

Three-Layer Storytelling

The knowledge you need to tell a story that compels an audience — from sales decks to blog posts to marketing strategies to TV commercials.

To tell stories to other people, you first have to tell the story to yourself. Sounds simple, but has the benefit of being true — and for everything from sales decks to blog posts to marketing strategies to TV commercials.

Layer One: Knowing What You Want to Say

That's the first layer of the Three-Layer Storytelling concept: knowing what you want to say. Everybody appreciates this layer, because everybody has something to say, just as everybody is armed with the business end of a digestive tract.

Layer Two: Knowing Your Listener

But stories have listeners, and different types of listeners respond to different types of stories. The second layer is knowing who your listener is, and what moves them.

This layer is more difficult to appreciate, because it takes effort to understand other people. The payoff, however, is the advantage of knowledge. Once you know who you're telling stories to, you can revise your story to meet your listener where they are.

Layer Three: Crafting the Story to Fit the Audience

That's the third layer: the crafting of the story to fit the audience. Few people appreciate this layer. It provides none of the explosive joys of mental flatulence, or the quiet satisfaction of knowledge.

But if you get it right, you'll express yourself through the needs of the audience, and that sets the foundation for a trust. Which, of course, is what every productive relationship is based on.