

Transcript

What makes a good story? That's a loaded question, right? Let's try it like this: what are some of your favorite stories? I personally love Harry Potter and I'm obsessed with Stranger Things. Seriously, I binge-watched that over a weekend. So, what makes these stories good? Where do I start? I love the characters, the setting, the dialogue, and a good quest. When the main character has this super important mission and all her friends rally around her to take down the bad guy, that's the best.

But storytelling is hard. Trying to figure out all these things together at once – what kind of quest you want to share, how do you want to share it, where your characters are, what are their backgrounds – it's a lot. Writers and authors focus on defining that quest for their characters.

Now, here's the exciting part – telling stories every single day, even at work. I get to tell stories, but I tell them with data. That's where I'd like to spend our time today: the power of effective data storytelling. Data storytelling and storytelling – they're exactly the same; they follow the same starting points and the same execution.

Data, it's a collection of facts that describe something. We're surrounded by data. More data has been produced in the last two years than in the entire previous history of humankind. But less than half a percent of this data is ever used. That's almost like living in a universe with billions of planets but deciding that we're only gonna use one to sustain life. It's incredible yet underutilized.

Data experts, the people that spend thousands of hours mastering this art, are some of the world's best storytellers. The key to being a good data storyteller? Focus and understanding of the problem you're trying to solve, also known as having a clear quest. And that's just step one.

Today, I'd like to share a framework I use to tell stories with data. I'll share it with one simple objective: to encourage everyone to talk about data, to use it, and most exciting of all, tell compelling stories with it. So, let's begin the journey to tell an effective story with data.

There are three parts in this specific order: the problem, the solution, and the inputs. Chapter one, the problem: if Albert Einstein had one hour to save our planet, he'd spend 59 minutes defining the problem and only one minute actually saving the world. It's crucial to define what you're solving for. For instance, at Soy Milk Queen, revenue has been down. The quest? Determine the worst-selling ice cream flavor.

Chapter two, the solution: making that solution useful and actionable. Our protagonists' game plan – what will solve the problem? At the heart of this is understanding the solution's merits and the best toolkit for success. Finally, Chapter three, understanding what your inputs actually are. Getting a clear understanding of the inputs needed for your solution, for instance, data about ice cream sales.

So, we agree – the best stories, the ones we run home to tell, or the ones that take both the Oscar and the Nobel Prize – those stories have a plot twist. A moment that fundamentally changes the narrative. In data storytelling, it's that piece of data evidence that changes everything. It's simple, it's creative, and it has the power to be incredibly compelling. I urge you to give this framework a shot. Whether it relates to data or not, it has the potential to transform storytelling.