
Power of Personal Narrative

Story Telling for Presentation Success



Shaping Your Personal Story

Stories remain one of the most powerful forms of communication. They not only are effective in capturing and holding the attention of children, but can mesmerize adults as well.

The purpose of telling stories during your presentations is to engage, to entertain and to teach. All of these attributes make story telling a dynamic technique for professionals who desire to be high engagement presenters.

Mastering the art of story telling can increase your presentation persuasion power and make you a more engaging speaker. Stories are also a sure fire way of opening your presentation.

What kind of stories can you tell? You can pull stories from your own life (childhood right up to today), from your personal or professional life. You can tell famous stories or well-known fables. You can even tell stories from other people's lives. Where appropriate, you may want to mask the names of the real people involved to protect their identity and respect their privacy.

How do you tell an effective story? There are many ways to tell a story. In presentations, I find the short story format to be particularly effective. The key is learning to shape your story in a way that works.

“Never make a point without telling a story.

Never tell a story without making a point.”

- unknown author

Story Telling Template #1: *Incident-Point-Benefit*

Here is a simple formula that you can practice to tell effective stories as part of your high engagement presentations. It's called the *Incident-Point-Benefit* story telling technique.

Part	Purpose	Tips for Success
The Incident	What happened?	Make it short & sweet. Describe the main events that happened. Bring the events to life as if they are happening right now.
The Point	What does this story mean?	What meaning should we interrupt from these events? What conclusions can be drawn from this story? You may have several points to make from this story.
The Benefit	Why are you telling me this story now?	How is it relevant to the audience and what's happening right now, in this presentation? Why is this story relevant to your audience in this current context? Establishing relevance of your story is key to your success.

Incident-Point-Benefit Story Template

The great part about this story-telling template is that you can create many different points and benefits from the same story, depending upon your audience and what you are trying to achieve. Each time you tell your story, you can draw a different point and different benefit, depending upon what you are trying to achieve in your presentation.

Caution: never tell a story that you are still hurting from. If you find yourself feeling angry, bitter, sad to the point of tears, then you are not ready to share this story in a public presentation. Save it for later. Being overly emotional during story telling can negatively affect your audience and alter your outcome.

What kind of stories can you tell? *(Here are some ideas to get your juices flowing...)*

- The exact moment that you decided to get commit to your current career/profession.
- A significant experience with a client/colleague/family that changed the way you look at your job/role.
- Your personal account of how a mentor helped you to redirect your life.
- A moving story that was told to you by a colleague that is worth re-telling
- A motivating “wake-up call” in your life when you realized that everyone has something to give (or everyone has something to learn).
- What other personal stories could you tell that would bring to life your key message in your presentation?*

Brainstorm a list of possible stories that you could tell:

Next Steps: now that you have some topic ideas, it’s time to select one and shape it into a personal story using the Incident-Point-Benefit template. Working by yourself, jot down a personal story that connects with your key message. *(see worksheet on next page)*

Incident-Point-Benefit Story Template

Worksheet

	Your Personal Story
The Incident	
The Point	
The Benefit	

Incident-Point-Benefit Story Template

Worksheet

	Your Personal Story
The Incident	
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Story Telling Practice #1

Partner Exercise #1 (5 minute rounds): This is an opportunity for you to practice telling your story in a **5 minute slot period** and getting immediate feedback from a partner. You will also have the opportunity to give feedback to others who will be sharing their personal stories with you.

Instructions: Here's how the group exercise will work

1. Find a partner; find a quiet place where you can practice your story with him/her;
2. Select one partner to tell their story first; the other person will listen and provide feedback at the end; *(optional: you can refer to your notes, if you need)*
3. You will have 5 minutes to tell your story. The bell will ring when the 3 minutes is up. Please stop talking when you hear the bell;
4. Your partner will then have 2 minutes to give you feedback (e.g., what they liked about your story and how you might improve the story telling);

Your notes:

5. The bell will ring when the feedback time is up;
6. You will then change roles and the other person will get to practice telling their story to you. He/she will have 5 minutes to do so; when the bell rings, stop talking;
7. You will now have 2 minute to provide feedback to your partner (e.g., what they liked about your story and how you might improve the story telling);

Your notes:

Story Telling Practice #2

Partner Exercise #2 (3 minute rounds): Find a new partner. Tell the same story, only this time you need to tell in 3 minutes or under. Try to make it tighter and more compelling. Incorporate the feedback you got from your first partner.

Round 1: first person tells a story within a 3 minute timed period. When bell rings, stop telling the story and start exchanging feedback for about a minute.

Your notes:

Round 2: now the other person tells a story within a 3 minute timed period. When bell rings, stop telling the story and start exchanging feedback for about a minute.

Your notes:

Your New/Improved Story

Edit/revise your story: What changes to your story or the way you told it will you make as a result of the feedback that you received? Write out your new/improved personal story below.

	Your Personal Story
The Incident	
The Point	
The Benefit	

More stories that you could tell

Now that you are practiced and more inspired, what other stories could you tell?

Brainstorm other possible story topics:

In what other context/situations might you use these or other stories?

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Professional BIO

Kathy McAfee

Kathy McAfee is professional speaker, trainer and executive coach and is known as **America's Marketing Motivator**. For the past five years, her company, Kmc Brand Innovation, LLC, has worked with motivated business executives, community leaders and ambitious entrepreneurs to help them become the recognized leaders in their fields by mastering the art of high engagement presentations and effective networking and relationship building.

In her role as **Executive Presentation Coach**, she helps her clients increase their confidence, credibility and influence by going PowerPoint®-FREE, engaging the audience and moving them to action. She is an approved trainer for LIMRA International's executive development program, where she teaches insurance and financial service corporate executive how to be more powerful and persuasive presenters.

A certified master practitioner of Neuro Linguistic Programming and certified Blind Spots coach, Kathy also serves as an executive coach, helping her clients groom their high potential talent for future leadership positions.

Over the past twenty years, Kathy has held numerous corporate leadership positions, bringing marketing success to the likes of Levi Strauss & Co., Maybelline, Southcorp Wines of Australia and ADVO, where she served as Vice President of Marketing Services. Living and working in England for three years, she led European marketing initiatives for an international vision care company. Regarded as a passionate "change agent," she has successfully leveraged her diverse experiences to bring innovation and growth to many industries.

A graduate of Stanford University in economics, Kathy is on the board of directors with the YWCA of the Hartford Region, an active member of Soroptimist International of the Americas and an associate member of the Connecticut chapter of the National Speakers Association. She has earned a Black Belt in the martial arts of Tae Kwon Do and teaches women's self defense workshops for community service. She and her husband Byron are the proud foster/adoptive parents of twin thirteen year old boys. They currently reside in Simsbury, Connecticut.

To learn more visit www.MarketingMotivator.net or her web site, www.MotivatedPresenter.com – a site dedicated to helping you achieve greater presentation skill and confidence. You can also call her at (860) 408-0033 or link in with her at: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/kathymcafee>