



10 Tips on Storytelling

1. Re-live the experience – don't re-tell it.

Storytelling is about getting in touch with your emotions. Your audience will feel your emotions when you re-feel the experience. By allowing your feelings to come through, your audience will re-live your story with you.

2. Walk your talk.

Telling stories is about performance so to bring your story alive you need to rehearse it as you mean to tell it. Ideally standing up, moving about, using body language, vocal variety, facial expressions etc. You can start with a story idea written down but to perfect it in delivery and timing you need to walk your talk.

3. Stories should be short.

In this way your audience will quickly absorb and remember them. However, they must be entertaining, punchy, worth listening to and have a strong message too. Think of stories lasting between 1-2 minutes – just right for most audience's attention span.

4. What's your point?

In telling a story you set out to change the attitudes, behaviour or awareness amongst your audience so your story needs to make a point which is insightful, persuasive and memorable. Always know what the point is you want to make before finding your story. Make sure the story conveys this single point clearly and with impact.

5. Show enthusiasm.

The more enthusiastic you are in telling your story the more your audience enjoy it and connect with it. Don't believe your story isn't good enough. If it's a story worth telling, your enthusiasm and excitement in telling it will make a strong impact.

6. Be conversational.

"Once upon a time" is the traditional way to start telling a fairy story. It's spoken in a slow, meaningful way so the audience relax and their expectations are lifted. Business stories should be given the same vocal treatment. Your voice should be slower, richer and more expressive. Pause after key thoughts and make it a conversation –albeit a one-sided one.

7. A story-a-day.

Find a story every morning which will be your story for the day. Make sure you pass it on to colleagues, friends, family via phone, e-mail, text or face-to-face. You can find stories everywhere: media, internet, books, films, personal situations. If a story impacts on you it will almost certainly do the same with your audience.

8. Have characters.

Most stories involve more than one person so make sure you paint the pictures of all the characters in your story – learn to notice and appreciate the wonderful quirks that everyone has. In speaking dialogue be "in" when you're saying your lines so you're speaking as you normally do and "out" when you're saying another character's lines. Being "out" means you have become the other character in voice as well as body.

9. Personal stories are best.

If you need to choose between a personal story or a borrowed one, the personal story will always be the stronger. You'll remember it better, you'll express it more clearly and your audience will know it's yours. So the credibility will be greater.

10. Smile.

You can hear a person smiling. When a person tells a story with a smile on their face, subtle intonations in voice change. If you are smiling you will choose different words. Remember storytelling is entertainment-it should be fun.

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