

# The mechanics of good storytelling

## Sourcing stories

- movies/books, current events
- things that happened to a person close to you (friend, mentor, co-worker)
- a time you shined
- a time you blew it

## What makes a good story?

### Grab attention by starting with a hook (within 8 sec)

- something unusual, unexpected, or with some conflict

See what Steve Jobs did here? *What if... you could put 1000 songs into your pocket?*

### Keep attention by making a promise of change

- what you are about to listen to will change your life
- people want to go through a transformation
- tell a story of how you were changed through an experience

Help them answer this question: How is what I will learn going to make *me* better?

### Tune the message to your audience

- speak to them on *their* level

Identify their aspirations or fears and speak to those.

### Build trust by being authentic

- create a story with heart

Make it personal. Don't be clever. Be vulnerable and honest.

### Build suspense

- people want to work for their meal, they just don't want to acknowledge it
- you want them to **feel** the theme, the mission statement, instead of stating it outright

It is the well organised absence of information that draws us in

### Master the delivery by following the 3-part structure

- **beginning** (setup) → setup the ordinary world and explain the problem that you set out to solve
- **middle** (build) → solution: describe how you solved it
- **end** (payoff) → success: get excited about the success this produced

# Six types of stories

## Who I am stories

- let people know how you became the person you are today
- they ground your reality to their's
- they show the steps, anecdotes and experiences that created who you are today

Answer this question: What qualities earn you the right to influence this person?  
Then think of a story that demonstrates one (or more) of the qualities you listed.

## Why I am here stories

- important for speaking or presenting
- what is my purpose for being here?

Make them understand what is in it for *you*.

## Teaching stories

- they transports your listener into an experience that lets them feel, touch, hear, see, taste, and smell excellent performance
- think about Scrooge's ghosts, taking Scrooge on Teaching-story tours. Each ghost told a different Teaching story, allowing Scrooge to emotionally and mentally experience the subjective consequences of not changing his behaviour

A Teaching story is a no-risk demonstration. A trial-run by imagination.

## Vision stories

- communicate your vision for the future
- build a future story that pulls your audience to it
- don't overpromise: a good Vision story also validates the difficulties of achieving your vision

Tell a worthy, exciting future story, that reframes present difficulties as "worth it."

## Value in action stories

- tell a story about a time you had a chance to embody a value through actions
- it's not bragging: your goal is to tell stories about doing the "right" thing in tough circumstances
- take some time to think about the four most important values that guide your behaviour

Think about a difficult decision that left you unsure. In the end, what did you choose to do?  
If that action left you feeling like you did the "right" thing, you probably based your decision on a value.

## I know what you are thinking stories

- useful when you have to prompt or deal with objections people might have
- **validation** is the primary dynamic of the I-Know-What-You-Are-Thinking story

Share their "secret" suspicion in a story that first validates and then dispels these objections, without sounding defensive.

