

Make Your Value Visible: Telling Stories That Influence & Engage

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Today's Workshop



- Why stories are so powerful
- A 5-part formula for telling a story about your work or your organization
- Where & when can I tell stories?
- How can I make sure what I say teaches about my expertise?
- How can I influence & engage, but avoid bragging?



What is Networking?

- Teaching people about your character and competence
- Listening generously so you can give to them



Why Tell Stories?

- Stories stick
- Stories teach
- Stories make conversations flow
- Stories make your expertise visible by giving a picture of you in action
- Stories make it easier for others to send the right opportunities your way



Ben's Story

You won't believe what happened in Seattle. I walked into the hotel training room, and that – “Wow! Floor to ceiling windows looking out on the water! Great!”

But I soon realized that people couldn't keep their eyes off the ocean. To tell the truth all of us were longing to be out there rather than in a 2-day Negotiation Skills course. So that evening I went to one of the boat companies and said, “Can I bring 14 people on your boat tomorrow. We'll need a meeting room for 14”

The next two days, we had our course on the boat. We worked hard, spent a little more money, but strolling on the deck during breaks made it all worth it.



Evaluating Ben's Story

- What do you know about Ben?
- What was most memorable?
- What did the story show about Ben's character and competence?
- Was the story interesting to listen to?
- Did the story show confidence without bragging?

Creating Your Story

- The Segue
- The Situation
- The SNAFU
- The Solution
- The Significance



What Makes a Good Story?

- S Strategic
- U Unique
- C Clear
- C Concrete
- E Exciting
- S Short
- S Service-oriented



Find the Turn-Around

- Once upon a time . . .
- Suddenly . . .
- Luckily . . .
- Happily ever after . . .
- (or lessons learned!!)



Stephanie's Story

Segue: I worried that people in our company didn't really see the value that our HR services could bring.

Situation: I have 10 HR Managers who's job it is to service all the far-flung departments and needs. But I wondered, "How far is their reach?"

SNAFU: I asked my Mgrs. to each list their 10 best contacts in the company – people who would tell them the truth about what's going on & alert them to needs & trends. Should have had 100 different names – but only had 57 different names cam up! Do you see the conclusion I had to come to? We had relationships with the loudest voices, but what about all the others folks whom we could guide . . . And who could guide us?

Solution: We put together a plan for reaching out, building wider and deeper networks, and making our services more visible.

Significance: We knew things had changed when a new Division Head was hired and said to me, "Let's have lunch. 3 people in my group told me you all are movers and shakers."



Evaluating Stephanie's Story

- What do you know about Stephanie?
- What was most memorable?
- Would the story influence you?
- Was the story engaging to listen to?
- Did the story show confidence without bragging?

Mirav's Story

Seque: All of a sudden our non-profit was growing like never before.

Situation: Our Executive Director said we'd better get ready to triple our Recruitment and Orientation Programs and put it on in 2 new cities due to so many new hires.

SNAFU: AND we had to figure out how to do it with only one new half-time staffer who had to get up to speed fast herself!

Solution: We decided to turn this into a chance to update the program by bringing together experienced staffers for a 2-day design retreat. They got so excited about the plan that they wanted to teach parts of the program – just what I'd secretly hoped for!

Significance: I'm so proud of the staff - we turned a problem into an opportunity and already new hires are doing more faster.



Evaluating Mirav's Story

- What do you know about Mirav?
- What was most memorable?
- Would the story influence you?
- Was the story engaging to listen to?
- Did the story show confidence without bragging?

Poll – Please select 2

What's hard about coming up with good stories?

1. My job isn't that interesting.
2. I don't want to brag.
3. I wouldn't know when/how to tell them.
4. I'd rather not have the spotlight on me.
5. People won't "get" what I do – too technical.

How To “Find” Stories

- Notice your successes at work and in life
- Notice situations that brought out your best
- Notice times when your character and competence were tested
- Notice what others find unique and interesting about you

Where To Tell Stories

- Anytime, anywhere
- Before a meeting or conference begins
- In a taxi, on an airplane
- Over a meal or coffee
- At a reception or convention
- On the golf course, or at a party or social event

Example

George wants to teach

“That I’m comfortable with CEO’s and celebrities.”

Story: The time I drove Bill Gates to the airport when he spoke at our national conference.



Example

Sylvia wants to teach

“That I’m a good negotiator and problem solver.”

Story: How I got two colleagues who were arguing to collaborate and fix the problem

Poll: My Biggest “Yes-but”

choose one

1. I can't think of a good story.
2. What if I tell the same story twice?
3. My stories would be boring to those in other functions?
4. What if I get interrupted before I finish?
5. I don't know what the “significance” will be down the road.

Q&A

Please chat your questions.

Thanks!



How to Tell A Story with Ease

- Find a role model to learn from
- Practice with people you know well

Hint: For making it a conversational habit



How to Begin Your Story

- In response to “What’s new?” or “How have you been?”
- When there’s a lull in the conversation.
- “Something happened that reminded me of you/your experience . . . “
- Segue with a transition sentence such as, “”I’ve been meaning to tell you what happened at the conference . . . “

Telling Your Story

- Take out all extraneous details
- Help the listener be there with you, feel what you felt, see what you saw
- Quote other people



Telling Your Story

- **Pace:** Vary the volume & speed
- **Punch:** Important words or phrases
- **Pause:** When it makes the story better



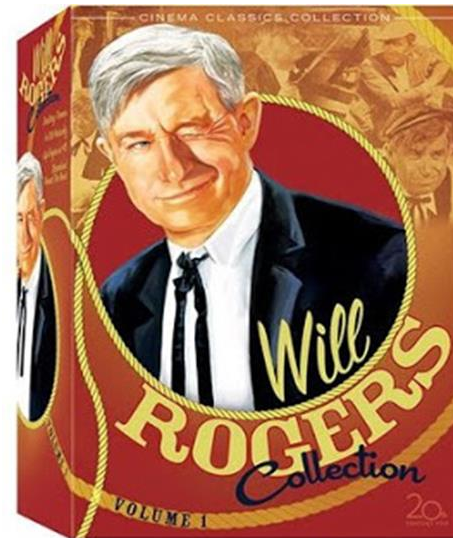
Avoid Bragging and Grandstanding

- Be amazed and humbled by your own success
- Give lots of credit to others



Avoid Bragging

- Remember what Will Rogers said
- Watch a role model who is comfortable telling stories without hot-dogging



Poll: Benefit for You?

choose one

1. People will learn more about my expertise, my character and competence.
2. I'll have more influence so people will want to work with me, recommend me, hire me, and help me.
3. My "light" won't be hidden under a barrel.
4. People will respect me and the value I bring.
5. More visibility will attract better projects.



Activity: Just Notice

- Brainstorm with colleagues about things you've done that you might turn into a conversational story that teaches who you are
- Choose things you've done at work or in your leisure time
- Be sure to give your colleague a turn so you can help him find a story

Activity: Make Stories Teach

1. Make a list of 3 people with whom you're currently developing a relationship.
2. Next to each name, write one thing you'd like to teach that person to expand their knowledge of you and your expertise, character, and competence.
3. Now think of something you've done that will teach each person you listed about an expertise or quality.

Activity: Write A Story

- Make notes about a story you might tell to one of the people on the list you made
- Use the 5-part formula
- Does it have a turn-around to make it interesting?

Activity: Tell Your Story

- Tell someone your story. Use your notes, if you like.
- Ask the listener: “What do you know about me after hearing the story?”
- Ask yourself: “Is that what I want to teach?” Get tips from the listener and revise.

Activity: Coach Others

- Listen to a colleague's story.
- Make suggestions to help it follow the S-U-C-C-E-S-S formula.
- Tell your colleague what the story teaches you about her character and competence.

Q&A

Please chat your Questions and Comments.



After the Workshop

- Come up with one new story each week, so that making the conversation flow with stories becomes a conversational habit.
- Enjoy listening to the stories of others and notice how good story-telling skills builds influence and visibility.
- Order your copy of Strategic Connections
- Get tips from our monthly email newsletter at www.ContactsCount.com

