

# #104 My Aviation Career - A Story of Relationships & Celebri...

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

aviation, celebrities, customer, worked, passenger, plane, met, included, wife, fbo, friends, lessons, restroom, hangar, starstruck, simplified, company, memories, smile, chatted

## SPEAKERS

Michelle Glogovac

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**M** Michelle Glogovac 00:01  
You're listening to the mind simplified life podcast and this is episode number 104.

**M** Michelle Glogovac 00:12  
Welcome to the mind simplified life podcast, a place where you will learn that your past and even your present. don't define your future. Regardless of what stage of life you're in, I want you to feel inspired and encouraged to pursue your dreams, simplify your life and start taking action today. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac, and I'm excited to share my stories and life lessons with you will take you on my own journey. This is my simplified life.

**M** Michelle Glogovac 00:46  
Hey, friends, welcome back to another episode. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac. I've shared why I ended up in publicity and podcasting, but I haven't shared much about my 18 year career in corporate aviation. So I thought we'd have some fun today and I want to share my aviation experiences with you. I went to UC Santa Barbara and after my freshman year, I had the come to Jesus realization that I needed a job if I was going to continue paying for being on the crew team enjoying eating out all of the law books I needed to buy my tuition, room and board and everything else. I didn't have a car at the time and yet I could walk to the airport from campus. My mom had been a flight attendant back in the day and took flying lessons. I already thought that planes are pretty cool. Then I found an ad looking for customer service reps at the general aviation terminal, and they were paying \$9.20 an hour. Friends. That was a lot when minimum wage was \$5.15. I was hired on the spot and started the next day behind the counter. I was working for mercury air centers, which has since been bought by Atlantic aviation and is the second largest FBO chain in the world. FBO stands for fixed based operation and it's the area where corporate jets and private planes go to park refuel and drop off their passengers. Within three months, our base bookkeeper quit and although I am not a fan of math, I was offered the position with the premise that it paid more and I could make my own hours around my school schedule. I was now making \$12 an hour and somehow I was in charge of the financials for a base that was pumping over 120,000 gallons a month. Now as a 19 year old, I was consistently baffled about all of this when it came to being the Coxon for the UCSB women's team, I was in charge of barking out orders on how

my teammates were to carry in handle a boat that cost over \$25,000. And now I was in charge of handling and reconciling millions of dollars. It still blows me away that at the time, I was even trusted with all of that. It was new to me to not only be sending out invoices for monthly customers, but also follow up on late payments. My collections tactics with the approval from the company's CFO included threatening to turn off services nationwide at all of our locations if I didn't receive payment. No one knew they were talking to a 19 year old college student who was just starting out. I do have to say though, that one of the best compliments I ever received was from a customer who I continued working with for almost 20 years, and I made those threats to him. When he met me in person years later, he said he was impressed with my professionalism and that I had every right to ensure my company was paid on time, and that they should have been proud of the way I stood up for them. From bookkeeping, my duties expanded to customer service training both at the local base and nationwide. That company hired a consultant who worked with the Ritz Carlton and four seasons to write a customer service manual and I was brought on to help write it and launch it. I also launched the first internal company newsletter and employee recognition program. From there I was recruited to to startup aviation companies and then became the youngest salesperson for the largest energy supplier for aviation, ground and marine transportation, as well as a fortune 100 company. Now that we've discussed some of my positions in aviation, let's get to the fun part. I met a shit ton of celebrities. Of course, when you're working in the capacity that I was you couldn't get starstruck in the moment. You couldn't ask for a photo or autograph or you risk losing your job. Because of this, I only have my memories and my stories, some of which I'm going to share with you today. At the risk of being made fun of because my husband thinks this is hilarious. My childhood crush was Troy Aikman, the quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys. in eighth grade, we

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Michelle Glogovac 05:09

had an auction for our school and I wrote to him asking for an autographed photo to be donated. He sent one but of course it went to the auction and I was crushed. We'll fast forward to about 2001. I had two pilots in the lobby waiting on a passenger. But for some reason, they didn't want to tell me who the passenger was. There's a lot of secrecy in private aviation. But one thing you can't do is ask if your passenger has arrived, but not be willing to let the staff know who exactly that passenger is. The pilot handed me a piece of paper that had his itinerary on it and the passengers name. It was Troy Aikman friends, I thought I was going to pee my pants because I was about to meet my childhood crush face to face. Cray came in we met, I escorted him to the plane, and then he became a regular weekly customer. He was building a house with his new wife. And he ended up remembering my name and I became the only one he wouldn't trust with the keys to his cars. At one point, I'd also ended up holding one of his daughters after she was born. This was one of the first lessons I learned about how trust is one of the most important parts of the aviation business. But how it's also something that's really of the utmost importance in every business. One of the best parts of meeting celebrities was in finding out who they really are in person. So often we think someone must be in real life the same way that they are in a movie, but let me tell you, they are not. With social media. Now we do get a glimpse into what some celebrities are like, such as Rob Lowe. He's hilarious online, and he is in person as well. Rob was always kind and friendly to our staff, but my favorite memory was when he needed to use the restroom before a flight. We only had two bathrooms, one for each gender and the men's room was occupied. He asked me if he could use the women's room since it was just a single toilet and I said sure go for it. After he went in though, two older ladies came to the desk and asked if there was another restroom because the two were occupied. Right as I said, No, out came Rob Lowe from the women's restroom. He was smiling back and said sometimes you just got to go and he waved goodbye. I thought that you all ladies are going to faint. They were stunned and looked at me asking was that Ravello? Yes ladies, and he just came out of the women's restroom. Others that I met included Michael Jordan on my 21st birthday. He loves Kentucky Fried Chicken, and that was the catering he ordered for his flight. He also invited me to come downtown to his bar for a drink that night, but I politely declined just as his wife was landing in her Gulfstream to meet up with him. I've met Sean Penn, who's a very quiet man, which surprised me. I think he's a phenomenal actor. And he was one that was not only kind, but went out of his way to ensure I didn't need to handle his luggage on my own. Joe Montana did this as well. Joe Montana was a household name for me growing up, and I was thrilled to meet him and his wife Jennifer. Now one of the things in the FBO business that we always do was ensure that the customer never had to handle their own luggage. It was rare when a

customer would offer to help. So when Joe Montana politely told me he would handle his bags, and I should just go chat with his wife. I was more than pleasantly surprised. Sean Penn also handled his own bags. This was in stark contrast to when Ashanti flew in and was furious that she not only arrived late, but felt her bags were taking too long to be dropped down from the baggage compartment of her chartered Gulfstream. She was on our way to perform at Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch. The polite and rude customer memories have always stuck with me. Speaking of Michael Jackson, I met him a few times the first was when he was traveling with his children. I actually got to hold blanket and carry him from the car to the plane. The next time Michael Jackson would arrive would be when he was being arrested. If you recall, there was video footage of him flying into an airport and taxiing directly into a hangar. And later footage was leaked from inside the plane. That was our hangar. We had privately arranged for him to fly right into it to avoid Papa Razzi. The media frenzy was something we didn't expect. And we were receiving calls literally every five seconds, asking if we knew where he was when he was coming in. I had no idea that I'd be training staff on how to say no comment, or no we have no idea or Mr. Jackson As it wasn't always smiles and helpful customers though, when Dennis Miller started co hosting Monday Night Football,

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Michelle Glogovac 10:07

he became a regular. And he's one that I'm just not a big fan of. Al Michaels would fly in and he was always kind, but he'd asked us where Dennis was. We attract planes, not cars, so we really didn't know when Dennis Miller would be showing up for his flight. Dennis was extremely arrogant and treated the staff like we were all staff and that we were just begging to serve him. One time he spilled food on his drive and yelled at me for not having club soda readily available for such events. Lucky for him, Bo Derek just happened to be popping in and had club soda on her plane that she could let him have. Having crazy amounts of money truly does create a different type of lifestyle for people. More regular customers of mine included Jean Montesano, the owner of Lucky Brand jeans, and the Simon brothers who own the Mall of America. All of these gentlemen and their crew were kind and polite. But these are also individuals that you might not know when you first look at them because they aren't on TV or in movies. Once a tall man came into our facility, he had a long kind of greasy hair and ripped jeans, and he wanted to discuss hangar space. I was asked to speak to him and we chatted about what I had available, and I gave him some pricing options. I treated him just as I would any other prospective customer. And then he said he was ready to move his business over to us that day. He turned out to be Ty Warner, owner of the Santa Barbara Biltmore Hotel, and Beanie Babies. Let this be a lesson to you to always speak with confidence and to never judge a book by its cover. During my aviation years, I also met Jim Carrey, governor Gray Davis, comedian Jeff Foxworthy, Doc from Back to the Future who was actually picking up his wife who's an author, and Tom Skerritt, who played Viper on Top Gun. Since I lived in Santa Barbara in Los Angeles, I also bumped into celebrities from time to time. I was shopping in downtown Santa Barbara one day, and walking straight towards me was Julia Child. I knew who she was right away and my smile must have given that away because she said Lou in an adorable accent of hers. I once wrote in an elevator with Jon Bon Jovi, who I have to say is much shorter than I expected. I had a friend swagger up next step Morgan Freeman at a bar. I've had sushi dinner just feet away from Ryan Phillippe. I cheered my Starbucks Saturday morning coffee to Christian Slater as he grabbed his coffee and said good morning to me. I've chatted it up with Buzz Aldrin and his most recent ex wife. And at one point I worked for Bob Hoover, who was checky cigars chase pilot when he broke the sound barrier, and Gene Cernan, who was the last man on the moon. When I was a mere child growing up in Paradise, I actually used to babysit regularly for the children of Gary Birkhoff. That was radar on mash, which is hilarious because now we watch mash pretty regularly with my own kids. These are the people I vividly remember during my aviation career, and yet, I'm sure I've missed some along the way. This also doesn't include the various flight departments I worked with behind the scenes, meaning that they purchased the fuel I sold them for their trips along the way. That list includes everyone from Metallica to Elon Musk to the founders of Tesla and many more. Over 20 years later, I still get a bit starstruck but for different reasons. In my business, I work with people that I know are true celebrities, people who are doing world changing work. I'm thankful that I finally have a place where these stories and interactions are documented because someday my kids will hear this. And these were some of the best memories I had during my aviation career. It wasn't all celebrities and they were playing versus limo accidents on the ramp running around and pouring rain while in heels, trying to get passengers sorted out late nights and early

mornings. But it was a ton of fun. And I'm grateful to have gotten to experience all of this, especially since it was never my intention or my dream to go into aviation. Thanks for joining me today on my trip down memory lane. This episode really brought a smile to my face. I hope it serves as a reminder to you that no matter what the path looks like to have gotten you to where you are today, you should take some time to look back on it and cherish the memories you've made along the way. Until next week, my friends remember that celebrities are just people like you and me. Say hi and make eye contact to those you meet and take note of memories you have so that you can share them with others.