

ATTRACT CLIENTS ONLINE

HOW TO TELL GREAT STORIES THAT MAKE AN IMPACT

When we are giving any sort of presentation or talk, the use of story is a really effective way to do a couple of things.

Stories can help us:

- **Connect with the audience.** We are hardwired for stories. We're bringing them into what we're doing and therefore, emotionally connecting us with them.
- **Effectively communicate information.** It's a great way to teach because we see how it plays out. For example, here is a concept and here is a case study to demonstrate it.

It's a great idea to sprinkle in stories throughout your presentation.

HOW YOU GATHER STORIES

There are two ways to gather stories:

1. **Sit down and come up with a list of all the stories that you like to tell.**

This may take a few days to complete. You might start with:

- The stories you tell that are funny
- The stories you tell to your clients all the time
- Stories about your clients where you've learned something specific.

As you're gathering these stories, you don't necessarily have to write the entire story out.

Write out:

- **The title of the story** (The thesis statement of what happened)
For example, "the time that I went to the Shinto Temple in Japan.
- **A few bullet points to tell what happened**
- This is what happened when I arrived
- I hiked for 20 minutes
- This was the insight that I had when I was standing at the top of the mountain.
- This was the lesson that I learned.

Use this format to create a list of all of the stories that you have and like to tell.

Keep this list handy! When you're doing an exercise like this, more stories are going to spring to mind as you go throughout your day.

2. The second way to gather stories comes from Mathew Dicks, an expert on the art of storytelling. **What he does is use an Excel spreadsheet to keep track of the most interesting thing that**

happened to him each day. And, he has to do it in only one sentence!

Gathering stories in this manner allows us to begin collecting stories and we're training ourselves to see stories that might be useful or interesting.

Note: You do not have to document the most profound or compelling thing that happened during your day. You do not even need to think about how the story relates to your business. You are simply forming the habit of collecting stories.

If you do this on a regular basis, you will have a library of stories that you can use in your various presentations and email correspondence. This becomes a useful resource that you can leverage when it comes time to sprinkle stories in.

HOW TO USE AND EXECUTE STORIES IN YOUR PRESENTATIONS

This process happens in 3 steps:

- **Select the story or stories you are going to use.**
When selecting a story, ask yourself:
- **What is the emotional state that I want my audience in?**
For example, overwhelm, desperation, hopeful, etc.
- **What is the lesson I want the audience to learn?**
For example, If we don't plan and work through things step-by-step, then we are not going to get the outcome that we want.

Next, go through your library of stories and start reading through all of those titles and look for stories that either

- 1) cultivate that emotional state or
- 2) teach that particular lesson.

Note: Don't worry about context when looking through your stories. For example, you don't need to look for 'feeling overwhelmed at work.' You want to connect with 'overwhelm.'

- **Write the story out or record the story as you are saying it out loud.** You can then type out the story so you can look at it.
- **Edit the story.** First, edit for the things in the story that aren't useful to the audience. For example, you might be traveling with a friend, but who that friend is (and the details that accompany them) is not important. Eliminate those things.

Next, edit the story for clarity. Simplify the story so that it is easier for the audience to understand. What's important is the truth of the story and not getting every detail right. This will simplify the story you are telling.

Last, figure out, 'what is the connective tissue to what you were trying to illustrate?' For example, if you are telling a story about overwhelm in business, and you want to relate it to a story about being overwhelmed in the grocery store with too many choices. I tell the story – this is what I did, this is how I felt, this is how I responded.

Now, the connective tissue becomes, "Now, as a small business owner, you know that ..." and we give them the space to connect the story to the point that we're trying to make.

What happens is, as we're going through our presentation outline, we think:

- I want them to understand overwhelm in business and the consequence.

- I need a story about overwhelm that's going to get them emotionally engaged in that.
- I tell that story about overwhelm.
- I then connect my feeling of overwhelm and the overwhelm they're experiencing as well to the common experience of what it's like to have that in the business setting. And from that we move forward.

So, really the process is that simple-

- We gather stories.
- We name them.
- We name what we want people to experience – to learn, to believe.
- We find the story that matches that emotion or lesson.
- We simplify and edit the story.
- We then create the connective tissue to the actual point we're trying to make.