

How business storytelling works

Sandeep Das

Sandeep das has worked in PwC, Accenture Strategy, Marico and BCG.

He is currently Global foresight lead for emerging markets at Mars Wrigley.

Storytelling as a tool, helps you bridge that critical gap by sounding authentic and building that missing level of trust.

A good story can hold a person's attention for a significant period of time.

As your grandmother explained to you, a story is a problem followed by a struggle followed by a resolution to the problem.

Future scenarios with the maximum role for storytelling

1. The globalization of popular culture
2. Digitization post the pandemic
3. Everyone is going to be an influencer
4. Everything meta, crypto, internet of the senses
5. The entrepreneurial dream

Most companies want to transform and 70 % of all transformations fail according to Harvard Business Review.

Reason why transformations fail is that humans don't like change. We don't like disruption to our routines, this gets more pronounced as we get older.

A framework for change management is all about reward, recognize, communicate and mandate

The human brain loves communication in groups of 3. Less than 3 and there is no pattern and more than 3 means your brain has to put more energy into it.

That's why the best CEOs always say .. Let me explain this in three steps or three ways, or these are three points.

Impact of storytelling on transformation

Framework

- Problem definition
- Anecdotes over numbers
- Scarcity bias
- Rule of 3
- Pop culture references
- Peak and theory

Implications for You

- Identify metric, from and trigger values
- Highlight anecdotal success stories
- Provide disproportionate attention while selecting and rewarding
- Why, what, ask from you?
- Leverage popular culture references
- End on a high

Storytelling for an entrepreneur

1. Define a transformative purpose
2. Go big on the ORIGIN stories
3. Color, image and metaphor
4. Generate buckets of empathy
5. Don't obsess with storytelling

Storytelling will become more sensory oriented , with greater involvement of sight, smell, touch, hearing and taste.

You tube stories is a good example

The future of brand storytelling is interactive

In B 2 B selling, one of the most powerful tools in selling a piece of work is to paint the future for the client leadership team.

In B 2 B selling, you should not go in for a pitch with more than 10 slides.

Storytelling for B 2 B corporate sales

Framework

- Clear problem statement
- Anecdotes over numbers
- Nested anecdotes
- Pop culture references
- Rule of 3
- Minimalism

Implication for you

- Identify the boundary conditions
- Build credibility
- Paint the future, use famous characters and cartoons
- 3 stages, 3 steps, 3 deliverables
- Carry 8-10 slides, not more

Common mistakes managers make in presentations

1. Text is too small
2. Not enough detail
3. Too much detail
4. Too many slides
5. Slides not customized to audience
6. Sentences are too long and verbose
7. Reading the matter on the slide
8. Talking too fast

The human mind cannot listen to a narrative for more than 20 minutes, that's why the best TED talks are about 15 minutes.

Ideal PowerPoint structure

1. Recap
2. Problem statement
3. Executive summary
4. 3 key takeaways
5. Decisions required
6. Next steps

Audiences for your presentations fall into four social styles:

1. Drivers – typically COOs, head of sales
2. Analytical – CFOs
3. Expressive – typically CMOS and people serving consumers
4. Amiable – HR and CEOs of companies with highly intelligent talent pools

We spend 3-4 hours a day, writing e mails or reading e mails. Be crisp with e mails.

Semiotics is an interesting branch of study, which in simple English translates to how signs and symbols create meaning.

Symbols are brought to life by company logos, they become a huge part of the brand experience.

One of the toughest jobs anywhere is to communicate bad news.

Semiotics led storytelling

1. Metaphors
2. Images
3. Symbols
4. Colors

Being funny is not funny.
If you have to be a master storyteller, then you
need to be good at using humor.

Leveraging humor in storytelling

Storytelling principle

- Power of anecdotes
- Popular culture references
- Twist in the end
- Minimalism
- Rule of 3

Used in corporate circles

- Cartoon strips
- Famous movie lines
- Program names, 2 truths and a lie
- Moment marketing on current affairs
- Avoid holy cows

David Phillips did a TED talk after analyzing 5000 speakers globally. His analysis:

“ You take a step forward towards your audience, you increase their focus towards you. You change the pace of what you are saying, you increase the audience focus towards you. By lowering your voice, you get anticipation from your audience. If you pause the audience gives you undivided attention.”

While doing public speeches, the slower you speak, the more impressive you become. The more minimalistic you are with words, the more impact you create.

Becoming a master orator

- Start and end with an anecdote
- Popular culture references
- Color, image and metaphor
- Embrace minimalism
- Follow the rule of 3
- Walk On

The single biggest principle that can be used to make your resume more attractive is minimalism.