



LEAD WITH STORY GUIDE

Ditch these top storytelling mistakes to lead with information, influence, and inspiration.

Top Storytelling Mistakes

Great storytelling requires thought, planning and practice. It's not as simple as "Use a story!" Anyone can become a great storyteller through practicing the skills; however, most people don't start there.

Below are common mistakes people make when telling stories.

Telling the story you want and not the story the listener needs to hear.

Ever hear someone tell a story that lands flat or seems pointless? It is likely missing the key ingredient: the story you need to hear as the listener. Don't just tell your favorites. Tell the stories that take the audience along the journey to the desired outcome.

Not taking the audience into account.

A great story results in a desired outcome for the audience and meets them where they are at. Vary your stories and the points you make for each audience. Just as you'd tell the same story differently to children and adults, tell stories differently based on each audience and the desired outcome.

No structure

Many stories fall apart because they lack structure and make it hard for the audience to follow. Structure doesn't require you tell a sequential story. It does mean guiding the listener through the key details that are important to the desired outcome – in a clear way.

Not enough of the right details

Without planning, we fill stories with a bunch of details that don't move it forward and only confuse the audience. These may be fascinating to us as the storyteller, but often are details that haven't earned their place.

Not leaving enough time to plan

Many people spend three hours preparing slides for a presentation and only leave five minutes to think about what they might actually say. Stories aren't made up on the fly. Invest time to identify ideas, create the structure, edit the story (and edit again), and practice.

Doesn't lean into emotions

Storytelling is the best artificial reality: letting us see, hear, feel, taste and emotionally experience the story. Failing to engage the senses and emotions limits our capacity for connection and understanding. The best stories invite you in and create a first-hand experience, even if you have never been in that situation before.

Interested in storytelling workshops or coaching to help you get started? Reach out to info@kareneber.com for a conversation.



Want to learn how to tell stories and avoid these common mistakes? **The Perfect Story: How to Tell Stories that Inform, Influence, and Inspire** publishes Fall 2023 with HarperCollins. The QR Code takes you to ordering and giveaway information.

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