Organisational Storytelling

"Igniting action in knowledge-era organisations"
- Steve Denning

Marcus Birkenkrahe

What's this about? Stories? Fairy Tales?

Watch the "Introduction to Storytelling" from Pixar Animation Studios and let's discuss if and how this could be relevant for business in general and for your consulting report in particular!

YOU MUST BE BLOODY JOKING!?

Not joking.

☐ Sample story by Richard Buckland

☐ Nancy Duarte: engaging through storytelling

☐ Steve Denning: leading through storytelling

☐ Student examples: video prototypes

☐ Team exercise: make your own prototype

Richard Buckland: let me tell you a story...

Notice what he's saying and what he's doing

Nancy Duarte: engage readers and viewers

How could you use story to engage in your report?

Now, this was cosy storytelling.

Writers with guns
(here: Hunter S. Thompson)

Main organisational purpose: igniting action

Steve Denning: leaders tell stories

«The choice for leaders in business and organizations is not whether to be involved in storytelling — they can hardly do otherwise—but rather whether to use storytelling unwittingly and clumsily, or intelligently and skillfully.»

What are the key criteria for leadership storytelling?

Telling Tales In Companies (Denning, 2004)

If your objective is:	You will need a story that:	In telling it, you will need to:	Your story will inspire such responses as:
Sparking action	Describes how a successful change was implemented in the past, but allows listeners to imagine how it might work in their situation.	Avoid excessive detail that will take the audience's mind off its own challenge	"Just imagine…" "What if…"
Communicating who you are	Provides audience-engaging drama and reveals some strength or vulnerability from your past	Include meaningful details, but also make sure the audience has the time and inclination to hear your story.	"I didn't know that about him!" "Now I see what she's driving at."
Transmitting values	Feels familiar to the audience and will prompt discussion about the issues raised by the value being promoted	Use believable (though perhaps hypothetical) characters and situations, and never forget that the story must be consistent with your own actions.	"That's so right!" "Why don't we do that all the time?"
Fostering collaboration	Movingly recounts a situation that listeners have also experienced and that prompts them to share their own stories about the topic.	Ensure that a set agenda doesn't squelch this swapping of stories—and that you have an action plan ready to tap the energy unleashed by this narrative chain reaction.	"That reminds me of the time that I…" "Hey, I've got a story like that."
Taming the grapevine	Highlights, often through the use of gentle humor, some aspect of a rumor that reveals it to be untrue or unlikely.	Avoid the temptation to be mean-spirited, and be sure that the rumor is indeed false	"No kidding!" "I'd never thought about it like that before!"
Sharing knowledge	Focuses on mistakes made and shows in some detail how they were corrected, with an explanation of why the solution worked	Solicit alternative—and possibly better—solutions.	"There but for the grace of God…" "Wow! We'd better watch that from now on."
Leading people into the future	Evokes the future you want to create without providing excessive detail that will only turn out to be wrong	Be sure of your storytelling skills (Otherwise, use a story in which the past can serve as a springboard to the future.)	"When do we start?" "Let's do it!"

Storytelling and videoprototyping

Story videoprototype for startup process model

Storytelling

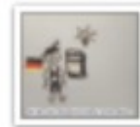1 This is Matthias from Germany

2 Matthias is writing his Master thesis

3 Matthias doesn't know if hiw English is correct

4 Matthias has a great idea

5 He uploads his thesis to proofster

6 Thesis proofread in the US

7 William corrects Matthias' thesis

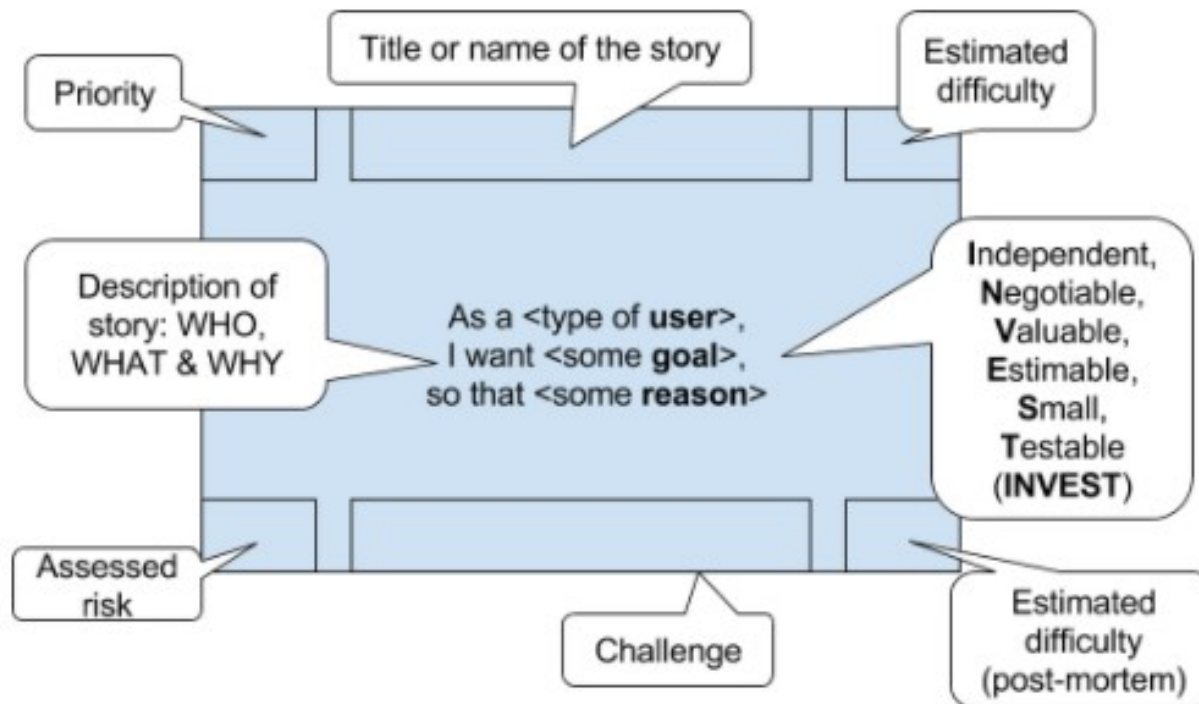8 William sends corrected thesis back

9 Matthias is happy with corrected version

10 William receives his fee

Next: Create User Stories

In agile project management, user stories are used to generate tasks for the team to complete & monitor

Any questions?