

How to Monetize Creativity and Solo-Preneurship – Sahil Lavingia

on [Below the Line](#), Hosted By James Beshara

Content

- [Intro](#)
- [Formula for Creative Success \(Part I\)](#)
- [Formula for Creative Success \(Part II\)](#)
- [Talk to Those Who've Come B4 You](#)
- [Train; Don't Exercise](#)
- [Learn in Public](#)
- [Just Start](#)
- [When & What to Monetize?](#)
- [Wrapping Up](#)

Intro

- Sahil Lavingia ([@shl](#)) is the founder and CEO of [Gumroad](#), a platform that enables creators to sell their content & earn a living
- Sahil was employee #2 at [Pinterest](#)
- Sahil's viral blog post, [Reflecting on My Failure to Build a Billion-Dollar Company](#), is read by ~10k people every month

Formula for Creative Success (Part I)

"I believe virtually anyone can make a living doing what they love."

- **GET SPECIFIC:** Have a specific goal in mind
- **GET COMMITTED:** You have to be willing to do the work—nothing worthwhile happens overnight
- **GET REALISTIC:** You're probably more average than you think
- **GET PUBLIC:** Share your work early and often
- **GET STARTED... NOW:** Being prolific > perfect

Formula for Creative Success (Part II)

“If you’re diligent about skill and audience-building, people will start asking you to give you money”

- **SKILLS:** Be REALLY good at your craft
- **AUDIENCE:** You need fans interested in your work
- **MONEY:** Lastly, monetize the audience

Talk to Those Who've Come B4 You

- “The number one thing you can do...
 - *if you want to make a movie: talk to someone who's made a movie before.*
 - *Want to start a podcast? Talk to someone who started a podcast.*
 - *They'll show you the holes—where not to step.”*

Train; Don't Exercise

“A lot of people exercise; very few people train”

- Exercise = doing something for the immediate, short-term calorie burn
- Training = doing something with a goal in mind

“With an end goal, you can reverse engineer your way there”

Learn in Public

“Share your work early and often—it’s the best way to learn”

- If you’re writing a book, post...
 - Snippets of your work
 - Shorter versions of the story
 - As often as possible for feedback
- By sharing your work, you’re more likely to discover the most substantial step you could take at any given time

Just Start

“Start early & create often”

- Build up a library of content
- It's SUPER long journey; earlier you start, the better

When & What to Monetize?

- Wait until your audience starts asking about, *'How to pay you?'*
- Rank-order, in terms of monetization potential
 - People typically pay more for education-based, self-help, fitness, and language-learning-type products
 - Selling physical products (e.g., pottery & oil paintings) can also be effective

Wrapping Up

- Business: Building for other people;
- Art: Building for yourself & what u care about
- *“It’s putting in the work,*
 - sharing it publically,*
 - continuing to do it for YEARS,*
 - getting better,*
 - getting feedback,*
 - getting better again,*
 - sharing your work,*
 - and eventually, you’ll be able to make a living doing what you love” – Sahil Lavingia*

Brought to you by



Sathyanand.S

Twitter: [@sathyanand1985](https://twitter.com/@sathyanand1985)

Newsletter: aurasky.substack.com