, if you've got a really strict diet and you don't want to break it and make sure you've cleared anything out of the house that would, um, that you would make it easy for you to just quickly cheat also understand you're not going to feel like doing anything. So don't plan a big session. Don't plan to hang out with friends or to host a party or, you know, play on, uh, don't plan to do like a big, fun thing with your family or your kids during your interview.

Dr. Mark: We just say, this week, I'm focused, I'm doing this. I'm going to block my evenings to rest, relax, and have nice calm nights or evenings. Stay in, you know, healthy food, et cetera. So make sure you're preparing in advance your family, your calendar, and your body, as well as your set up. Also, when you're doing your interviews, try to minimize your time. So this should go without saying, if you're doing an interview on somebody, the audience wants to hear them not you. Now you buy, and this is the most absurd thing to me. I've been interviewed hundreds and hundreds of times, and there's always a few people that are, will ask me a question. I'll give an answer and then they'll take five minutes answering the question themselves. I get it that you want to position yourself as the expert, but just by doing the interview, you've positioned yourself as the expert.

Dr. Mark: So one from the success of your summit standpoint, don't do all the talking. Also, your speaker is going to be sitting there, like, why did you even invite me on here? If you're going to answer all the questions or do all the talking? Yes, you can have a follow up comment. Yes, you can comment on it, but do not be the one doing the majority of the talking. The other aspect of that is rest your voice. Let them do the talking. Ask questions, ask good thought provoking questions that elicit good thought provoking answers. So minimize your talking when you can. The other aspect, again, it's still going to happen. Even if you do all of them of this, you're still going to be tired, fatigued, worn out mentally, energy levels low. So you need to be prepared to get your energy level up. So what is that song?

Dr. Mark: Create a playlist that you can jam out to right before you go, or when you come back from lunch and you got another four hours, Brent, get that thing that gets you psyched up and get ready. Because when that adrenaline hits, you'll be able to rock and roll and you'll have that energy back up. Also, if you've been sitting for four or five hours while doing these interviews, get up, stand up, jump around, do some jumping jacks, get the blood flowing to get the energy up. Okay? These are all I know. They sound basic and straightforward. This is important. If you don't plan this or think about this in advance, you're going to get through the middle of your summit sessions, some interviews and your, your energy is going to drop. Those sessions are going to be poor or worse or not as good, not as high quality.

Dr. Mark: And what's going to happen is if you're on hands, all it takes is one bad session for your audience to get mad, okay, this isn't that great. And then not come back. So you have to

stay there. You have to perform every single day interview at a high level. The other thing throw in here, which is easier said than done is not letting speakers change their interviews. There's nothing worse than getting ready for an interview and having them cancel, and then you have that hour down. So one, all you speakers out there. Listen up. Quit canceling and rescheduling your interviews. When you book a time stick and keep your time, for two reasons. One, it's hard on that summit host, but number two, you just took a spot from somebody else, then you canceled and reschedule and took another spot from somebody else. You took two spots and maybe there's limited spots. So stop doing it. Okay. That's for the speakers.

Dr. Mark: You summit hosts, let your speakers know in advance, say, Hey, we are minimizing the ability to reschedule. If you decide you're not going to be able to do this interview time, we don't know if we'll be able to keep you in the summit. So please do not cancel or reschedule. The other thing is don't put a cancel or reschedule link in your follow up emails. That was one lesson I learned. If, if there's a link, when they get the notification. For example, I use Calendly. It intersects with my Google calendars. They get a follow up the day before, the hour before, and then five minutes before their interview with all the information they need, the link, some of the details of the session. So again, they have it right there. That's another tip. I'd say it's kinda side like a, you know, a pro tip for you here is most of your speakers, specially real high level speakers.

Dr. Mark: They're not seeing your emails. So they don't really know everything that you, that you've sent in their EA or their VA or whatever handled. So if there's something you want to make sure they have it, put it in their calendar. Because when they go on to their calendar to click on the link, they can quickly skim that and see the information they need. So that's just a pro tip for you right there. But what you don't want to do is put the reschedule or link in there because they're like, you know what this does is it makes them have to email you to cancel or reschedule. Well, you're like Mark, it's not very easy or nice for my speakers. Well, you know, you gotta make the decision. I, this, this session right now, we've got almost 80, um, summit, uh, of summit sessions I've already recorded in these three weeks.

Dr. Mark: I've only had to reschedule two people. I've had two people cancel and reschedule. Out of 80 interviews. My last summit that had the calendar schedule re uh, you know, reschedule in it. I only had 35 speakers. I think I had to reschedule it with somewhere around 12 to 15 of them. Why? Because it was easy and they thought they could do it. So you can decide if your schedule is open up and you want to just let them reschedule, redo it. That's fine for me. I'm like, I don't have any more spots available if you we've had to tell people no, to be on this summit. And if you reschedule or cancel, you just cost somebody else's spot. And for me, I don't think that's right. I don't think that's okay. So I take a hard stance on that. If you want to be in the summit, pick your time, stick to it. But Mark things up, things happen.

Dr. Mark: I understand. I understand, but you're also disrespecting my time. Am I, once you get to a certain level, your time is the most valuable thing you have. And if people are canceling their interviews on me, that's an hour of my time that they've just wasted and to me, that's extremely disrespectful. So for you, you get to decide how strict or not strict, but I can tell you this right now with a hundred speakers. If I had to, if I had to

reschedule 20 to 30% of them, which is what I had to do on my last summits, that just wouldn't have happened. That's 20 to 30 hours of interviews that would have been scheduled and would have changed. And I would have had to re-adjust for that in my schedule. So for me strict, don't put it in, don't put the calendar scheduler, like the cancel or re-change in the notifications because now they have to email you.

Dr. Mark: And now you can say, Hey, look, we really don't have any other spots to move you to. I'd really appreciate if you keep that spot. Most of them will do it. So again, I know this is kind of a bizarre topic, interview fatigue, interview endurance et cetera, but it's real. It's there. And it hit me like a ton of bricks today. I was like, you know what? I need to share this with all of you summit hosts out there, because most of you, aren't going to be aware of this when you walk into it. So plan. Prepare yourself, prepare your mind, prepare your body, prepare your setup, prepare your environment and prepare your family. Limit your interviews if you can. If you don't need to do 40 or 50 interviews, don't do them also. You don't want repetitive. I don't have a hundred of the same interviews.

Dr. Mark: Each one has. That's been accepted has been specific to a specific topic. If you already have that topic, don't bring people on just to bring them on batch record, give yourself some time off, sleep, hydrate, rest your voice, take supplements, prepare your body. Avoid things that dehydrate you like coffee and alcohol, alcohol, prepare for your session and prepare your environment, your, your, your evenings, your days, et cetera in advance, have brain food and snacks available. Minimize you're talking both because it's better for your interview as well as for your voice. Make sure you have a playlist to get you pumped up and psyched up and get up and move to keep your energy up. So that is how you can avoid, or at least minimize some of that interview fatigue you have, you will get into that interview endurance and you'll be able to rock and roll. So again, remember your message matters and there's no more powerful way to get that message out to the world than with a virtual summit. I can do anything to help you. Please don't hesitate to reach out and let me know, and I'll see you on the next episode.

Dr. Mark: Now, I want to end this episode by saying to all the summit hosts listening right now, I believe in you, and you can do this. Summits are by far one of the most powerful ways to quickly grow your list, launch your platform, make more money. And most importantly, make an impact in the world, even if you're just getting started. So don't get caught up in analysis paralysis because the world needs to hear your message. There are people who are waiting for you to help them just get started because imperfect action is always better than no action. Thank you and see you on the next episode.