



slack

VARIETY PACK

Episode 16: Our Favorite Things

Speaker 1: You are listening to the Slack variety pack. A collection of stories about work, life and everything in between. Brought to you by Slack. If you don't know what Slack is, head over to slack.com and change your working life forever.

On this episode we're bringing you a selection of the most popular stories of 2015. In addition, we will be hearing from some of the team at Slack. We thought to ourselves what kind of present can we give our listeners for the holidays, the listening kind made the most sense. So we would like to recommend our favorite podcast to you to while away your down time over the holidays. First a holiday greeting.

Slack variety pack, yeah cool. Making work less work.

Hi I'm Slack CEO Stuart Butterfield, welcome to episode 16. I'd like to thank you all for listening to and sharing the Slack variety pack. I hope you all get some moments of relaxation, rest and over full bellies this holiday season.

We love podcast so much we made an homage to podcast in an early episode of the Slack Variety Pack. It seems appropriate that we kick off this podcast episode about podcast recommendations with our very own podcast explainer.

Welcome to the part of this podcast where we teach you how to make your podcast sound like all the other really popular podcasts. The first thing you want to focus on is how you sound. You don't want to sound like a reporter, you want to sound like a regular person. Use the word like, like, like a lot. You want to take pauses, pauses that feel like they may go on too long. Right about now you're going to want to change the music. This is a different piece of music it's non intrusive, it's atmospheric, you might even say it's generic. It's an audio signal that tells your audience to get ready because you're about to tell them something pretty important and pretty emotional.

I'm the first interview subject, I am wandering around on a sidewalk and I'm poorly miked.

That is how you introduce people in your story. It's important to remember that you only ever want to use their first name. That is Fred.

You're going to want to record me for three hours but this 15 seconds is going to be the only usable piece of tape to support the story you want to tell.

To legitimize your story you have to call an expert.

Hi I'm the expert and I'm about to say a bunch of things that are going to go over your head but it will make me sound very smart and you have to trust me.

At this point let your audience just sit in their emotions. Went that's done it's time to check in with your sponsors. Music like this tells the audience that you're no longer a journalist, you're now a paid spokesperson.

Hey I'm the sponsor, I'm like a 23-year-old kid who is the founder of some company that delivers baskets full of websites to your front door or to twitter e-commerce bull shit.

Now that you've told your story, it's time to wrap up your podcast. The best way of doing that is with the credits.

You want to make sure that the credit's are read by random people who helped make the show, like me.

Hi, I'm a person and I helped make this podcast. I'm another person and I also helped make this podcast. Hello this is Fred and I was featured earlier in the podcast, now I am in the credits.

I feel like that's how you make a podcast.

Hello my name is Anna Pickard, I am the editorial director at Slack. My podcast recommendation is called awesome etiquette. It's just that you don't know how to use social courtesy. It's old fashion. Sounds like it's going to be terrible, it is by Lizzie Post and Daniel Post Fineg I think from the Emily Post Institute and they just talk about modern problems.

What to do when an acquaintance shares very personable information.

Give traditional or interesting or new etiquette answers.

Just stash it away in a little drawer.

It's kind of for anyone interested in the way that we conduct ourselves.

Quite possible the worst regifting story we've heard of .

Any kind of modern communication problems, they address all that stuff and it's good.

Right, so what's the etiquette around what you wear to work? For these guys if it's cut off at the knee, it's not worth showing up at the office. Here's one of the most popular stories of the year.

Meet a very special group of guys. Hi I'm Matt Thompson. Hi my name is Tate, my name is Chris Mazoni, my name is Yod Sylvester. They are members of a unique subculture. My name is Ted Shred, I'm Rob, my name is Jason Leber, I'm Cal Henderson, the CEO of Slack. Come rain, wind, sleet and snow, these are the guy who wear shorts to the office every single day of the year.

I wear shorts all weather, so I wear winter, summer, fall. I will wear shorts all year round. It doesn't have to be about zero. I'll wear shorts when pipes are freezing. They have freed themselves from the tyranny of pants. I've worn pants once in three years. You know when you get older and wiser you realize oh you can make your own rules. I

started realizing well nobody says I have to wear pants. I'm not going to go as far as to say that wearing pants makes me feel claustrophobic, but it's trending that way.

Today they stand together as loyal members of a unique band of brothers. It's almost become a part of my identity. You know Rob, he's the guy with the shorts. All of my friends know me as the guy wearing shorts. I've actually had to stop to help at a vehicle accident one time, the police asked me if I was okay because they were wondering what I was doing out there in the middle of a field with a roll over car and I'm standing there in shorts trying to block the wind for this woman so that she wasn't getting frost bite.

They came to be office shorts guys for all different reasons. From nature, I run hot, I tend to be hot all the time. I have an actual thermostat which is always set at high. To nurture. When I was a kid, my mom she made me a pair of shorts from my old Star Wars sheets that I had from being a kid in the 70s. Nothing ... I don't know that anything will ever be as awesome as those Star Wars shorts. I went to boarding school and that's where it all started, you wore shorts as your uniform. You are freezing all of the time.

They have sacrificed their love lives. There could be women how date shorts guys, imagine going out on a date, you have to find the right shorts to wear. My wife is used to it, I think she is resigned to it at this point. Let's say ex-girlfriend for one thing she was always trying to get me to wear pants when we went someplace. She didn't want to be seen with me when I was in my shorts.

They know you think they're weird. On Halloween last year everybody dressed as me. Everybody in the company wore short and they called it Calloween. Some people who dressed up as me like my outfit so much they that they started wearing shorts to the office on regular days.

I was standing at the bank teller, one of the other guys in the fire department sitting there said oh Rob I didn't recognize you with your pants on because for some reason I had pants on that day, I had no idea why. The whole bank just went dead quite. They don't care what you think. I don't even know why we are really having this conversation, what is the problem, they are just pants with no legs. Women wear skirts, they wear skirts in the middle of frigging winter and they wear nylons, how warm can they be, that's wearing short.

Next time you see your office shorts guy stroll in during a snowstorm, thank him for taking to the man. I don't give a damn whether somebody else said I should be wearing this or wearing that. I'm just going to be who I am and feel comfortable with what I'm wearing. Office shorts guys, we love you. Keep on wearing shorts and fight the power.

Slack your teams collective brain.

I'm Matt and I work at Slack in editorial and here's a couple podcasts recommendation of mine. The first is for Disney Nerds and it's The Golden Horseshoe Review. It's just three guys who are designers, web designers and just love Disney stuff and park design.

The barbecue, it is arguably my favorite restaurant at Disneyland. They know names of people that designed every ride and every song but somehow they just make that nerdy super interesting to anyone who has a casual interest in Disney.

There's a weird little cabin back there. Would that be what once was the burning settlers cabin. No that's over on Tom Sawyer Island. Yeah, okay.

My favorite new podcast is Hello From the Magic Tavern. Hello from the Magic Tavern. Based on concept alone, it is basically an improv comedy podcast with three people except the premise is one of the hosts fell through a dimensional portal behind a Burger King into a magical land and he can't get back so he made friends with a wizard and a shape shifting badger. I am Shunt. Who are co-hosts on the show and they just talk about the wonderful adventures they are having in this weird magical land and it's amazing.

If there is one person who would appreciate Matt's quirky tastes in podcasts, it's the subject of this next story. Will Hall loves to find patterns in things most people overlook and uses Pinterest as his canvass. The result, the most subversive Pinterest boards ever.

My name is Will Hall I'm from North Carolina originally, I've been in New York for 10 years. I'm currently the executive creative director at an agency called Rain.agency. I've been doing these sort of ironic I guess you could say Pinterest boards for a couple of years now. I always talk about it's a joke for one person and that person in this case is my sister. I would always imagine her mornings and she would get on Pinterest and do all the things you would expect you are suppose to do on Pinterest, wedding cakes, all this kind of stuff. I just love the idea of the joke I know that's how she started her Saturday. I would then just bam, here's fifty prison shanks and it would appear in her feed and I would just know that's funny.

Pinterest huh, why that platform?

If this stuff lived on Tumbler just as an example that should be on Tumbler, that's not particularly remarkable, it's obvious. But if you are on Pinterest where it definitely should not be and you are spamming prison shanks and the feed that's a wrong place. I think in advertisement is something we talk about a lot, I emphasize with my team all the time. Right is wrong, you have to be the right kind of wrong. To quote [inaudible 00:12:34] that idea is your job isn't to right it's to be remarkable. I think that Pinterest allowed an odd context for this content to be a little bit of fish out of water in that way.

Okay we've got to know what these boards are all about. Here are some of Will's favorites. I think one of my favorite boards is championship alpaca. I think best in show that faux documentary of course sort of picked up on that trend with dogs. I have to say that horse people are nuts often times and I think alpaca people are particularly nuts. I have a board called talk to the hand which is about ventriloquists which are terrifying in general. I'm not the second fiddle. There is also things that are quietly creepy like mannequin head shots. There are sort of over sexualizing of eyes that happen. I think that picking up and not showing the obvious parts of their bodies, their boobs, their

butts, etc. Just showing these disgustingly pervy eyes on an inanimate object is particularly terrifying.

Will's sense of humor is definitely out there but he has a sharp eye for noticing subtle similarities in things sprinkled around the Internet and the real world.

One of the things a good designer and artist do is they find patterns and things that exist in plain sight. You walk through the city and you see coincidences hidden over and over again. One that I'm working on right now, it's not even a Pinterest board but something I collect on my iPhone just pictures. I see weaves on the street all the time.

He's talking hair weaves.

I'm always wondering what happened here. Was there a fight did it just fall off. Did oh girl my head is scratching and just throw it down. How did this happen. I have 25 of these photos and they've all been taken over the last 12 months. Anybody in the city as walked by the same weaves I have. It's just a matter of for I think us designers and creative folks, you see this and you recognize these things. I'm on the Internet fortunately or unfortunately the better part of my day at work and you end up seeing pattern, pattern, pattern.

For Will creativity doesn't have an on/off switch. It's part of who your are, whether you are thinking about work or discovering a new subject for a Pinterest board.

I think those treat design or creativity as a 9 to 5, typically don't do so well I found. There are I think exceptions to the rule but you are always thinking, you are always collecting, you are always noticing trends and to me it's just an extension of who you are it's not just a segment itself.

Cow body builders, I love this contrast of it's sort of jazz moms meets masculinity. It's very interesting to me. Spelling bee eliminations. I went through all the spelling bees of the last ten or fifteen years and was actually taking screen shots of the moments these kids figured out oh no I spelled it wrong, I'm done. You realize in that one moment of dread that the last nine months of training and home schooling have come to an end.

Will is not sticking to the status quo forever. He's already got a new challenge in mind.

I love how serious everybody takes Linkedin and oh my gosh it takes a lot of self control not to just ... I haven't figured it out yet but I can't wait to subvert that platform

Check out Will Hall's Pinterest boards in all their glory at pinterest.com/ponyfight.

I'm Lea Rush and I work at Slack as the user research lead. I'm here to recommend another round with Hi everyone I'm Heaven and I'm Tracy and welcome to another round with Heaven and Tracy. It's the best, I think it's the number one podcast that you should listen to. It's about race, culture, gender. Their interview with Hillary Clinton was fantastic.

As a woman you're really held to a totally different standard. Tracy is funny as hell. People often say that you're some sort of robotic rehearsed person. Heaven is asking some insightful questions. Do you ever look at the state of black America and say wow, we really fucked this up for black people.

Every single episode they are approaching something important and meaningful but with so much humor and wit and intelligence. It's kind of hard not to fall in love with the two of them. I want them to adopt you into their amazing lives so you should totally listen.

You are listening to the Slack Variety Pack and on this episode we are playing the most popular stories from this past year. Another favorite from 2015 is when we asked parents to describe what their kids did for a living. Here are the results.

In the past things were more simple and straight forward. You could ask any parent what their child did for a living and get a pretty clean answer. Doctor, lawyer, firefighter, postal worker, cab driver. In today's world though the information and tech economies have made it much harder for our poor parents to know anything about what we do at work.

What do you mean what does he do? I have no idea. Heaven knows, I really have very little idea what he does for a living. He works for a company. He's in the computer. Works with computers but what he does with them I don't know. He designs things in the world of the Internet. Well he's making and his project he has to finish his projects. He works for a sales company that represents clients with their on-line accounts. He implements a form of business. I know he posts stuff on Facebook or for i Pods or something like that. I don't know how that works or how you even make money doing it but hopefully he is.

Making something and produce something and in sales. I know some words that can associate with you but I don't know what they mean. That's what I heard that she will Tweet it out to the communities as well. Do you even know what social media is? Well it's a communications thing. Yeah. Okay.

Before all of you techies with fancy jobs start felling too good about yourselves, be forewarned, this will happen to you too. If we asked you to describe Mine craft, it would probably sound eerily similar. Anyway it's about all I can figure out for now, but hopefully I will learn more about it. Bye

Hi I am Rob Campbell and I am a technical customer support agent for Slack. One of my favorite podcasts is hard-core history with Dan Carland. They are very long, it takes a little bit of a commitment to get through them but they are absolutely gripping and I never realized how interested in the Mongol world until I listened to it. The Mongol women could shoot as well as the men if not as well as the men and ride as well as the men. It was they that trained the toddlers of the Mongol tribe both boys and girls how to shoot and ride.

The best thing about it is that he can take these very mundane sounding events and explain them and contextualize them in a way that it is quite easy to put yourself back in that strange period of time. Patience is required like I said. Many of them are several hours long, they're great for road trips. Anybody curious about where we came from and how we got here would love it.

In the short history of YouTube there were some viral hit's that were so good they'll still make you laugh today. Then we wonder whatever happened to those guys. Well here's what happened to these YouTube stars from eons ago, 2009.

Is this real life? Yeah this is real life. Okay now I have two fingers. My name is David Davore and I am David after dentist. I am 14 and I'm going into ninth grade. My name is David Davore and I'm the dad that video tapes David after dentist.

David after dentist is one of YouTube's great hit's and one of the earliest examples of the Internet video that went viral. With over 130 million views and counting since 2009, it's not only a classic, it's timeless. You can watch it now and still laugh out loud. After six years, we were curious to know what was happening with the Davore's and what life as a viral sensation has been like. First lets find out how that video came to be.

I actually recorded it in 2008 and that's when David was seven. I had just gotten a flip cam. I had always been the work from home dad and take the kids to the doctor, dentist. When he came out, I actually had to kind of guide him to the car. I got him strapped in and made sure he was okay and just videotaped him reacting to the anesthesia. I started sharing it with family and friends and social media started to pick up. I just uploaded it to YouTube so I could get that link. I remember it distinctly because it was Super Bowl weekend, uploaded it on Friday and forgot about it. Then Sunday after the Super Bowl, looked at it and we were shocked to see there was ten thousand views on it. We were like what is going on.

I kind of had known about viral videos and that was starting to become a buzzword. I was like wow maybe that's what this is happening and then it was confirmed because the next Wednesday or Thursday we had three or four million views.

Once a video goes viral, it takes on a life of it's own. Suddenly you have all of this attention you never had before. In the course of the conversation reading the comments and talking to different people that people loved David and they loved the reaction he had. They thought it was funny, they though he was great. Maybe they has some problems with me posting or whatever but it was never anything directed at David. We were fine with that.

I watched the video a lot, I thought it was really funny. I didn't know it was going to be as big of deal as it is now. It's kind of weird because you never expected to get famous off of a YouTube video.

Viral video stardom does come with it's perks. I got to go places like New York, and Brazil and LA. I wouldn't have gone to all of those places if the video hadn't happened.

We went to MIT in Boston for a convention called Raffle Common which was a gathering of internet celebrities. Basically everybody knows me there. It's pretty fun to go to those. The times that I've gone, at first they don't really know because I was just some little kid who just walks in and they don't think anything of it. Just that you are just coming to watch. When they find out that you are then they're really nice to you and they treat you a lot different from everybody else.

Despite the fans, the Davores don't let the whole thing take over their lives. We go out or open the front door and we just hear crickets which we are perfectly fine with. For us it's like two separate things. We have our life and David's school and sports and friends and then we have this thing over here that's really cool that we kind of ... it's like a room that we go into, somebody would like to talk to us about it or an event we have to go to. For us it's very separate.

David Sr. believes there was one key ingredient that sent it over the top. If the scream wasn't in there I don't think it would be half as popular as it is. Stay in your seat.

As a senior of the viral video community at the respectable age of 14, David Jr. knows a thing or two about what works. I mean I just tell them to do whatever they think they should do but then keep it real and not make up stuff. Even though sometimes that works but most of the time it's just real stuff, real stuff that actually happened. But also ours was just an accident, that's why keep it real, that's all we can really say. What is happening to me? It's okay but it's just from the medicine okay. Is it going to be forever? Not it won't be forever.

That wraps up Episode 16 of the Slack Variety best of the year pack. Stay tuned in two weeks time when we bring you more 2015 story favorites and staff podcast recommendations. Speaking of podcasts, here are a few more to recommend to you from Stuart Butterfield.

If you do get some time off there are definitely some worse ways to spend it than enjoying some new podcasts. If you don't already listen, I recommend Criminal, The Illusionist, Back Story, Radio Lab, The Truth and my favorite, 99% Invisible.

From all of us here at the Slack Variety Pack, Happy Holidays and thanks for listening.

Slack, making work less work.