

Unlock the story from data

SECTION 2 – Story Design: How 2's



- How to develop story structure
- How to set up your story
- How to identify conflict
- How to create a valid story resolution
- How to pull your story design together

Section 2: Story Design

How to develop story structure



A person is sitting on a director's chair, holding a megaphone to their mouth. The person is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The image is in black and white, with a slightly grainy texture.

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People have forgotten how to tell a story.
Stories don't have a middle or an end any
more. They usually have a beginning that
never stops beginning.

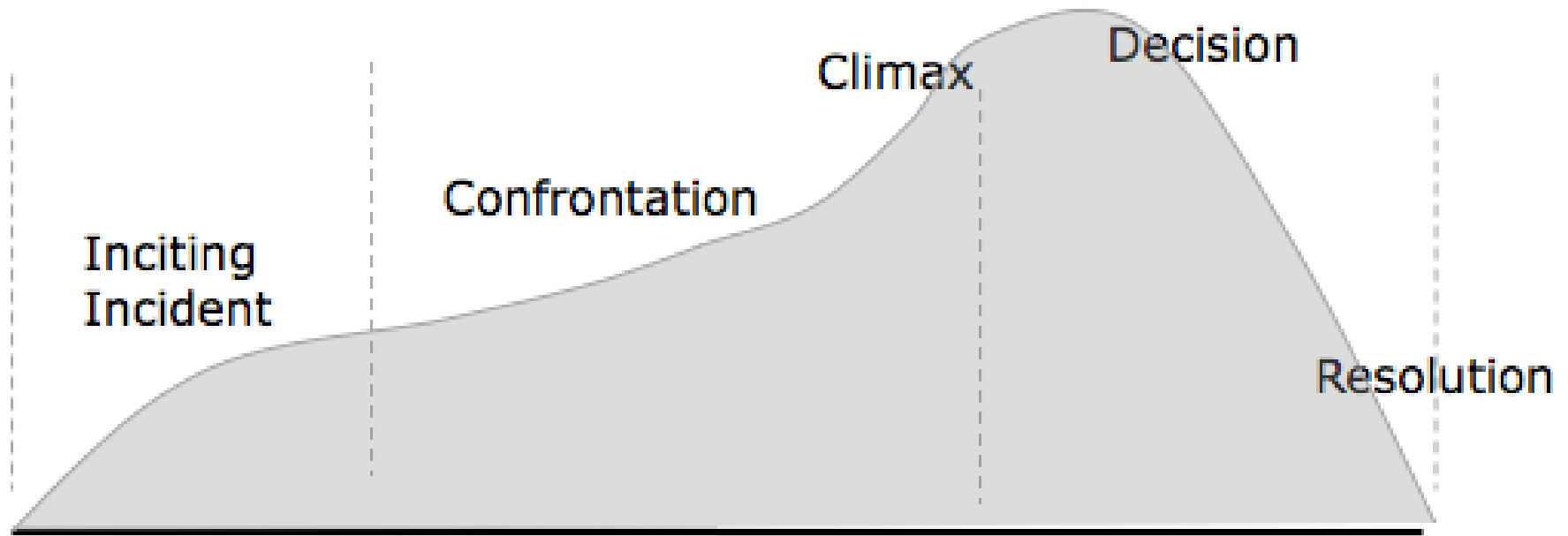
- STEVEN SPIELBERG

Hollywood Director, Producer and Screenwriter

Act 1: Setup

Act 2: Conflict

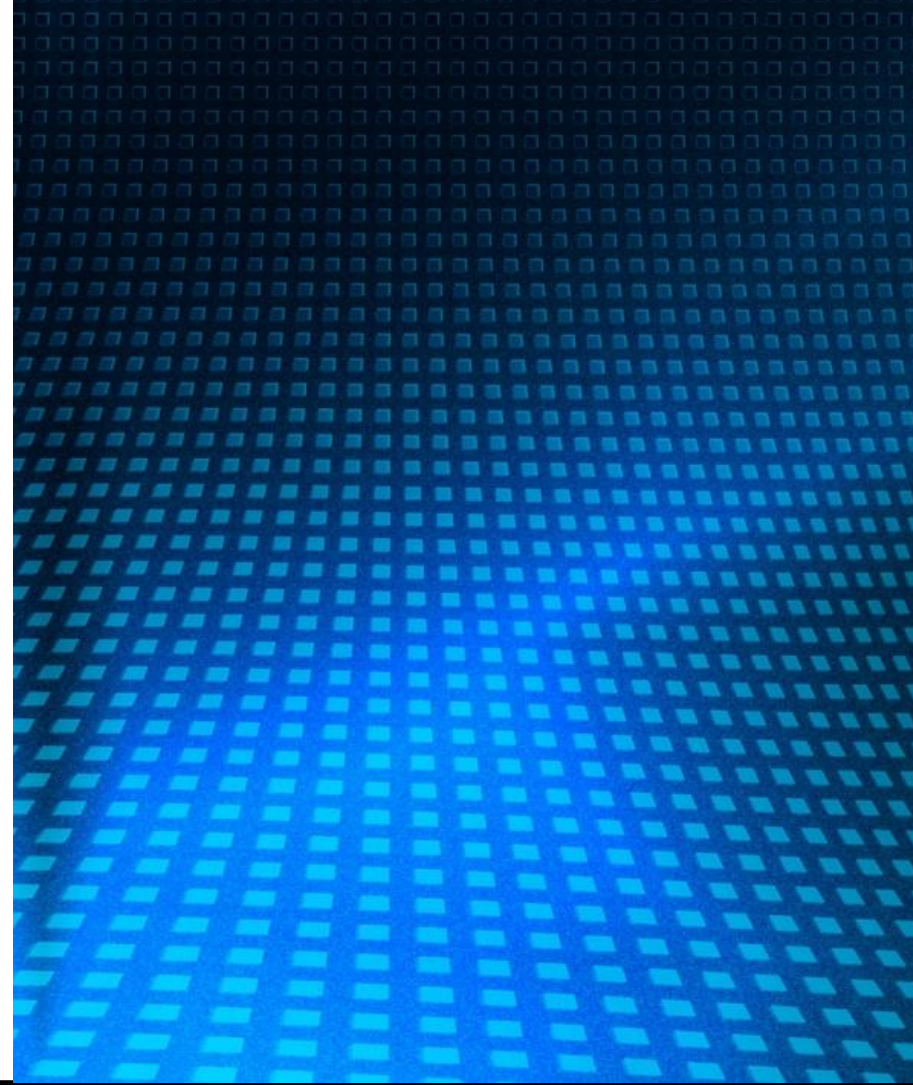
Act 3: Resolution



The 3-act structure has proven to be a valuable weapon in the arsenal of any writer

Without structure:

Boring recitation of
one piece of
information after
another



No structure. No story.

Why structure first:

Force thinking

Can't skip a stage

Becomes a habit



Designing the story structure from the outset helps prevent getting stuck in the set up stage.

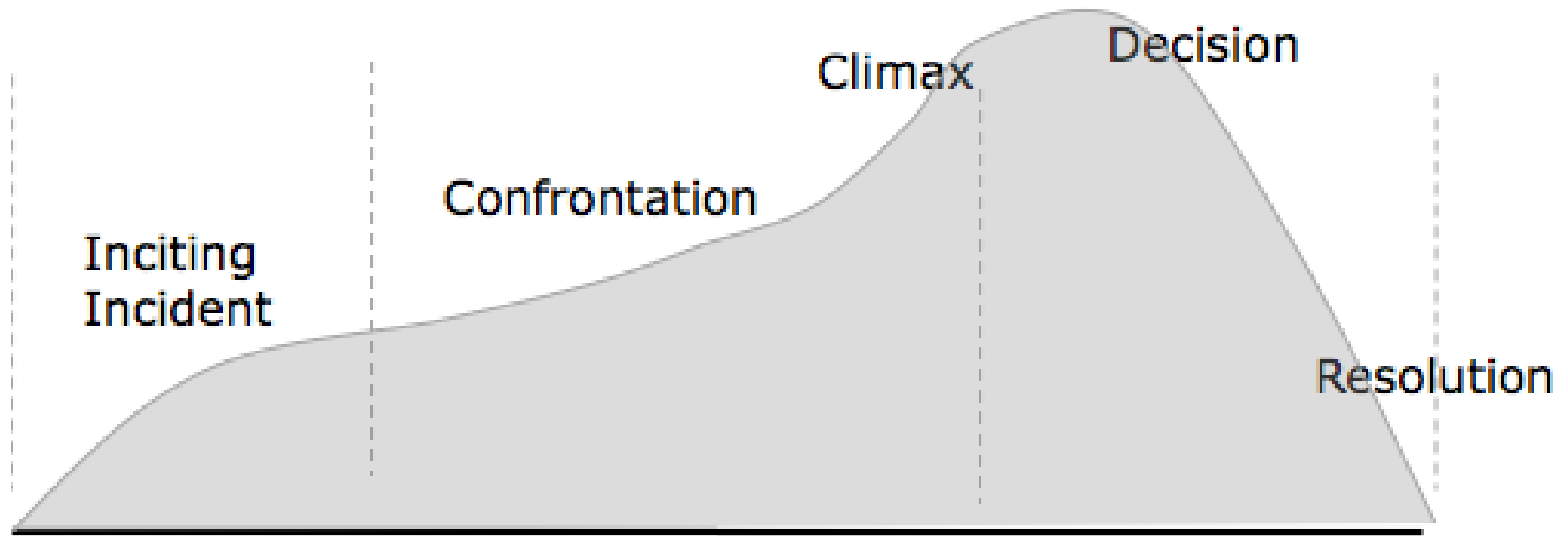
How to set up your story



Act 1: Setup

Act 2: Conflict

Act 3: Resolution



Act 1 is the story set up.

Act 1 helps define:

Characters

The context or the
world they live in

Why this story is
important



Act 1 primarily sets the scene and makes the audience care.

Character lens:

Customer

Product

Brand

User



Your characters will depend on the lens through which you want to tell the story

Context matters:

Journey so far

Expectations

Ambitions



Your character doesn't live in vacuum. Bringing to life their world highlights important context for your story.

Reason matters:

Link to business goal

Align to strategy

Fit with ambitions



There needs to be a reason you are telling this story. The reason needs to be important for your audience.

Growth stories:

Acquisition

Upsell

Retention

Cost saving

Risk reduction



Growth stories are a popular archetype in business.

How to identify conflict





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The cat sat on the mat is not a story. The
cat sat on the other cat's mat is a story.

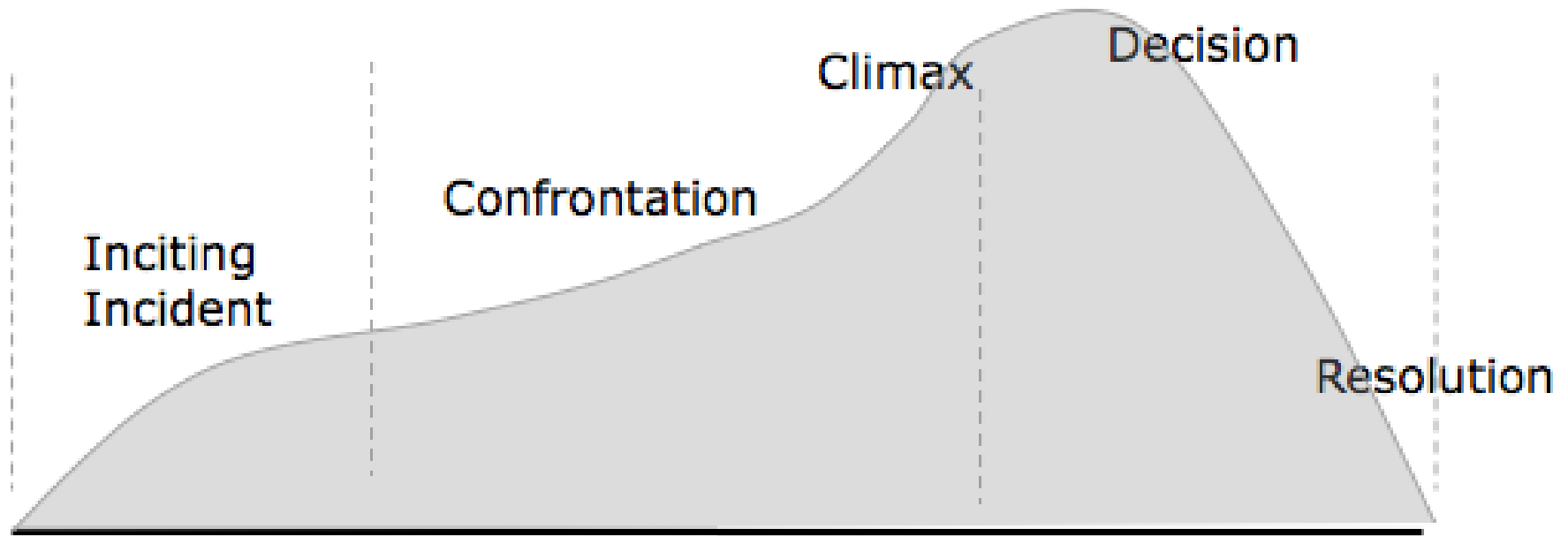
- JOHN LE CARRE

International Best Selling Author

Act 1: Setup

Act 2: Conflict

Act 3: Resolution



Conflict is key to any story arc. It is what provides interest and momentum.

Where to look:

Formal brief

Conversations

Anomalies in data

Surprises in data

Response to data



There are a number of places you can search for sources of tension in your work .

Conflict archetypes:

Man vs. Man

Man vs. Nature,

Man vs. Society

Man vs. Self

Man vs. Technology



There are typical conflict archetypes that exist.

Business conflict:

Brand v Brand

Company v Regulator

Product v Customer

Brand v Company



Similar tensions exist in a lot of the business problems.

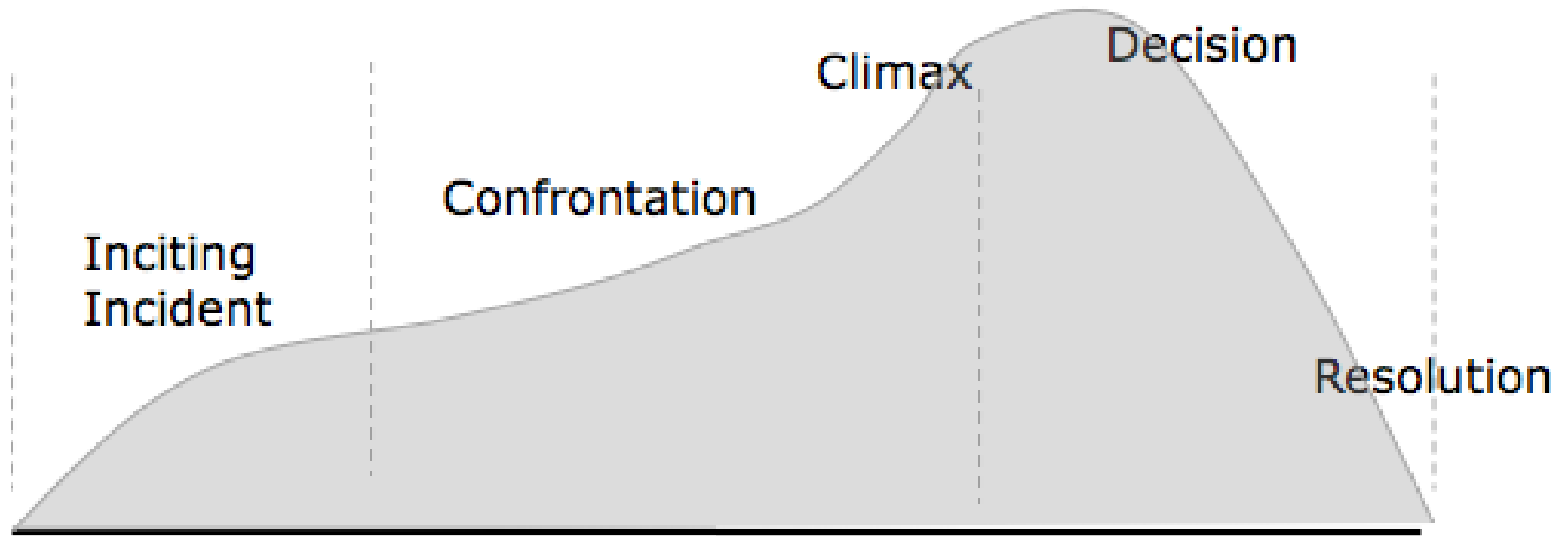
How to resolve your story



Act 1: Setup

Act 2: Conflict

Act 3: Resolution

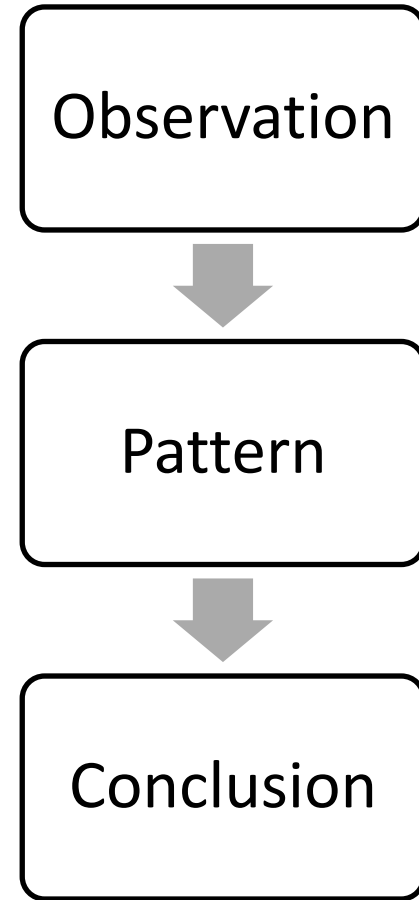


Every story needs an ending.

Inductive analysis:

Get lost in the detail

Detracts from the
answer



Inductive approach means the observations are the star, not the conclusion.

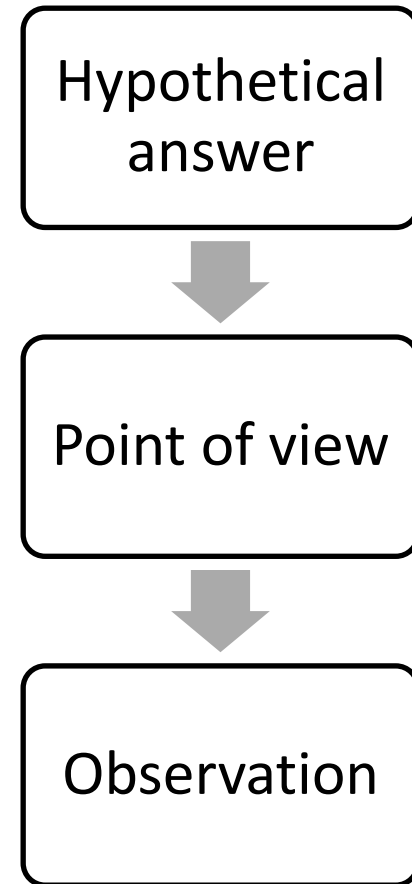
Deductive analysis:

Large volumes

Multiple sources

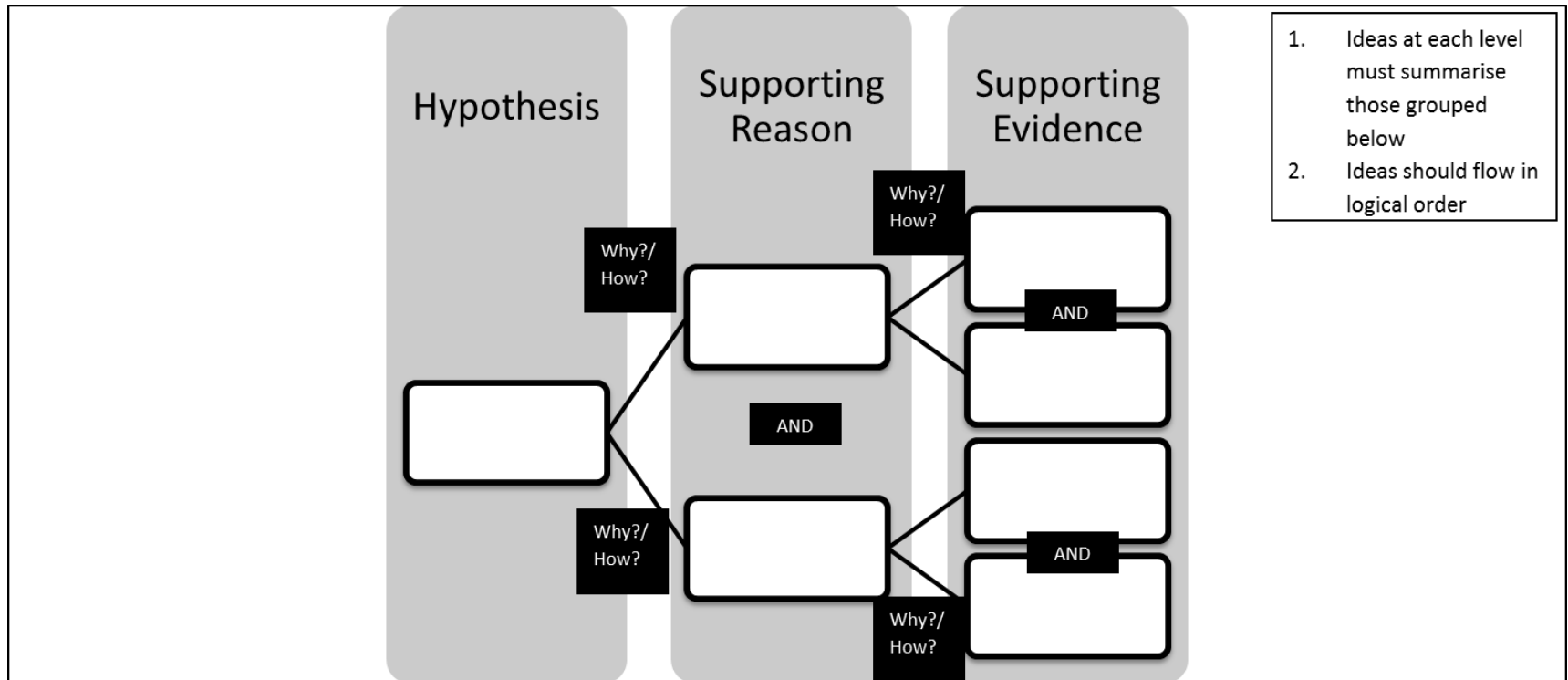
Bite sized chunks

High level story



Deductive approach means the answer is the star.

Tree approach:



You can get to your resolution using the Tree approach.

How to pull your story design together



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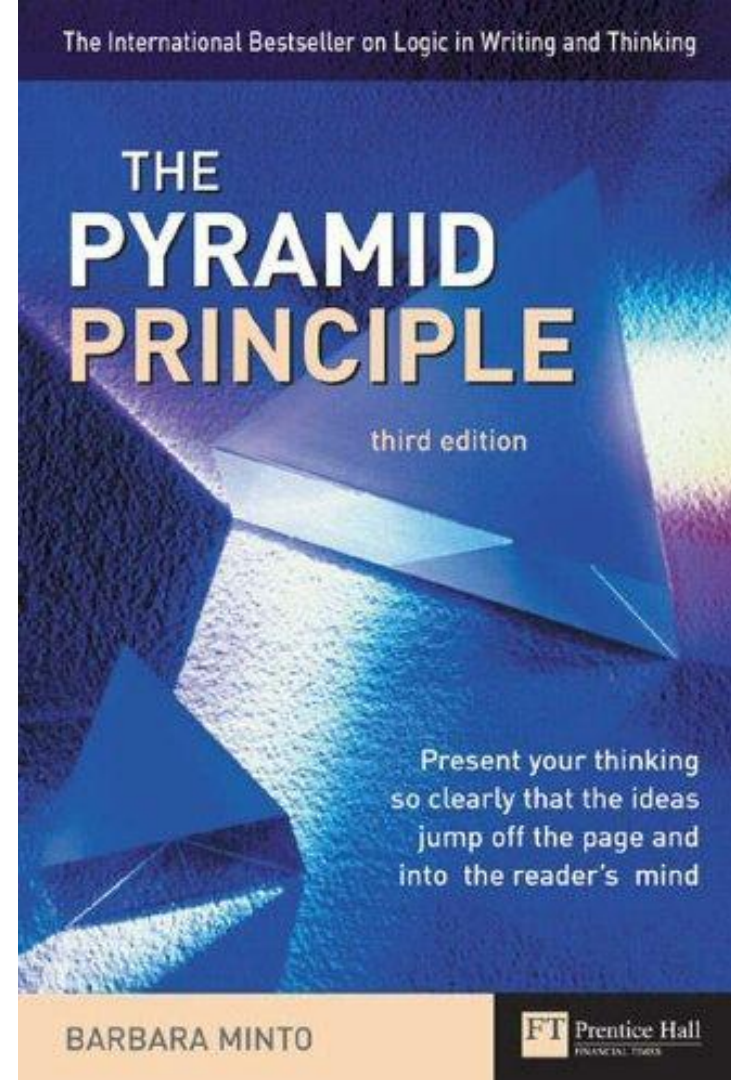
If we could improve just one things about the presentations and reports we receive it would be a clear and concise message.

INSIGHT CLIENT

Unilever

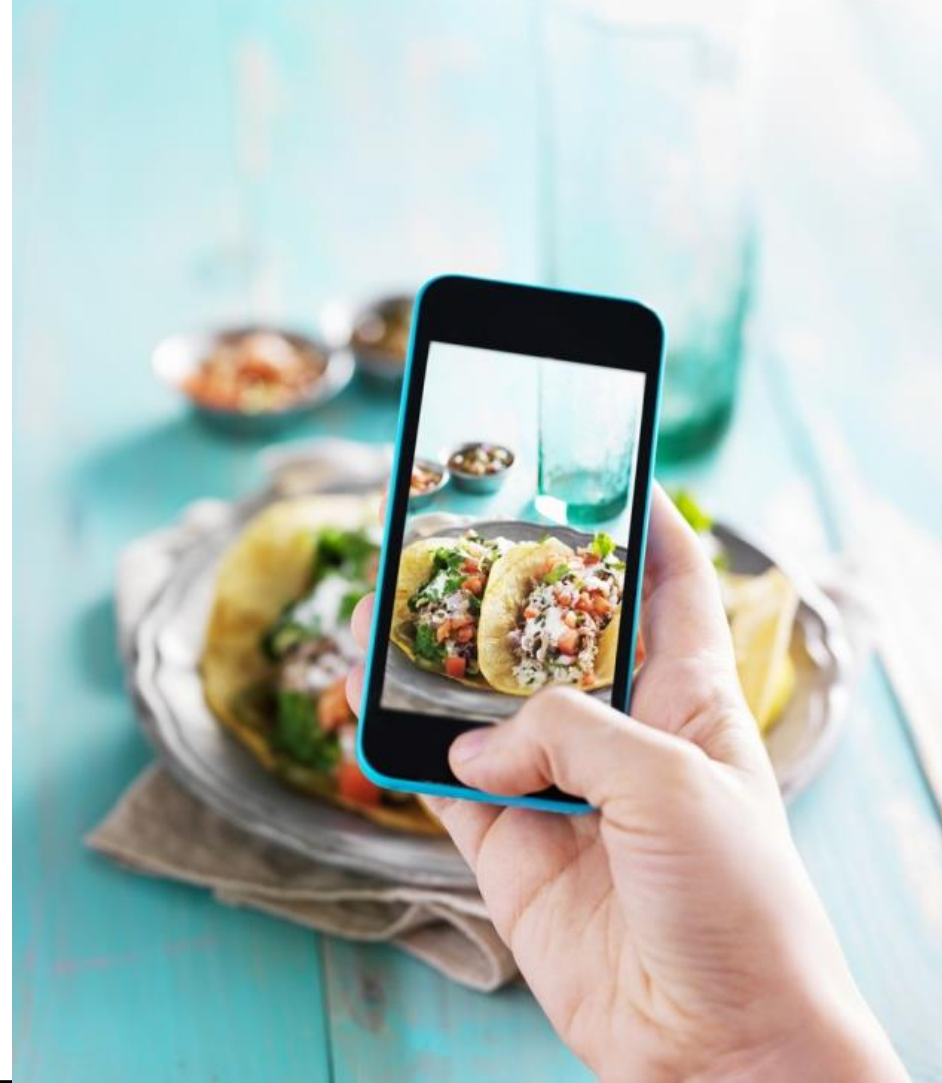
SCQA is:

A useful framework
to help you to quickly
identify your
message



We recommend using SCQA technique from The Pyramid Principle to frame your message

S is for:
Situation



Firstly you need to define what your story is trying to help the audience with

C is for:
Complication



Secondly, you need to focus on why this story is important.

Q and A is for:
Question
+
Answer



Finally, you need to create a message that helps solve this problem.

S: Cereal brand X has been the market leader in children's breakfasts for the last ten years.

C: A new brand has entered the market and is investing in a major advertising and promotional campaign.

Q: How much impact Brand Y have on the market leader's share?

A: The new brand launch will have minimum impact due to brand preference.

An example of SCQA in practice