

Know your audience

DATA STORYTELLING CONCEPTS



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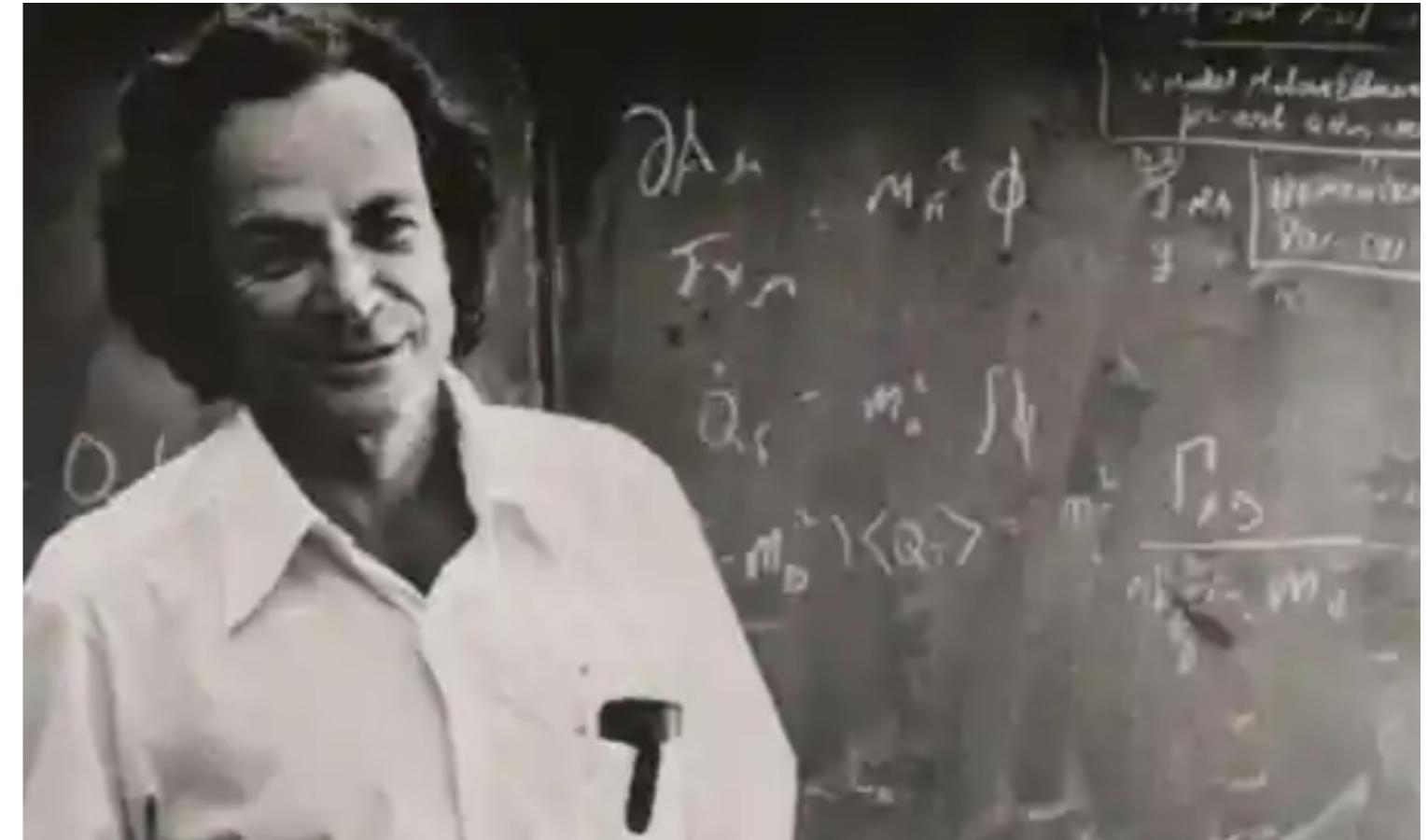
How to recognize a non-technical audience

- Audiences tend to be either technically informed or non-technical
- Non-technical audiences are simply not familiar with the technology discussed
- Avoid jargon and offer more visuals



Know your subject matter

- Study how experts in your field communicate
- If you can teach your subject then you understand it
- Break it down to the most basic elements



Take the audience's perspective

- What does your audience want to know
- What problems is your audience trying to solve
- Even non-technical people may be briefed by technical experts daily
- Avoid technical jargon
- Who is the decision maker?



Conciseness is key

- A simpler, concise approach is effective
- Technical details work best in footnotes
- Good text messages are clear and concise
- Highlight just a few main points
- Limit yourself to three or four sentences per statement
- Use clear examples



Bitterroot Surgery Center

Hi Mary, we hope you're feeling better today! Can you please share an update of your healing progress for us to evaluate you?

Hi, I'm feeling better today and the bruising and swelling have improved around my incision. I will upload photos of it to the portal for evaluation too!

Clarity in all things

- Be as clear as possible
- You can't elicit emotion without first being understood
- Anticipate possible questions and ask for them at the end



Set the scene

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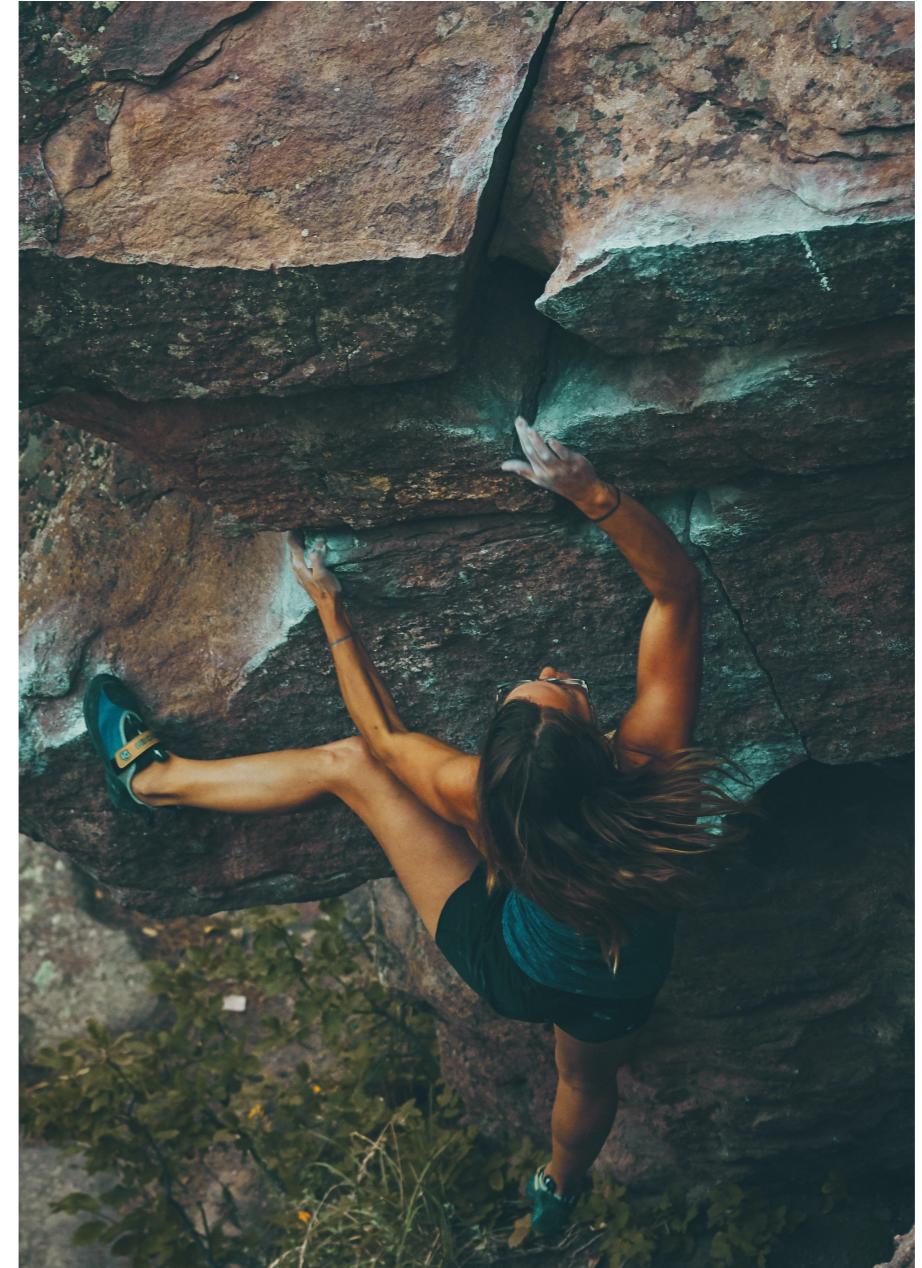
Operational insights vs. strategic insights

- Operational insights require technical knowledge but limited accountability
- Strategic insights require non-technical knowledge but greater accountability
- Both types of insights are important



The exposition or challenge

- The exposition or challenge is out front
- Sets the mood, introduces characters
- "Why are we here?"
- Can be dramatic or low-key depending on the situation
- Data story relevance to your audience is key

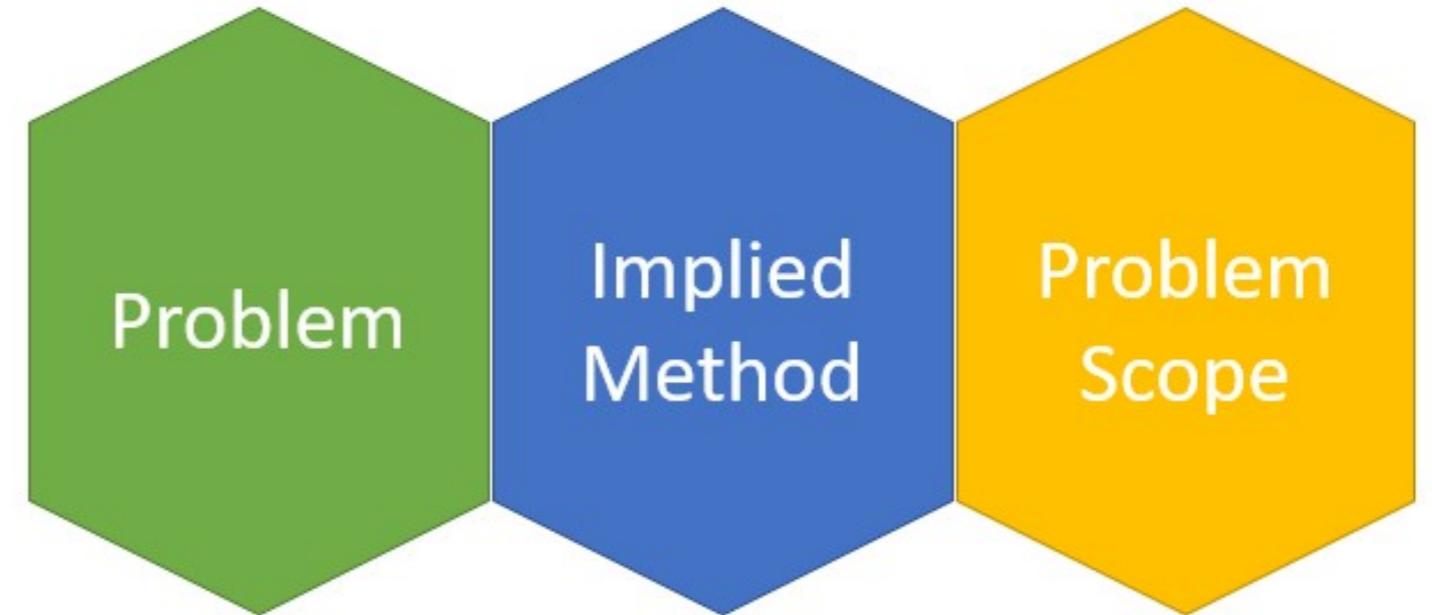


Start to pull your audience in



A problem statement

- The problem itself
- An implied method of taking on the problem
- The scope of a problem



One problem at a time

- Define the problem in one or two sentences
- Defining the problem is as important as defining an audience
- Avoid trying to investigate multiple problems for one data story



Building tension

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Keywords

- Specific memorable words or phrases
- Key words create a buzz that is passed from person to person
- Subtle and deliberate use is advised

buzzwords
acceptable
message
summarize
specific
story ^{foreign or} phrases keywords
text language subtle
words slang speech

Inductive reasoning vs. deductive reasoning

- Inductive reasoning is the process of making predictions based on evidence.
- Inductive reasoning leads to a new theory.
- Deductive reasoning seeks to test an existing theory.
- Inductive reasoning moves from specific observations to broad generalizations, and deductive reasoning is the other way around.



Introducing observations via inductive reasoning

- Inductive reasoning makes predictions based on evidence
- Use words like "maybe" or "probably"
- Share your research process



Be methodical, not cheesy

- Calm, even tones
- Cool professional demeanor
- Your audience is fundamentally on your side



The climax and moving forward

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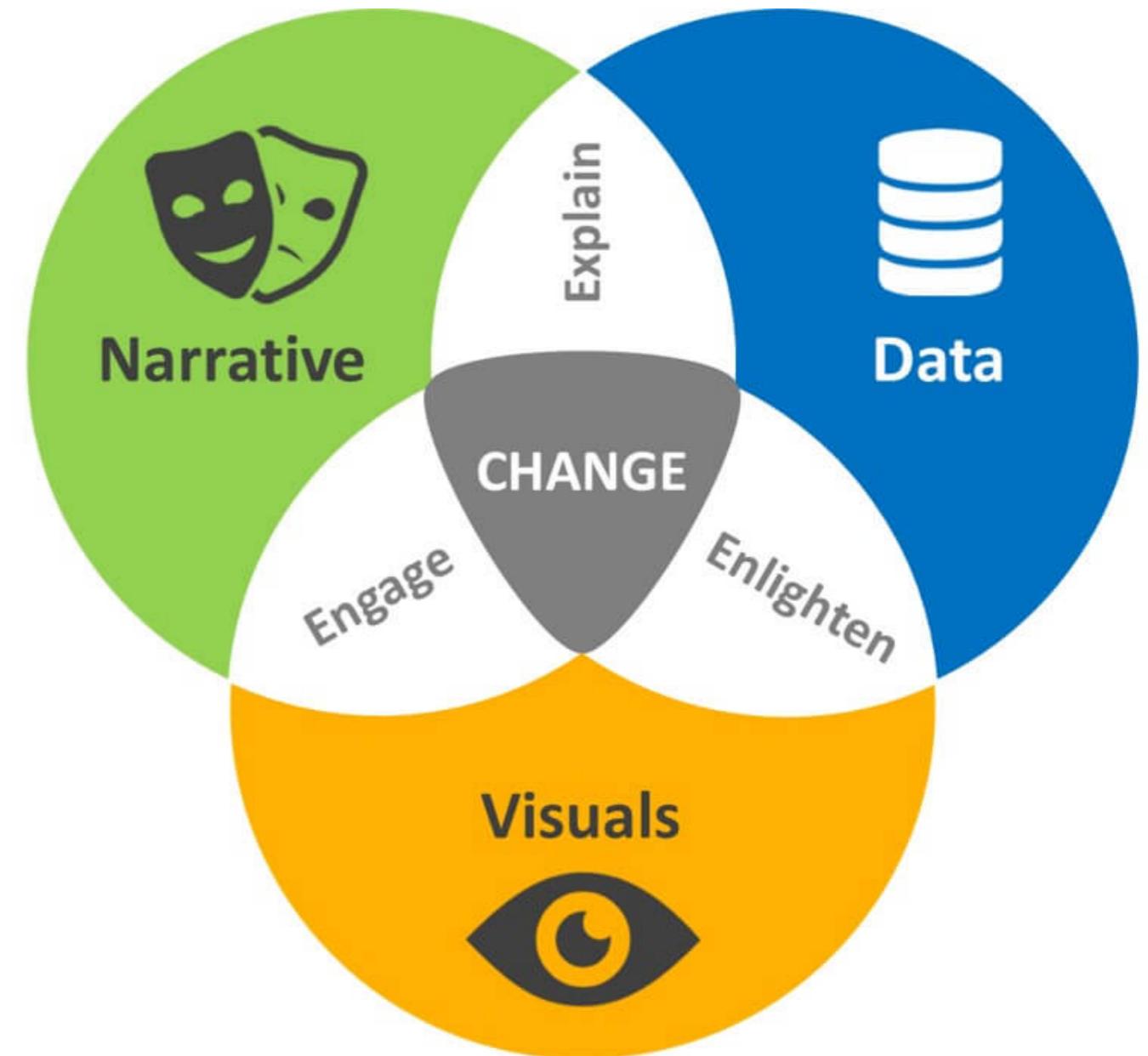
Definitions

- Resolution
 - gives a way to solve the conflict
- Actionable Insight
 - previously unrecognized patterns discovered during data analysis
- Call to Action (CTA)
 - a prompt to encourage an immediate audience response
- Kaizen
 - small incremental changes



Changing Behaviors

- Data storytellers always have empathy for their audience
- Acknowledge that change is difficult
- Outline the first small step.
- Be prepared for a "no" or an alternate resolution



¹ <https://www.pathwaysinternational.com/2017/06/22/data-storytelling/>