



## S1E1 Transcript/Quotes

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Hey friends. My name is Heather Adams and my passion is developing the women coming behind me. I want to help you navigate and build a life you love. I'm a busy wife, mom of two teenage boys, and a 25-year publicity veteran who's launched more than 100 New York Times bestsellers and placed marquee, thought leaders, celebrities, and change agents in the headlines and on all your favorite TV shows and media outlets. I run a seven-figure business where we solve all your communication needs from PR to social media, events, to branding and strategy. And I'm giving you behind the scenes access to the best of the best in all the areas of life that we are juggling as busy, working women.

You'll hear from the people who are saving me in my very own business, as well as all my tried and true strategies and lessons to make you and your business known. I want to be the most generous female CEO who is linking arms with you and passing along all my best learnings so you can lead a life that you deeply love. This, sweet friend, is the Make Me Known podcast.

Hey, friends, welcome. Welcome to the Make Me Known podcast. I am your happy host, Heather Adams, and I am thrilled that you are joining us. Listen, I know that your time is valuable and those are precious minutes that you are giving us by putting us in your ears. You might be in the school pickup line, waiting to get your kids. You might be on a treadmill, working out. You might be putting your makeup on in the morning, getting ready for the day, whatever it is, we are so grateful that you are here. And I am committed to making sure that the investment is worth the time, that every single minute is valuable to you, that we are solving your problems, and we are giving you great content in every single episode. Thanks so much for being here. I want to tell you a little bit about Make Me Known just in case it's new to you.

So I am a wife, a mom, a CEO, a mentor, a daughter, a sister, a friend. I care about taking care of all those aspects of my life, as well as myself. And there are so many of you out there doing just the exact same thing. You're wearing all the hats, right? You have to be everything to everybody. And, y'all, sometimes, that is absolutely exhausting. And I am here to tell you that Make Me Known is here to help you navigate the steps that you need to take in all aspects of your life, but predominantly in your professional career life. Now we're going to talk, at times, about relationships because relationships are important to us. We're going to have industry leaders, change agents, people who are changing the game in their respective industry. We're

going to have them on this show. It's such a privilege to have access to those kinds of people who are changing my life as a business leader and as a mom and as a wife.

And I want to share those people with you. I'm also going to be in your ears several times this season as your communications expert. Just one on one, me and you, talking through the biggest challenges, issues, news of the day that you are dealing with in your business. Let me dive in and tell you just a little bit more about how Make Me Known is going to be slightly different this season and also who we're going to have and what we're going to talk about. A couple of the distinctions. Number one, the show's going to be a little bit shorter. Listen, I am like you, I don't have a lot of time and those minutes are valuable. So I want to make sure that we can get to you every single week. And it is not a burden for you to listen. It is something that you're looking forward to every week.

So the episodes are always going to be less than an hour. Also, we're going to have a shorter season. We're going to only bring you eight to 10 episodes every season. And we're going to only do that a couple of times a year instead of every single week, day in and day out. And what we've decided we're going to do is we're going to pick themes like overarching themes for every season. And every episode will connect to that theme in some way and have a specific topic. So for example, season two is all going to be surrounding around the theme of business 101, what are the things we need to do to lead our businesses well? Everything is going to be in this season that I have found valuable and beneficial to me running Choice. So let me give you a couple of examples of some of the episodes we've got cooked up for you.

J.J. Peterson, who is at StoryBrand, is a leading expert in how to market your business effectively and well, so that your ideal client acts. He is going to dig into all of that with us in an episode. We're going to talk with JuJu Taylor, who is one of the top 25 marketing experts you need to be following on TikTok. We're going to talk with her all about how to negotiate for our worth, how to showcase our value, how to determine our pricing, how to answer questions when people wonder about the cost for our services, products, or expertise. We're going to talk about storytelling with Laura Quick, who is the publisher of Good Grit Magazine. She is a storyteller in every sense of the word. And Laura is going to walk us through how to be effective storytellers in our businesses. We're going to talk with Heather Salazar of PRG, Pink Ribbon Girls, about the why in our business and how to take our why and our passion and marry those to create an effective culture, to drive our operations, to set our goals and our strategy.

It's a really fantastic episode. Then I'm going to talk to Michelle McKinney about a vision board and how to make it your playbook in your business. So not just pinning a few things together on Pinterest and calling it a mood board, but really mapping out a thoughtful, intentional, strategic vision board for your holistic life and allowing that to drive and be the roadmap for every decision and step that you take. That's just a few examples of the episodes we've got cooked up for you. Y'all, I am so excited for you to jump in with us. I'm going to also address a handful of communications things with you.

And this very first episode is answering one of the questions that y'all ask me all the time. And the last episode of this season, I'm going to answer a lot of questions that y'all come to us throughout the year about. So be tuned for both of those things. Listen, let's dive into today's episode. I'm so excited to talk with you about it. I get questions about it all the time, and I know it's something that you share in common with me and you know what that is? Our founder story.

I want to formally invite you to our upcoming Choice Collective beginning on September the 7th. The Choice Collective is a fully virtual, six week intimate mastermind for female business owners, influencers, and leaders who want to make their business known. Topics that we're going to cover in these six weeks are how to create a week's worth of content in 90 seconds. The ultimate guide to storytelling and making yourself known. Social media trends to grow your following in 2023, plus social media toolkit essentials you've got to know about. How to identify and acquire your ideal customer and how to identify and land the right media. We're also going to do one session on goal planning for 2023, inundated with questions and calls from female business owners about how to run a business and how to communicate with and care for their team and clients during a global pandemic. The Choice team knew that we needed to offer a service that could help meet the needs of these business women without obligating them to the financial commitment of a retainer agreement.

The Choice Collective was born, y'all. This affordable program offers business owners and leaders sound counsel, expert advice, and tailored coaching through a season of six sessions. The first hour of each session is led by one of our Choice communication experts, teaching on a very specific subject with the last half hour dedicated to an open Q&A format that allows for our experts to provide personalized coaching for your most pressing communication needs at that very moment. We cover aspects of communication that are applicable to businesses across all industries, including media relations, social media, internal communications, customer acquisition, content creation, and more. To allow for candid conversations, personalized coaching, and an intimate community, space is limited to only 20 spots per season. Go and register now at [choicemediacommunications.com](http://choicemediacommunications.com) and click on the tab at the very top that says, "Choice Collective." We can't wait to see you on September the 7th.

Well, what is a founder story, Heather? Well, a founder story is exactly the story that caused you to take the plunge and start your business. So if you're an entrepreneur and a CEO like me, then you've got a founder story as well. And mine is kind of a long, windy, thorny path to get right here, eight years into Choice. And I want to start way back in 2010, four years before Choice even launched, because 2010, there was something that happened, a disruptor, if you will, that caused me to change the trajectory of my professional career. So in 2010, I was employed by one of the world's largest book publishing houses. I had been there for the better part of a decade, and I was leading the publicity team and all of our publicity efforts corporately. I was serving the biggest of the big authors that we represented there.

And I had a team of publicists that reported to me, and it was... Oh, my gosh, where I cut my teeth on working with national media and really made a name for myself and built a reputation for myself in the book publishing industry. I love, love, loved my time there. Well, in 2010, I went on a trip to New York City with our publicity team, and it was taking our newest catalog and pitching it to the mainstream media located in Manhattan. We were going back and forth, back and forth, all over the city, from the New York Times to Time Magazine to the Today Show and Good Morning America to People. I mean, you name it, we were seeing them, and every single catalog, we would take that trip, and we would select the most appropriate books in our catalog to pitch each respective media that we were meeting with.

And I had gone that week. We had had an insanely incredible trip. We had landed a six week appearance on the Today Show for one of our authors. I had a cover magazine story for People

Magazine. I mean, all kinds of coveted media secured. It was such an extraordinary trip. I got home on a Thursday, on Friday, I got laid off. I walked into the office, and this was 2010, so it was in that recession season. The recession kind of started in 2008. And what was happening at our publishing house is we were having round after round, after round of layoffs. Our leadership team, I did not envy the position they were in, were having to determine the best business decisions to make for the longevity of the publishing house. And so you'd go in one day and 25 people would lay off and you'd go in a couple months later and a 100 people be laid off.

And then five, it was like a sharp shooter taking people out a little at a time. It was a very tumultuous and hard season, but I had been there for two years through all of that and thought I had kind of navigated it all and was on the other side until I came home from New York and got laid off. And, y'all, I went through every single stage of grief. At first, I was devastated. These are my people. These are my family. I was sacrificing my own family for these people that I worked with. And it was so much more than a job to me. And that hurt even more. Then I went through that stage of, "I'll show you, I can't believe you did this." And then I went through... I mean, every single stage of grief, and I'll never forget what my husband said to me during that season, because I was panicked.

I had a brand new one-year-old and a three-year-old at my house and little bitty dudes that we were raising and I was responsible for caring for, with my husband. But my husband said to me, "Babe, listen, I don't want you to take your next step out of fear. Fear we can't pay our mortgage. Fear we can't feed these two boys. You have built a beautiful career for yourself. Now here's what I want you to do. I want you to go and build the quality of life that you desire and put the career around that," rather than picking the career and allowing whatever was left over to determine what kind of quality of life I had. I'll never forget that, it was so liberating and freeing for Matt to give me that permission to dream, and to go really advocate for what I wanted my life to look like.

So I got laid off on a Friday. On Sunday, our number one competitor's CEO called me and she said, "Heather, we've heard the news. We understand what's happened. We really would like to talk to you. We believe that you have an experience and an expertise that you can bring and help us at our house." And I was so flattered and so humbled, but what that showed me was the power and value of your network and relationships within your industry. So not only did I have great relationships where I worked, but across the industry, I had really great relationships. And that is what paid itself out when I got laid off is those people went to bat for me and told other people and told other people, and then the word got to this publishing house. So they flew me to their offices and I met with them and I just fell in love with their team and the work that they were doing.

And I said, "I would love to do this for you. I can do this in my sleep. I've been doing this for a long time. I can rebuild your team. I can train them. I can change the processes and the structures that you have in publicity. I can help you build a world-class team known for publicity. I would love to do that, but I'm not going to move away from Nashville and I don't want to be a full-time employee." So I advocated for myself and I negotiated. And it's the first time in my life that I really understood, when someone has a problem that you can solve because of your

credentialing, because of your competency, because of your brain power, they're willing to pay for it.

And so I negotiated and they agreed. And Heather Adams Consulting was born. And so I started working with them and doing that work, and I was doing only what I was good at. All that other red tape and all that other stuff that I was responsible for in my last job that I just had to do because it was part of my job, I didn't have to do now because I was getting paid for what I was best at.

It was such a good life lesson for me to realize that. So I started working for them and I loved it. I loved the authors that I served. I loved the team. I loved hiring and helping them build that out even further. Changing some of the acquisition process to incorporate publicity, a bunch of that. I loved every aspect of it, but what I missed was leading a team that was my team, that I was responsible for. And so about four years into it, I decided it was time for me to go and build a team to lead, where I could specifically pour into and develop them, because what I was doing for this company was for them, as opposed to my own team. And so I took the plunge and Choice launched in June of 2014. And it launched initially as a publicity firm because that's what I was good at.

And we were most well-known for book publicity. And so a lot of those relationships in the publishing world came to fruition and we started working for those authors and those publishing houses. And I started hiring a staff and started out very slowly, but, y'all, that is how Choice began. It has grown and evolved in all the years since then. We're about to celebrate eight years in business this June, which is insane and amazing, and I'm so thrilled and humbled by every single day. I continue to lead an all female team, which I am really, really proud of. And my goal and hope for Choice is that we would serve with excellence and heart, and that we would have a hallmark for the relationships that we build that are deep and meaningful. So here I sit, eight years later, after being laid off, one of the most tumultuous, hard seasons of my life.

And there have been so many things that have transpired since then, but that's how Choice began. And a lot of you ask me about that all the time, and so now you know. I would love to hear what your founder stories are. Would you share them with us? We would be so grateful to know how you got started. I mean, this is important in our why. It's important in that passion that drives us, that fire that's ignited in our belly, right? It's also really important in the mission that we create for our company, that founder story, that really connects so deeply to the vision, to the mission, to the values that we establish for our organizations.

Y'all, I'm so thrilled to be with you again this season on Make Me Known. I can't wait for all the upcoming episodes, for you to dive in and for you to learn along with me from these great experts. I know we're going to have so much fun together, stay connected with us. We would love to continue to serve you in this way. And again, we appreciate so much, you allowing us these really critical, important, and valuable minutes of your day to listen to the show. Thanks for being here.

#### Quotes:

- "My husband said to me, 'I don't want you to take your next step out of fear...I want you to go and build the quality of life you desire and put the career around that.'"

- "It was so liberating and freeing for Matt to give me that permission to dream and to go really advocate for what I wanted my life to look like." (16:58)
- "It's such a privilege to have access to those kinds of people who are changing my life as a business leader and as a mom and as a wife, and I want to share those people with you."
- "I was getting paid for what I was best at, but what I missed was leading a team that was my team, that I was responsible."
- "My goal and hope for Choice is that we would serve with excellence and heart and that we would have a hallmark for the relationships that we build that are deep and meaningful."