

Tell a Better Story. Generate More Interest. Grow Your Business

With David Lee ▪ StoriesThatChange.com

Creating Your Origin Story

1. What inspired you? *Describe your “Eureka” or “I’ve had enough” moment(s).*
2. Why do you care; why is this important to you and to the world?
3. What’s unique, fascinating, quirky, exotic, or just plain cool about you, your product, your business, your journey? (this is also an important question when branding yourself)
4. What obstacles have you faced and overcome in this journey?
5. What sacrifices have you made?
6. What pain did you have or did you see that you could not ignore?
7. What vision do you have?
8. What struggles, twists and turns have you experienced?
9. What good will your business do in the world?
10. What “enemy” of your market does your business fight?
11. What makes you a “wizard”?

Identifying Pain and Pain & Promise Stories

1. Describe examples of your target market experiencing the pain that your product or service alleviates .
2. Describe “before and after” pictures of your target market experiencing the pain of the problem you solve, and then the “after picture” of the positive impact your solution provides or will provide. You can also use stories of other people who have successfully dealt with the problem you solve, until you have your own success stories.
3. For more, see *The Powerful Storytelling Techniques Manual* by yours truly. You can read more about it at StoriesThatChange.com.

Identifying “Here’s What I Mean By That” Stories

1. For every key point you want to make when giving a talk or describing your business, come up with at least one example that illustrates that point.
2. Create a simple two column table or database to capture and archive your stories. This is arguably the most important tool at your disposal for having great stories at your disposal. If you don’t capture stories when you think of them, you are very likely to forget them. While you won’t forget dramatic, life-changing stories, you are likely to forget many of the “little” moments of truth that your audience will be able to relate to

because they are part of everyday life, but...because they aren't dramatic, are quickly forgotten.

With your two column table, each row represents an experience, a story. In the left column, you will put key words and phrases (e.g. "saves money", "social media possibilities") that will allow you to easily search for relevant stories when you need one to make a particular point. In the right hand column, you will write a brief description of what happened. You don't have to make a long or formal description. Just include enough detail so you can read the description months later and remember the story well enough to tell it in a compelling manner.

3. When you state an idea or use any abstract term or phrase, follow it up with "So for instance..." or "Here's what I mean by that..." and give an example of what that concept or idea would look and sound like in real life, or tell a short story. This helps people understand your point far better than if you leave it at the abstract, conceptual level (e.g. "Our new technology makes the waiting-for-a-table-at-the-restaurant-with-your-little-kids experience much more enjoyable,...here's what I mean by that...").

Other Story Genres To Use

1. **"So I said to him _____" Stories** – These are a great way to deliver a challenging message without sounding confrontational.
2. **Perspective Shift Stories** – These help you get others to see a situation from a different perspective, without coming across as challenging.
3. **"Pack a Punch" Stories** – These stories help you make your key points more persuasive and memorable.
4. **Flight Simulator Stories** – These stories help you create a virtual reality experience where the listener can imagine themselves using a skill you are teaching or experiencing a new way of acting and reacting.
5. **Analogies** – While these are technically not stories, they can be considered a cousin to stories. Analogies will be one of your most powerful tools to help you bridge the gap between your specialized knowledge and industry experience with the knowledge and experience of your audience. Analogies made *Made to Stick* author's Chip and Dan Heath's Six Keys to a Sticky Message (stories also made the list) because analogies make the abstract concrete. They take something that people understand at a superficial, conceptual level and help them "get it" in a full-body, "gotcha!" kind of way. Thus, analogies make your ideas more understandable—concrete is always easier to

understand than abstract. Because they impact at the visceral, “Oh yeah...I get you” level, analogies enable your ideas to pack a bigger punch.

For more on these and other story genres, see [Powerful Storytelling Techniques](#) by yours truly at [StoriesThatChange.com](#).

More Resources

Using Stories So You’re a Fascinating Interviewee--For examples of how to use stories to deliver a fascinating interview, go to [StoriesThatChange.com](#) and type “eofire” in the search box. That will bring you to several blog posts analyzing interviewees on John Lee Dumas’s [EntrepreneurOnFire.com](#) podcast. His podcast is an outstanding tutorial on how to be a great interviewee by telling fascinating stories. You can also hear examples of people bombing, because they only spoke at the conceptual, 30,000 foot level, and never brought you into the experiences they were talking about, so you never felt drawn in and impacted at the emotional, visceral level.

Starting Off A Presentation With a Story That Grabs the Audience’s Attention—At [StoriesThatChange.com](#), type in “Opening Story” or click the blog post category of Opening Stories for examples, including videos of me starting talks off with a story.

Other examples of stories and their application – Wander through the blog posts for a wide range of story genres and their application. Here are a few of my favorites:

- type “Eckhart Tolle” – this is an example of taking an experience you have and thinking “Hmmm...how can I use this as a metaphor for something else?”
- Type “Instant Perspective” – this is an example of using a humorous, self-effacing story to both make your point more “sticky” and help the audience bond with you.
- Type “Vivienne” – this is a sweet video of an 8 year old entrepreneur telling why she started her amazing business.

To Become a More Compelling Communicator:

Contact David Lee at 207-571-9898 or email david@storiesthatchange.com to discuss your communication goals, including:

- Becoming a more comfortable, confident, compelling speaker.
- Telling your business's story in a more interesting way.
- Increasing your persuasiveness without being pushy, by using stories and analogies to make your ideas more fascinating and relevant.
- Becoming a more inspiring leader by making your ideas and vision come alive, through the use of stories.

About David Lee: David Lee is the founder of HumanNature@Work. The theme of his work can be summed up by this sentence:



“Every better business result you desire requires a better conversation—with your team, your customers, or the marketplace.”

He has worked with organizations and spoken at conferences throughout North America and Australia, and is the author of nearly 100 articles and book chapters on maximizing employee and organizational performance.

David has been using and teaching storytelling for over 20 years.

Before focusing his work on how to use storytelling in business, he practiced and taught hypnosis and therapeutic storytelling in the field of mind/body medicine both domestically and abroad.

His work was featured in the clinical book *Tales of Enchantment: Goal-Oriented Metaphors for Adults and Children in Therapy*.

He is also the author of the *Add Powerful Storytelling Techniques to Your Training* published by ASTD Press.