



Storytelling Tips

Context ~ Challenge ~ Conclusion

Avoid the Traps

“My story is boring.” “I don’t have any.” “I have too many to pick from.” This isn’t Broadway or Hollywood. This is real life. Just share something real. If you need some sparks to get your mind going, check out the attached idea sheet. But don’t limit yourself to those; feel free to try something totally different!

Stories Make You Relatable

Stories are a true equalizer between you and your audience. They take you from being presenter and content expert to being a relatable person, just sharing with a group of people.

Connecting

If people can relate to you, you can connect with them. When you have a connection, you can make an impact. Storytelling is one of the most effective ways to connect with your audience. If your story makes *you* feel anything, chances are the *audience* will feel something, too. And if they are *feeling*, they are *connecting*.

Use Notes

Following an outline is totally acceptable in storytelling, as long as it’s an *outline*, not a script. An outline is just keywords that serve as reminders.

Storytelling 1. 2. 3.

The best stories present a situation, followed by a challenge and conclude with a resolve. Good stories can be happy, sad, scary or suspenseful. Think about how your story fits into these three steps:

- 1. CONTEXT:** Set the stage. Describe the situation, the characters and the environment. What was your state of mind? How did you *feel*?
- 2. CHALLENGE:** What was the problem, issue or conflict? Did it impact you or others? How did it make you *feel*?
- 3. CONCLUSION:** What happened? How did it get resolved? What’s the current status? Did you learn anything from it? Did it *impact* you?



Storytelling Sparks

Gift

Think of a time when you received a gift or praise that you did not expect or feel you deserved. How did that make you feel?

That night

What happened that night you didn't tell your parents about?
Did they ever find out?

Trouble

Did you ever get into big trouble by doing something you were clearly told *not* to do? Have you passed along similar advice?

Sickness

Was there a time when you got very sick at the worst possible moment or on the most inconvenient day?

First impressions

Did you ever misjudge someone? Was your first impression completely different from your lasting impression? Has that had an impact on you?

Winning

Have you ever been so close to a victory, only to find out you didn't win? Do you feel the same way about it now as you did at the time? Why?

First crush/First best friend

Why do you think you made that very first connection with someone? What was it about him or her that drew you together?

Worst haircut/Wardrobe malfunction

Did you get a terrible haircut at the worst possible time? Was your button open or your fly down? How and when did you find out and what did you do?

*Based on *Telling Your Own Stories* by Donald Davis



Story Ideas for Business

We all have a million stories, until we're asked to tell one on demand. Don't worry; you have plenty! Here are some ideas to get your mind going.

What was one of the most unique, most rewarding, scariest or most fun days/experiences you ever had on the job?

What made that day so different? Why did it impact you so much?
Did you learn anything from it? Do you still think about it?

What was your best day/time period at work? Or Worst?

What led up to the events of the day? What happened that day/time period?
How did it affect you-make you feel? Why do you remember it?
What did you learn from it?

How did you come to choose your current career?

Did anything happen as a child that pointed you in that direction?
Was it random chance that brought you to this job?

How have you positively impacted a customer or co-worker?

How did you make a difference?
How did it make you feel? How do you think it made them feel?

What was your dream job growing up and (if you're not doing that) what is it about *this* job that connects you to that original dream?

Talk about that evolution from the beginning until now.

Have you experienced the product or service you offer?

What was it like on the best day? How did it make you feel?
Why do you remember that time in particular?

What lessons do you use at work that you learned from your family or friends?

Sometimes the most basic life lessons or experiences come in handy on the job.
Do you find yourself referencing things you learned from those close to you?
Describe a time that happened on the job.