



# Creating Story for Learning

 **ONLINE CONFERENCE** SM

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## **Don't Be a Boring Explainer: Add Strategic Storytelling to Your Training Toolkit**

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*Produced by:*



# Don't be a boring explainer

Add Strategic Storytelling to your Training Tool Kit

**Alliance**  
*@work*







# THEATRE IS HUMAN CONNECTION THROUGH STORY.

“In the past jobs were about muscles, now they’re about brains,  
but in future they’ll be about the heart.”

Minouche Shafik  
Director of The London School of Economics

*being*

**PRESENT &  
CONNECTED**

**CURIOUS**

**INTENTIONAL**

**AUTHENTIC**







**Stories humanize your key messages.**







**SOPHIE BROWN**  
**/TEST DRIVER**



What elements of good storytelling did you experience?





A clear purpose

Specific character point of view

Surprising

Vivid details

A narrative arc

Humor

Emotional connection


Focus

# Stakes

Rhythm

high relevance to both your content and the target audience





# Engaging your learners can begin with a story.

- Show up authentically
- Emotionally connect with learners
- Increase their curiosity
- Help learners better relate to the content
- Inspire them to take action on what they hear
- Encourage deeper reflection



# Our brains love stories.

- We relate to other humans and their experiences through stories
- Stories are still (even in the digital age) how we think and make meaning of the world around us
- Our brains are wired to process imagined experiences, such as stories, in the same way as a real experience, and respond in the same way
- Stories engage the right brain, where imagination is housed, and increase our empathy and creativity while evoking change

No more  
boring explainers

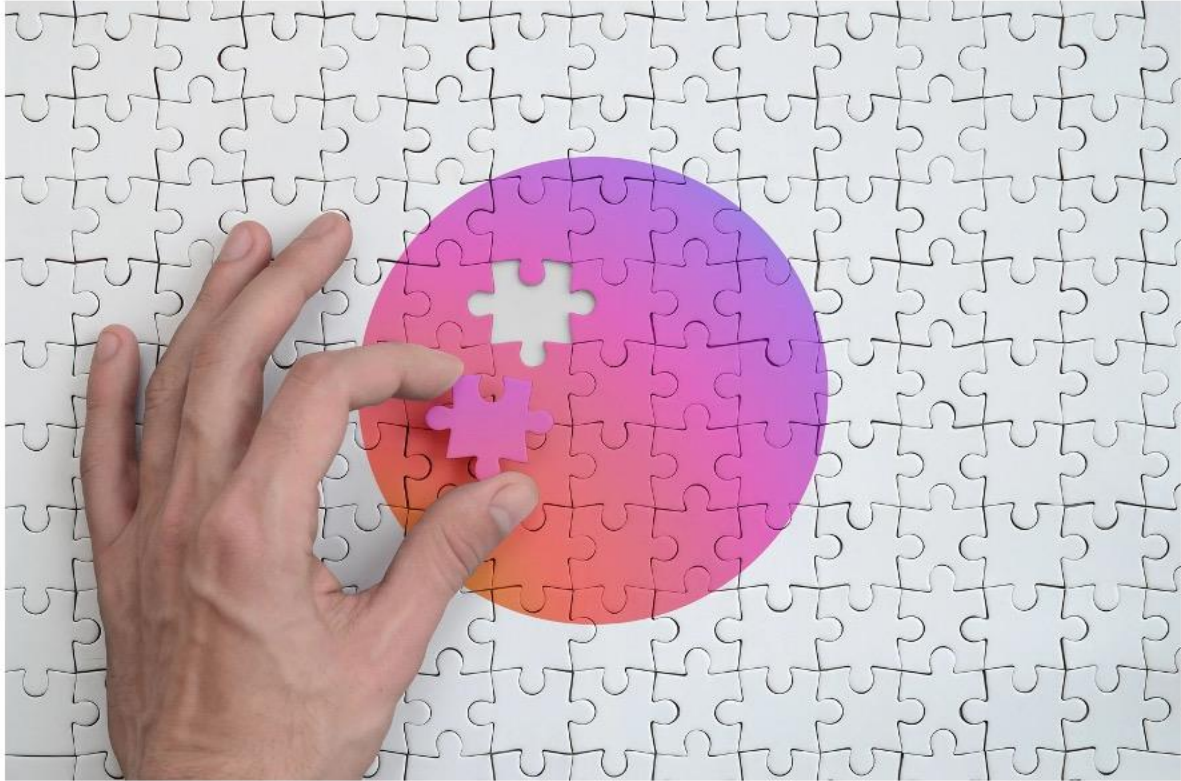




NOT RULES



IT'S AN  
**AND**  
NOT AN  
**OR**



**STORYTELLING  
NEEDS TO BE AN  
ELEGANT FIT**



## STRATEGIC STORYTELLING PLANNING WORKSHEET

What type of story will you tell?

- ☐ Break the ice - a way to connect to you
- ☐ Beginning of session - relate to the content
- ☐ End of session - summarize the content
- ☐ Explanation of an abstract concept
- ☐ Demonstrate how concepts are applied in real-life situations

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is your Big Idea? (in one word)

\_\_\_\_\_

This means I believe \_\_\_\_ to be true.

\_\_\_\_\_

You would be surprised to know that...

\_\_\_\_\_

This Big Idea is like a \_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_

What do you want them to remember?  
(in five words or less)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Story Source Material - What story do I tell?

Personal experience \_\_\_\_\_

Historical example \_\_\_\_\_

In-the-field experience \_\_\_\_\_

Cultureal reference (e.g. a movie) \_\_\_\_\_

A metaphor \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

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# Strategic Storytelling

Communicating with Presence and Purpose

- **Choose the purpose for the story**
- Identify the right story to say what you want to say
- Set an emotionally intelligent goal
- Rehearse your story



# What sort of story can I tell?

## Break the ice by telling a story.

Maybe you have a memory about something that relates to the learners' stage of life. Give them a way to connect with you.

Begin a session with a story that relates to the content. They are hooked now and ready to learn.

End the session with a story that illustrates the key take-aways from the content.

An abstract concept can be explained with a story. Research shows learners are more likely to remember science facts when taught in a story.

Use story to demonstrate how concepts in the session are applied in real-life situations.

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## TO GET WHAT YOU NEED, HOW DO THEY NEED TO FEEL?

*Set an emotionally intelligent goal*

*FEEL*

*DO*

*KNOW*

*Trusting*

*Confident*

*Empowered*







*Trusting*

*Confident*

*Empowered*

*Relieved*

*Hopeful*

*Useful*

*Connected*

*Cheerful*

*Daring*



Joyful

Proud

Accepted

Powerful

Peaceful

Optimistic

Liberated

Inquisitive

Important

Original

Respected

Valued

Playful

Open

Surprised

Warned

Astonished

Eager

Energetic

Focused

Acknowledged

Calm

Daring

Creative

Fulfilled

Courageous

Hopeful

Content

Safe

Trusted

Ready

Fascinated

Cheerful

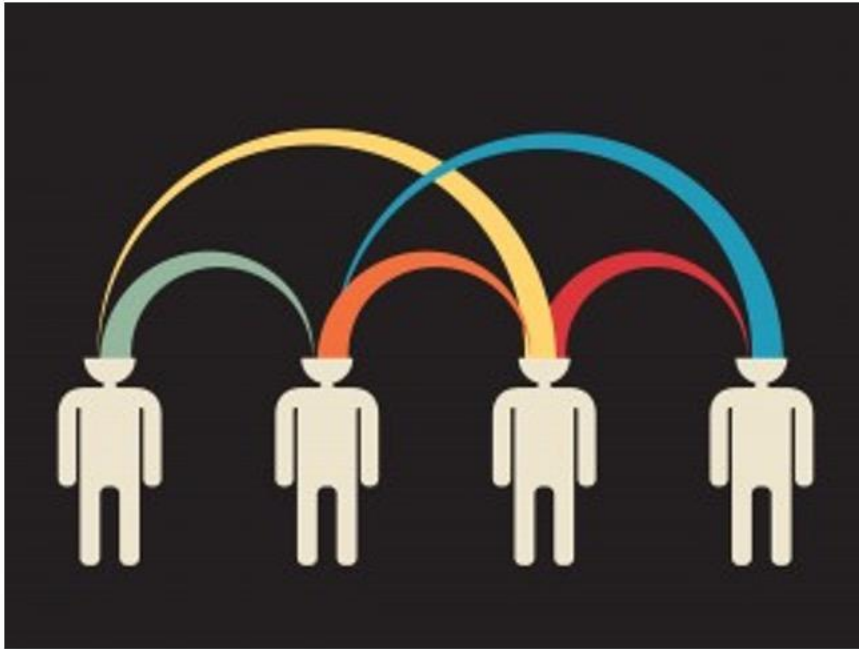
Aware

Curious

Seen



**BASED ON MY CHOSEN EMOTIONALLY  
INTELLIGENT GOAL(S), MY STORY NEEDS TO...**



**EXPLAIN...**

**ADDRESS...**

**AFFIRM...**

**OWN...**

**APPEAL TO...**

**REMINDE THEM...**

**CONNECT TO...**

**REMEMBER THAT...**

**NOT TO...**

## GENERATE THE RIGHT STATE OF MIND: SET EQ GOALS

### What state of mind will cause your audience to act on what they hear?

There are three goals we are trying to achieve when we communicate something.

We want people to **know** things, **do** things, and **feel** a certain way.

Begin your planning process by identifying **how** you want the audience to feel.

This goal will provide context to what you want them to know. By creating an emotional connection, this can become motivation for what you want them to do.

Build your message by making intentional choices to create this state or states of mind.

<input type="checkbox"/> JOYFUL	<input type="checkbox"/> PLAYFUL	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/> POWERFUL	<input type="checkbox"/> AMAZED	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> PEACEFUL	<input type="checkbox"/> ASTONISHED	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/> INSPIRED	<input type="checkbox"/> CALM	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> RESPECTED	<input type="checkbox"/> DARING	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> FULFILLED	<input type="checkbox"/> FASCINATED	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> COURAGEOUS	<input type="checkbox"/> CHEERFUL	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> HOPEFUL	<input type="checkbox"/> AWARE	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> CONFIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> CONTENT	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> CURIOUS	<input type="checkbox"/> SECURE	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> CREATIVE	<input type="checkbox"/> TRUSTED	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> VALUED	<input type="checkbox"/> WARNED	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> GRATEFUL	<input type="checkbox"/> READY	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> CAPABLE	<input type="checkbox"/> CONNECTED	<input type="checkbox"/>

### I need to...

Explain...

Address...

Affirm...

Own...

Appeal to...

Remind them...

Connect to...

Remember...

Not to...

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How could emotionally intelligent goals  
reframe how you communicate?





# Alliance @work





Where do you find your stories?



# WHAT IS YOUR SOURCE MATERIAL?



Personal experience  
Historical example  
In-the-field experience  
Cultural reference  
A metaphor



# STRATEGIC STORYTELLING PLANNING WORKSHEET

## What type of story will you tell?

- ☐ Break the ice - a way to connect to you
- ☐ Beginning of class - relate to the lesson
- ☐ End of class - summarize the lesson
- ☒ Explanation of an abstract concept
- ☒ Demonstrate how concepts are applied in real-life situations
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## What is your Big Idea? (in one word)

Rehearsal

This means I believe \_\_\_\_\_ to be true.

The performance you want takes practice.

You would be surprised to know that...

Rehearsal helps you fail faster.

This Big Idea is like a \_\_\_\_\_.

An R&D process.

## What do you want them to remember? (in five words or less)

Rehearsal is essential.

Details matter.

Stories need to show stakes.

## Story Source Material - What story do I tell?

Personal experience

Historical example

In-the-field  
experience

Cultureal reference  
(e.g. a movie)

A metaphor

Other

A previous client story

# Strategic Storytelling

Communicating with Presence and Purpose

- Choose the purpose of your story
- Identify the right story to say what you want to say
- **Build good story architecture**
- Rehearse your story





# STORYTIME

*J. practices what he preaches.*

The background of the slide features a photograph of several classical columns with ornate Corinthian capitals. The columns are made of light-colored stone and are arranged in a row, receding into the distance. The lighting is bright, highlighting the intricate carvings on the capitals.

# THE PILLARS OF A GOOD STORY

**DRAMA** (the stakes – what's at risk)

**DETAILS** (paint the picture)

**DIALOGUE** (the first person's voice)

**DESIGN** (beginning, middle, end)



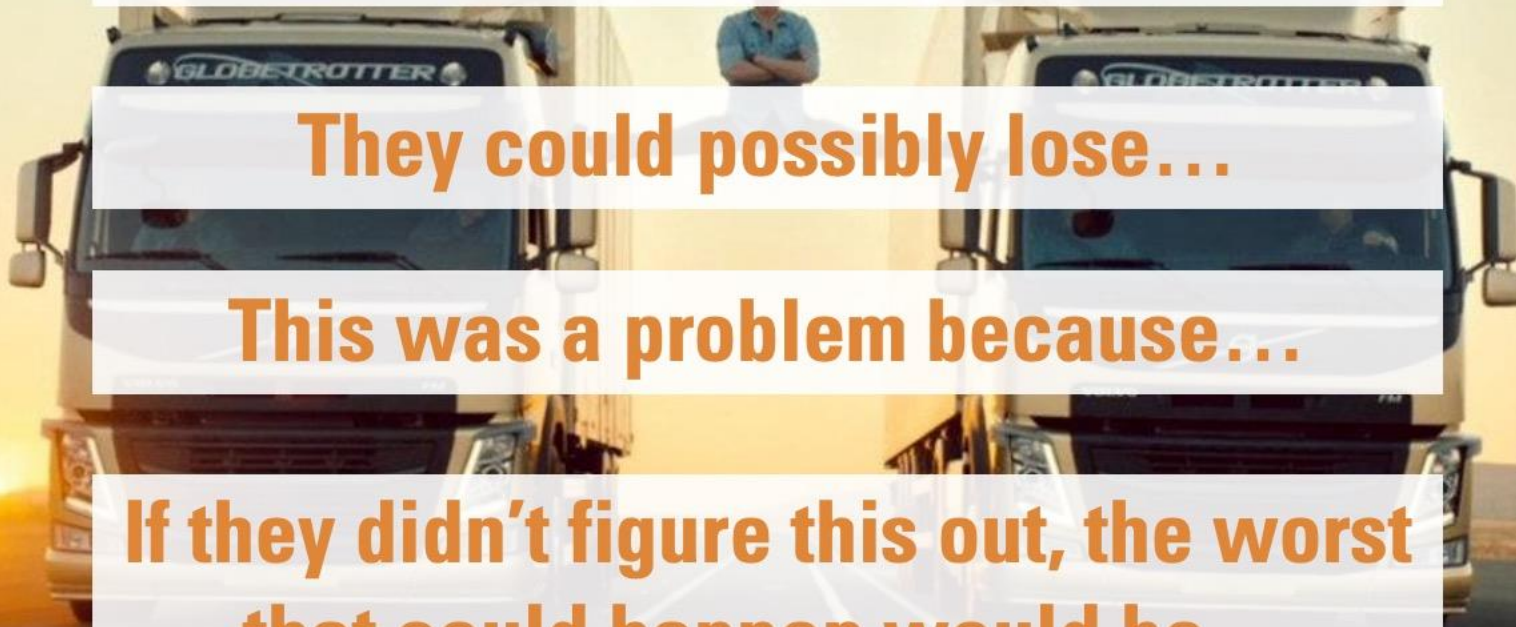
# Know the Stakes

**The risk to the team was...**

**They could possibly lose...**

**This was a problem because...**

**If they didn't figure this out, the worst that could happen would be...**



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**DESIGN** (beginning, middle, end)



# DESIGN

The beginning, middle, and end



Place

*all on board*

How is the world before the problem?

Where are we? Who is there?

What do we see, hear, and feel?

What is the inciting incident?

Problem & Turning Point

*purposeful ascent*

What is at risk?

How do you know? Show that.

What are the obstacles?

How did you overcome them? Or not?

What exact moment did things change?

Promise

*stick the landing*

What is the new state of balance?

What is different now?

What was learned?

What should be remembered?



**Know  
your  
last  
line.**



Watch where you  
**START**



## COMPELLING STORYTELLING WORKSHEET

Why this story?		Where's the drama?		
This is a story about storytelling.		Can they get the \$\$ they need? Can the ED tell the right story?		
BEGINNING // Place	Key moment?	Dialogue?	Details?	Feel?
Their anxiety.  The team in the studio space.	The boring explainer.		Sitting in a semi-circle  Strawberry juice	Uncertainty
MIDDLE // Problem and Turning Point	Key moment?	Dialogue?	Details?	Feel?
Retelling the story twice.		"I thought a strawberry is what is inside a popart."	Pudgy little hand  Strawberry juice	Capable
END // Promise	Key moment?	Dialogue?	Details?	Feel?
Underscore the key learning.				Ready
The last line:	What I did know was the team left knowing the performance you want takes practice and stories help people learn by seeing things from someone else's point of view.			

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# Strategic Storytelling

Communicating with Presence and Purpose

- Choose the purpose of your story
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- **Rehearse your story**

# Show, don't just tell your story



It is not a performance.  
It is a connected conversation.



# REFLECT



1. What has been most useful?
2. What has been most surprising?
3. What you want to learn more about?