



Five Steps to Successful Storytelling

What's the secret to connecting with your employees on a personal level? A good story!

Stories make ideas stick. Good stories surprise us. They have compelling characters. They make us think, make us feel. And most importantly, they inspire and motivate us. Telling stories is the key to the success of every leader. Now, more than ever, businesses have the opportunity to stand out and lead change through storytelling.

Vitiello Communications Group (VTLO), a global leader in business communications, recommends the following pointers to structure your story for maximum impact.

1. Identify the five C's.

The 5 C's of storytelling are circumstance, curiosity, characters, conversations, and conflict.

- **Circumstance** - Set the scene of your story. A good introduction will tell the audience what they need to know immediately. Don't leave them hanging; instead, give them enough background and context to pique their curiosity.
 - **Curiosity** - You have their attention, but how are you going to keep it? Engage their natural interest and use it throughout your story. This trick will create a thirst for knowing what happens next, leaving them wanting more.
 - **Characters** - By incorporating a human element into your story, you can make it more relatable. Present a person with a problem and you'll spark a desire among the audience to root for your hero in overcoming it.
 - **Conversations** - We're social animals and respond to conversation far better than a list of numbers, statistics, or achievements. Avoid "corporate speak," be conversational, and match your tone to your story's intention.
- Conflict** - The most critical part of any story is conflict - it creates drama, tension and doubt. The main character of your story must face conflict in some shape or form, and have something significant at stake that requires a critical decision.

Telling stories is a powerful business tool. If you want to motivate your employees, you need to learn how to tell a good story.



2. Select the right words and details.

When we paint a picture with words, we help the story rise above the noise to connect with the listener. In the same way an artist carefully selects colors to convey precise detail, storytellers must choose the right words to fire listeners' imaginations. Colorful stories are woven with well-chosen words, making them memorable, and easily retold by the listener.

3. Relate the message to the audience.

Good storytellers must be able to put themselves in the shoes of their audience. What is important to them? What concerns them? What would they respond to? When we share stories about ourselves or others, the audience gets to know us – as people who have encountered difficulties, experienced setbacks and figured out how to overcome them. When crafting your story, keep the perspective of your audience in mind to avoid telling them the same story you've always told.

4. Convey the intended purpose.

Stories can fall short in reaching their objectives, typically due to form or delivery, or sometimes a combination of both. Stories can also fail when they're too vivid and powerful – listeners can get so caught up in the reality of the story that the real purpose and intention is lost. When this happens, listeners begin to feel disconnected, and they lose the ability to relate to the story, compare it to their experiences, and apply it to their work.

5. Define a clear and actionable next step.

Connect with your audience by telling a three-part story: a story of "self," "us," and "now." The story of self is to create an emotional hook that inspires and impacts your audience. The story of us is to identify common ground between yourself and the audience. The story of now is the most critical element because it revolves around a strong call-to-action. Remember, the objective of telling your story is to persuade. Communicate your call-to-action clearly and outline what you want the audience to do.

Engage Employees

We can help develop a strategy and give you the necessary tools to tell good stories and engage employees.

Start the Conversation

Call or email us to arrange a free, 20-minute phone consultation.

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Talk With the Experts



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