

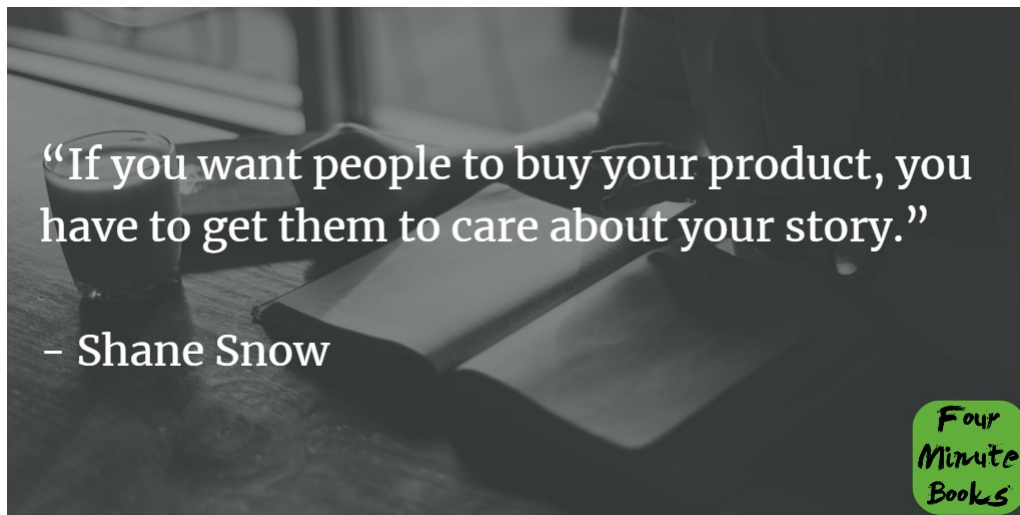
The Storytelling Edge Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *The Storytelling Edge* will boost your communication and persuasiveness skills by showing you how to tell powerful narratives in a convincing way and giving examples of why you should.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



It's 2012 and American musician Amanda Palmer is standing on a street corner in Melbourne. She's recording a video of her story by showing a series of signs for her Kickstarter campaign. They tell of how she's left her label and wants to be independent and pay her collaborators. Within 30 days, her Kickstarter has brought in \$1.2 million. This was the start of her solo music career.

That's just one example of how powerfully stories can influence people. Throughout time we've seen great narratives persuade people to change, make ideas catch on, and build up the platforms of great leaders. The good news for us is that storytelling isn't a gift. We can learn this mighty tool of communication.

If you want to become a great storyteller, look no further than Shane Snow and Joe Lazauskas's *The Storytelling Edge: How to Transform Your Business, Stop Screaming into the Void, and Make People Love You*. After these tips, you're going to become a master at getting people to listen to your message.

Here are 3 of my favorite lessons from this book:

1. Making a statement is easy but inefficient, to really stand out you need to use the power that stories have to make connections in people's minds.
2. When it comes to giving narratives, fluency is a more powerful motivator than complexity.
3. How you publish your content is just as important as what you say, maybe more.

Let's dive right into these great lessons on storytelling!

Lesson 1: Stories have the power to make ideas stick in people's minds.

Jacques Prevert, a French poet, once crossed paths with a blind beggar many years ago. Discovering that the poor man wasn't having much success, Jacques offered to re-write the sign the man was holding. Upon meeting two weeks later, the beggar happily exclaimed how his cup was now always full.

What message did Jacques write to have such a powerful change in the man's condition? He simply wrote, "Spring is coming, but I won't see it." This small statement made a big difference in the blind man's donations, but why?

In scientific terms, the reason is that "neurons that fire together, wire together." **More simply, as the number of parts of our brains that engage with a narrative increase, so do the chances that we'll remember it.** And stories light up our minds unlike anything else.

Think back to your teenage years in health class. Imagine you've got a teacher giving you statistics about the dangers of drunk driving. Doesn't sound very exciting or memorable, does it?

But let's say that instead, you've got a teacher who shows you pictures of a nice young man similar to your age. You learn that he was a good kid, but that he began taking drugs to make himself feel better about problems at home.

In the next image, you see a miserable, sickly man. This is the young man from before, but 10 years after starting drugs. Your teacher iterates how dangerous drugs are. It'll be easy to remember the lesson in this case, won't it?

Lesson 2: If you favor fluency over complexity, your audience will receive your narratives better.

Are you familiar with reading-level calculators? You put in a piece of work and the algorithm spits out how advanced it is to read. What would you imagine the results would be if you put in the work of a great writer like Ernest Hemingway or J.K. Rowling? Pretty intricate and

high-level, right?

Actually, the greatest writers throughout history all get lower reading levels than you might think. Hemingway's work, for example, is at a fourth-grade reading level. In other words, the average ten-year-old can comprehend it! In analyzing multiple novelists, the authors found similar results for all of the most notable writers.

To tell great stories you need to be clear and fluent. **That means getting to the point quickly and throwing out everything that stands in the way of doing so.** Great communicators focus more on the story than anything else, no matter what realm they are in.

Take *Star Wars* for example. Editors of the earliest films in this saga made the storyline more punchy with quick cuts and transitions. Prior to *A New Hope*, the sci-fi genre had a reputation for being slow, with dramatic pauses. But the editing team of this movie's work began the fast-paced stories we expect of science fiction movies today.

Lesson 3: Publish with the create, connect, optimize pattern to make sure your content has a significant impact on your fans.

Let's go back to Italy in the sixteenth-century. At odds with each other and wanting power, wealthy families began using gossip as a weapon. Writers used this opportunity to scan cities like Milan for juicy news that they would then compile and print on presses to post wherever they could. This is where the original mass media business, called avvisi, began.

Because of their love of gossip, the people of Milan grew impatient for the newest information. Hand-written notes were faster, and writers soon began to use this instead of the printing presses. **From these events we can see the three steps to making the way you publish as efficient as possible:**

1. Create content
2. Connect with the people
3. Optimize

Avvisi writer's content creation came by their running about the city gathering all the rumors to publish. Connecting with their audience meant pinning the pamphlets to doors or lampposts. And their efforts to write by hand and get the information out in the same day was their way of optimizing.

A similar pattern happened more recently with the content-sharing site Upworthy. They became the fastest-growing media company in the world by following this same pattern.

Upworthy's content came from notable articles or videos that didn't get much traction. They would repackage these and put them on Facebook to connect with people. The last step was seeing what did the best, then researching like crazy to determine what methods were most effective. All their hard work paid off and the company grew 500% faster than any media business ever!

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The Storytelling Edge Review

Whoa, the tips given in *The Storytelling Edge* are extremely useful! As a blogger, I love the idea that the way you share your information makes a difference. It was especially fun to hear stories that were examples of the principles the authors were teaching!

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Who would I recommend The Storytelling Edge summary to?

The 59-year-old who wants a way to make their life lessons memorable to their grandchildren, the 31-year-old content creator who is looking to have a more memorable influence on their fans, and anyone who needs a way for their product or idea to stand out.