Tell Your Story…Well

Think about the typical speaker. S/he stands before a group, and gives a presentation based on what? That’s right, facts and figures. And if you’re having a really good day, that information is printed onto a series of Power Point slides in 10-font.

This isn’t a lesson about avoiding facts and figures, which can be an important part of a presentation. The point of this lesson is that, if you choose not to be like most speakers, the ones that rely on facts, figures, and slides, and instead, tell well-crafted stories, you will stand out from the crowd.

Remember this phrase: Stories connect; facts and figures disconnect.

In the last lesson, you were reminded that human beings have always told stories because they make a deep emotional connection. Remember the words of the late Bill Gove, the founder of the National Speakers Association. He was credited with saying that “If you want to make a Point, tell a Story.

That is great wisdom, and excellent advice. With all the respect in the world for Mr. Gove, I would add one word to his suggestion, however. That word is… ‘well’…Make a Point, Tell a Story Well.”

We’ve all been the victim of the storyteller who rambles incessantly, seemingly with no point. Perhaps someone in your family has this skill. They can definitely tell stories, but they lose our attention fairly quickly.

My client Pam was a self-confessed ‘rambler’. When we met, she learned that I am a speaking coach. She said, “Michael, I really need your help. I’ve agreed to give a keynote speech for the Chamber, and I’m waking up every day feeling sick. I’ve got knots in my stomach. They’ve only given me 25 minutes to speak and I don’t think
I can do it. I KNOW that I talk too much. I can’t get focused, and when I end the monthly meetings at my organization, people are s-o-o-o relieved. Can you help me?"

The interesting part of Pam’s dilemma is that she wasn’t schedule to give her keynote speech for another eleven…months! She was looking at the possibility of nearly a year of morning sickness, Alka Seltzer and sleepless nights.

Fortunately, Pam avoided that fate. On the night she gave her speech, she finished three minutes ahead of schedule, she received a standing ovation, and donations of time and money to her organization. What changed? How did Pam experience such a dramatic shift?

She learned many of the tools and processes that you will learn in the coming weeks. She became a speaker who harnesses the power of story to change and inspire lives.

Creating a compelling vision of the future can make the difference between being a leader who others follow, or someone who is quickly forgotten.

In 1962, President John Kennedy stood before a crowd of over 40,000 people in Rice Stadium in Texas, and laid out an ambitious goal for the United States. “We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win, and the others, too.”

Is this a story in the traditional sense? Technically, no. However, it is a vision of the future. It is a story of millions of Americans working together with a common goal; of winning a race to be the first to another celestial body; to advance the

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world technologically.

President Kennedy could have said, “We will make a $25 billion investment, involve 1.5 million American workers, and invest 7-1/2 years to reach our goal.” Although the numbers are correct, they would not have inspired the public in the way his emotional language did.

THAT is the power of story. You and I will probably never have the opportunity to set such a lofty goal as inspiring Americans to visit distant moons or planets. Yet your story can inspire others. As you prepare your next presentation, remember, that to make your point, you should tell a story [well]. In the coming weeks, you will learn how to do just that.

**ACTION STEP:** Take time to think about events in your life that changed the way you look at the world. It could be something as simple as a conversation with a teacher or mentor, or as extreme as a serious illness. Consider the way that event changed you, and the common emotions that event created that will connect you to others. Record those thoughts in your file.

As a Post Script to this lesson, if you want to hear a speech that is inspiring and visionary, I suggest you watch President Kennedy’s speech laying out his vision of landing on the moon. President Kennedy's 'Moon Speech'

**Until next week, always remember, you have a story that someone needs to hear.**
Recommended Resources

1) *Inject More Humor into Your Presentations*  Click on this link: [Inject More Humor into Your Presentations](#)

2) *Go Ahead and Laugh!*  Click on this link: [Go Ahead and Laugh](#)

3) *Stand Up, Stand OUT!*  Click on this link: [Stand Up, Stand OUT!](#)

4) *EDGE of Their Seats Storytelling*  Click on this link: [Edge of Their Seats Storytelling](#)

5) *Hollywood Presentation Skills*  Click on this link: [Hollywood Presentation Skills](#)

Michael’s Background & Raving Fans

For many years, Michael Davis gave presentations and speeches that were, in a word, ineffective. Mistakes, confusing messages, and ignorance about the art of public speaking and persuasion led to failure to convert prospective clients into paying clients.

Then a chance meeting with World Champion speaker David Brooks opened the door to meeting many other World Champion and Hall of Fame speakers. Investment of time, energy and thousands of dollars in training and coaching helped him develop the skills to become a speaker and leader who influences, impacts, and inspires others. In 2011, he earned the certification of World Class Speech Coach. He also studies the art of comedy and movie making to learn new skills that can take speech creation and delivery to new levels.
“Last summer, when I spoke and promoted to subscribe to [my email newsletter] **Hot Marketing Tips**, I got a big fat zero sign ups.

**At your wise suggestion**, I passed the signup clipboard around the room this time. When you first mentioned it, it felt very old-fashioned and not trendy or technology driven. I set a goal for 50 new sign ups. Probably 2 times more than I have ever had sign up at one time.

When I tallied the new subscribers after the lunch yesterday, **we hit a total of 72!** I think that is about **46% of the room**. **THANKS!**

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**Drew Dinkelacker**  
President, The Marketing Accelerator

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“**Evaluate to Elevate is a powerful program.** Every speaker should hear it... twice!”

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**Darren LaCroix**  
2001 World Champion of Public Speaking

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“**Mike helped me fine tune a 10-minute presentation from “too much information” into a clear, to-the-point focus** that has not only **given me more confidence**, but generating **more positive feedback** from the audience NOW than I did before meeting with Mike.

**Mike has a unique ability to help you focus on the main point(s) of your presentation and then how to present them in a way that is easy for those in the audience to understand.**”

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**Doug Smith**  
Sr. Account Executive  
Hubbard Interactive

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“**Mike has an easy way of working with you that isn’t intimidating... Amazing, insightful feedback... My presentations are now far more interesting and result in additional sales of my services. No matter what the level of speaking at which you may be performing, you’re sure to improve with Mike Davis.”**

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**Joann Westwood**  
Westwood Virtual Associates, LLC

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“**Mike Davis breathed life into a topic that many of our group of trial lawyers take for granted, that public speaking is both an art and a science. It is clear that Mike is himself passionate about this topic and his insights are invaluable for those facing the daunting task of public**
speaking for the first time and for those seasoned veterans behind the podium”.

David Williamson
Attorney

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“The success I enjoyed in the Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking is the result of coaching I received from Mike Davis. He helped me refine and deliver a speech that carried me all the way to the finals. His tireless dedication is outstanding! Mike Davis will help you communicate better and be more successful.”

Phil Barth
Portfolio Manager
International Paper

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“Michael has completely opened my eyes! I’m performing at an entirely new level. I went into my last event with the utmost confidence thanks to him. He even called me the night before with a few last-minute reminders! If you speak for a living — if your revenue depends on your ability to communicate, you NEED Michael Davis!”

Brennan Scanlon
Co-Executive Director
Business Network International

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“I recommend the coaching services of Michael Davis. He helped me to put a new, more meaningful spin on my existing presentations that enabled me to connect with my audience. He provided me with tools and resources that allowed me to gain confidence, decrease my anxiety, and more effectively get my message across. Most importantly, he taught me how to have fun with public speaking!”

Dr. Laura Ward
Cincinnati Children’s Hospital

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“Thank you for your coaching with my LULAC Awards Gala speech... I received compliments from many people both for the speech content and for the delivery.

Thank you for helping make it sharp and to the point. Your suggestions to slow down, take my time reading the names of VIP attendees, the intro paragraph, etc. were invaluable as well as the coaching at the auditorium.

I look forward to working with you on my next big presentation”.

Lourdes Ribera
State Director – LULAC Ohio
President – LULAC Cincinnati