



July 2010

Stories fuel imaginations.

Humans can talk to each other about their dreams and fears, fuelling each others' imaginations in a way no other animal can.

Through the stories we tell of our lives and experiences and the events that have marked us, we help others to imagine.

In Mozambique during the 1980's civil war, the author Henning Mankel tells us of a young man he saw, whose clothes were in tatters, who was very skinny and obviously hungry. "But this young man had used his imagination and the colours of roots and herbs to paint shoes on his feet, to keep and defend his dignity in some way."

As Mankel said, "it's important to tell his story because it could happen to all of us and it reminds us that we have many more ways of surviving than we may think. Human beings are very rationally made. If we didn't need imagination to survive we wouldn't have it."

We encourage you to tell your stories so that you can too fill the imaginations of others and help open their minds to what's possible.

And in moments of self doubt, don't forget to tell yourself some of your personal stories. They'll help re-build your confidence and show you a way forward.

Our thanks to Henning Mankel, The Times, May 22 2010.

Barry Graham and Sally Clare

"Well it's not a good way of dying, before you've told the end of your story." Citizen of Maputo, Mozambique

"There are just three essentials to a good story: humanity, a point and the storyteller." J Frank Dobie

Word Play

By playing with words you can become an even more effective communicator. Here's a recent example of word play from David Cameron, British PM which made his point very graphically to his audience of CEOs. "I do sometimes sense when I look at how we deal with international trade and trade promotion that we are playing softball while the rest of the world is playing hardball."

This reminds us of a much older analogy from Tim Melville Ross a former Director General of the Institute of Directors. He said: "Over the years I learnt there are two types of people – the 'radiators' and 'drains'. Radiators give themselves with enthusiasm to any project, whereas drains consume energy with negativity and moaning. Surround yourself with the former and you will succeed."

Martin Luther King illustrates his word skills here: "That old law about 'an eye for an eye' leaves everybody blind." And a recent headline in the UK Times: "We're in violent agreement."

Finally, a few to raise a smile: "The plan was simple, like my brother-in-law Phil. But unlike Phil, this plan just might work." "She grew on him like she was a colony of E. Coli, and he was room-temperature Canadian beef." "He was deeply in love. When she spoke, he thought he heard bells, as if she were a garbage truck backing up."

By using colourful analogies you make your thoughts more powerful.

"If I were two-faced, would I be wearing this one?" Abraham Lincoln

A diet of words

The six most important words:

“I admit I made a mistake”.

The five most important words:

“You did a good job”.

The four most important words:

“What is your opinion”?

The three most important words:

“If you please”.

The two most important words:

“Thank you”.

The one least important word:

“I”.

"Words are the most powerful drug used by mankind." Rudyard Kipling

A good read

Dan & Chip Heath best selling authors of “Made to Stick” have published a new book: “Switch – how to change things when change is hard”. [ISBN 979-1-84-794031-5].

They’ve ‘delved deep inside the human psyche’ to explain why ‘scepticism in others and our own caution and fear undermines our desire to improve and change’. You’ll meet Elephants and Riders. Elephants are our emotional side and riders our rational side.

There are lots of case examples to show how change can take place and inspire you to take the necessary action – not only for yourself but to help others around you – like a client, your boss or even your partner!

“Standing in the middle of the road is very dangerous – you can be knocked down by traffic going in either direction.”
Margaret Thatcher

Stories from our travels

We ran 8 “Storytelling in Business” workshops in Cairo and Dubai last month and heard some great stories that could be used to help persuade an audience to take action. Stories inspired by schooldays, family life, client experiences, fables and much more. We’d like to share two stories that happened to us whilst we were there.

The first one was in Cairo when the World Cup was on. Many of the Egyptians we met were supporters of England in the absence of their national team. However, there was no escaping the fact that England was playing disappointingly and one of our delegates said with a big smile on his face – and you don’t get bigger smiles than in Cairo - “England won’t win the football World Cup. Why not look to where you will have success? You have the two best Formula One drivers in the world - Hamilton and Button - give them your support”. And to prove his point, at time of writing they were 1st and 2nd in the drivers’ table. His positivity certainly cheered us up.

Our second story is of our time in Dubai. There is always something new to see and this time it was the Dubai Mall with the largest indoor Aquarium where you can swim with the sharks, the “Singing Fountains” that compete with anything on show in Las Vegas and the Burj Khalifa, at 2,717 feet high, the tallest building in the world. They’re all amazing. Dubai understands how to wow its customers. It’s such a vibrant media, advertising and marketing community. They even have their own Media City with a choice of Media Hotels where guests are given a free copy of Campaign Mid-East. Dubai continues to surprise. When did you last surprise anyone?

"Opportunities multiply as they are seized." Sun Tzu

The Red Dot

We know you need focus to win at any sport or activity but we were surprised that the new UK Open Champion Louis Oosterhuizen had been coached to focus on a red spot on his golf glove. His Sports Psychologist, Dr Karl Morris said the red spot was designed to help the South African concentrate on his swing in the crucial moments leading up to a shot. "His pre-shot routine was all over the place. I suggested he changed his whole game plan after he told me that when he played in the US Open last month he was making split decisions instead of thinking about what he should have been doing. One of the tips I gave him was to put a red spot on his glove and to focus on it during his swing," This, after

all, was a 27 year-old with a record about as bad as it gets in major championships. He had played in eight major events, failed to make the cut in seven - including his three previous Opens - and had a best placing of 73rd in the US PGA a couple of years ago. Nobody at that level had ever won the UK Open but Louis did winning by 7 strokes, the biggest margin since 1919.

Just goes to show, that focus combined with talent and self-belief is the key to success.

"A good idea today is better than a great idea tomorrow." Dave Trott

Excuse me – can I stop you there?

Not so long ago it was enough to hold a company conference in a darkened room, with a screen at one end, everybody facing the same way and a presenter on the stage....And it was not that long ago that we received most of our news from the TV or press, mobile phones could only deal with voice and email was the best way of contacting people. For most of our managers and leaders of the future, this is a world that does not fit comfortably with their everyday experience.

Many of them are doing jobs, working with technology and handling information that did not even exist when they left school. They expect to pass comment, question and make contact 'real time' with the presenters, the organisers and their fellow delegates

The challenge is two-fold: firstly to bring their technology into your business meetings and events and secondly for you as the 'one up front' of an audience of maybe hundreds to confidently deliver a strong message despite and as a result of these interruptions.

Ex-client Ben Hillson and his company Aspect Conferences is at the forefront of this technology. To find out more about this visit Questionregistration.com and why not contact us to see how our one-to-one coaching or Conference Speaking workshop can help you make the most of your speaking opportunity.

"A visionary is one who finds his way by moonlight and sees the dawn before the rest of the world." Oscar Wilde

Future Activities

Barry is doing his "Presentation Skills" session at the IAA PAC seminar in Oxford at 2.45pm on August 5. For the full programme go to www.iaauk.com or email office@iaauk.com or phone Annika McCaskie on 020-7381 8777.

On Friday September 5th, Barry will be speaking on "Using Stories in Speeches" at the UK Speechwriters Guild in Bournemouth University Executive Business Centre. www.ukspeechwritersguild.co.uk

"Ever notice that "what the hell" is always the right decision?"
Marilyn Monroe

Follow the rules!

A big corporation hired several cannibals. "You are all part of our team now," said the HR manager during the welcome briefing. "You get all the usual benefits and you can go to the cafeteria for something to eat, but please don't eat any of the other employees." The cannibals promised they would not.

A few weeks later the cannibals' boss remarked, "You're all working very hard, and I'm satisfied with you. However, one of our secretaries has disappeared. Do any of you know what happened to her?" The cannibals all shook their heads, "No," they said.

After the boss left, the leader of the cannibals said to the others angrily, "Right, which one of you idiots ate the secretary?" A hand rose hesitantly in admission. "You fool!" said the leader, "For weeks we've been eating managers and no one noticed anything, but nooo, you had to go and eat someone important!"

And a final thought to finish with: "Cannibals prefer those who have no spine." Stanislaw Lem.

Good luck!
Barry Graham and Sally Clare

Speakers' Corner - Summary of principal workshops and coaching on offer

STORYTELLING FOR BUSINESS 1 or 2 DAY WORKSHOP

This programme shows why storytelling works and bridges the mind gap because stories feed the imagination not give it indigestion.

THE BRAND CALLED YOU 1 DAY WORKSHOP

This programme concentrates on developing strong personal brands so that we can make the most of every opportunity that comes our way to maximise our personal potential.

PITCHING TO WIN 1 DAY WORKSHOP

This programme helps the new business team put on their best performance and so create more powerful, persuasive and winning presentations.

MAXIMISING BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS 1 DAY WORKSHOP

This programme shows the delegates the difference between simply having the confidence to stand up and talk and communicating to convince and influence.

COACHING - ONE-TO-ONE TRAINING

We work on specific needs, eg on a major industry presentation or helping to build greater self belief & credibility.

ADVANCED BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS 1 DAY WORKSHOP

This programme is designed for more experienced presenters who realise that to perform at their best, they need to get rid of bad habits, hone their strengths and be able to deliver a presentation story.

CONFERENCE SPEAKING 1 DAY WORKSHOP

This programme asks the delegates: Don't think what you have to do for the conference but rather what the conference can do for you.

SELLING CREATIVE WORK / YOUR IDEAS - 1 DAY WORKSHOP

This programme shows delegates how to help others see and believe in their ideas.

WRITING PRESENTATIONS HALF-DAY WORKSHOP

This programme shows the delegates how to write a presentation message that's worth hearing and produce a leave-behind document that's worth reading.

CONSULTANCY AND FACILITATION

Working with a group of managers, we act as facilitators & trainers helping them resolve issues, eg for an agreed new business approach, best practice for working with clients, best face to put forward to a wider audience.

Speakers' Corner 'Helping people deliver their best'

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