

**Institute** of  
**Data**

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2025

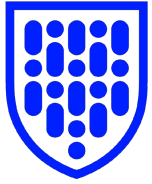


# Software Engineering

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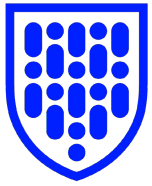
## Storytelling

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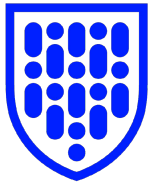
# Agenda

- The importance of storytelling as a skill
- A storytelling framework
- Activity
- Tips for effective delivery



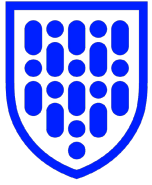
# The Importance of Storytelling as a Skill

- Storytelling is an important interpersonal skill for software professionals. It helps them to be effective in job interviews and perform their roles as software professionals.
- It enables the communication of complex ideas, the contextual situation and conflicting elements of the decision making process.



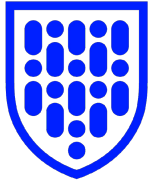
# The Importance of Storytelling as a Skill

- The use of emotion makes it easier for the audience to remain attentive, retain information and create interest as opposed to being presented with a list of facts.
- With good storytelling skills, a professional can gain buy-in from stakeholders, guide the agenda, influence decision making and ultimately achieve their objectives.



## Discussion

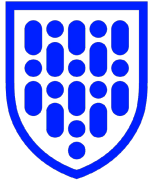
- Think of some of the best stories you have told or heard.
  - What are their main elements?
- Who are some of the great storytellers?
  - What makes them effective?
- Are there better ways of communicating complex ideas?



# A Storytelling Framework

- Theme
- Setting
- Character
- Conflict
- Plot

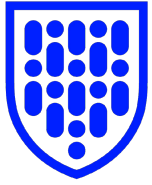




# Theme

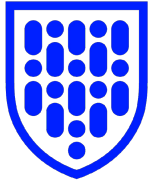
- What is your key message?
- What are you trying to convey?
- What's the moral of the story?
- Do you have examples of stories with a strong message?





# Setting

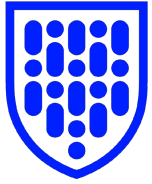
- Context
- Background
- History
- Feelings and emotions



# Character

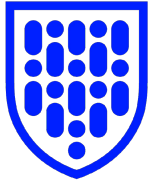
- Who is the Hero? You?
- Stakeholders
- What are their motivations, objectives, fears?





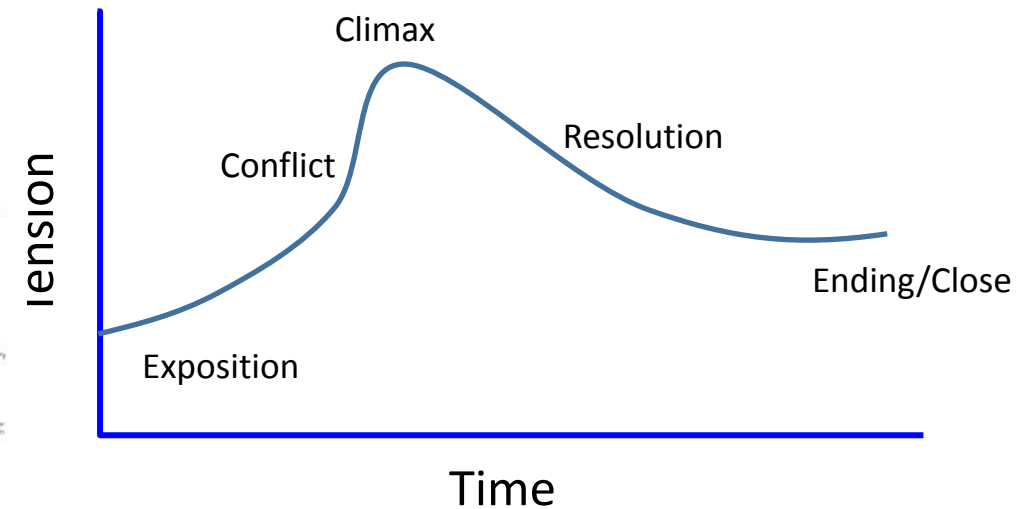
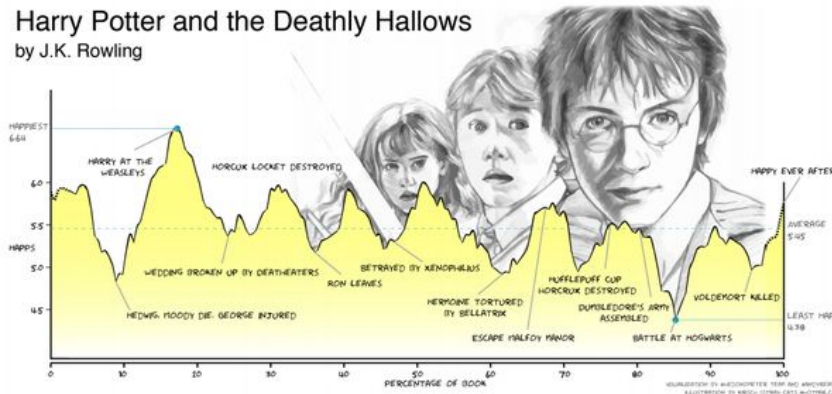
# Conflict

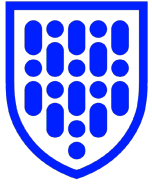
- Hero vs:
  - Someone else
  - Themselves
  - Technology
  - Society
  - Nature
- What is causing the conflict?
  - Scarce resources
  - Competition
  - Regulation
  - Profitability
  - Survival



# Plot

- Exposition (Introduce themes, character and context of upcoming conflict)
- Building tension and conflict
- Climax!
- Resolution and ending





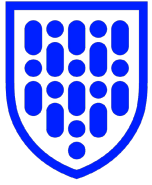
## Case study

- What makes the following compelling?
- What are the theme, setting, character(s), conflict and plot?



The magic washing machine | Hans Rosling

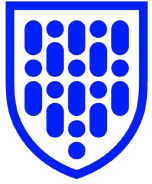
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZoKfap4g4w>



## Activity

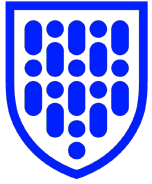
Tell a relevant story from your career

- Stand up and tell a story with no preparation
- Complete the Story Template from the next slide
- Retell the same story to the class and receive feedback



# Story Template

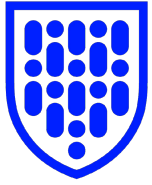
Section	Guiding Questions	Your Content
Theme	What are you trying to convey here?	
Setting	What is the background and context on the situation?	
Characters	Who are the key stakeholders and characters?	
Conflict	What's the problem?	
Plot	What happened?	



# Communication skills

- 55% of communication is body language, 38% are the communication skills and 7% is the content.
- Communication skills: Tone, Volume, Pitch, Rate of Speech, Pause. (from Vinh Giang, Communications coach)
  - It is helpful to engage your audience with questions and humour.

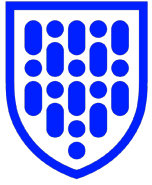




## Body Language

Use hand/body gestures and facial expressions to match the emotions you are trying to elicit from the audience

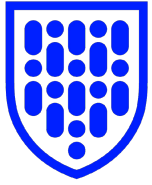




## Example: Vinh Giang

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTY6Q31slpQ>

- What are your thoughts about the content
- He is clearly very engaging
  - Why?
    - How is he using the communication skills?
    - How is he using body language?
    - What emotions does he express through these skills?



# Summary

- Storytelling is an important skill for software professionals to engage stakeholders
- We learnt a sample framework for effective delivery
  - Theme
  - Setting
  - Character
  - Conflict
  - Plot

# Questions?