

# SKILL 1 – COMPLEX PROBLEM SOLVING



## 1) DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL

**Storytelling** - Leadership storytelling is the art of utilizing stories to encourage and inspire people by delivering key messages, values, and vision. Stories help leaders to instill a sense of purpose and identity in their followers or employees, which makes their message more accessible and memorable.

Selecting stories that are relevant and important to the audience and presenting them in an interesting and memorable way are essential components of effective leadership storytelling. Speeches, presentations, and one-on-one talks are just a few examples of the different settings in which it can be employed.

Storytelling in leadership is such a powerful tool. In any circumstance, leaders should ask themselves, "Would a story make a difference here? Will it influence or inspire my audience?"

Would a story make a difference? In almost all cases, the answer is yes.

## 2) OBJECTIVES OF THE TOOL

A leader can use stories and storytelling for:

- Explanation of ideas.
- Smooth the implementation of change.
- Communication improvement.
- Tacit knowledge sharing.
- Intensification of innovation.
- Community and team building.
- Planning.
- Creation of scenarios and visions.
- Coaching and training.
- Communication with clients and other stakeholders.
- Trust building.
- E-learning and many others

## 3) CONNECTION OF THE TOOL WITH THE SKILL

One of the earliest methods of human communication was storytelling, which is being employed in many different cultures today to transmit traditions, traditions, and memories. Since 2001 (Boje, Denning, and Weick) and by numerous experts in the leadership literature (Auvinen, Aaltio, and Blomqvist, 2013), the importance of narrative in leadership has been related to leadership effectiveness. While "narrative" has been used interchangeably with "storytelling," which generically and synonymously means "an account of a group of events that are casually narrated," while storytelling may be more frequently used by leadership practitioners and consultants (Denning, 2012, p.13).

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## 4) RESOURCE MATERIALS

One piece of paper, one pencil and lots of inspiration!

## 5) HOW TO APPLY THE TOOL

### Setting up

1. Decide on a powerful story you wish to share. Simply think: "I want to share about the time when..."
2. Find a cosy and quiet place where you can work, grab a cup of coffee and you're ready to start.

### Buliding the story

#### **1. "I'll Tell You About the Time"**

Your story's title should be written at the top. You won't mention the title when you share your narrative; this is just for you. Your story will remain in your mind's "story bank" of saved memories if you give it a title..

#### **2. "So There I Was," for example**

Start your story with a time and place marker. I was at the airport last week going through security when...Include a single protagonist as well. If your tale is about a person, your viewers will feel a deep sense of empathy. If you can, let us know the person's name.

#### **3. "We Wanted... But"**

The driving force behind all good stories is conflict. Finding the conflict in your story will be your first obstacle to overcome. This may be a "conventional" conflict, such as a dispute between individuals. Yet it's also possible that someone sought something and ran across an obstacle to getting it. There should only be one conflict that drives your story, therefore resist the urge to create several.

#### **4. "So we... Then,"**

What followed, then? This phase should be simple to finish if you've set up your protagonist and conflict properly. There's way too much information here from a lot of folks! Keep it short. What is the bare minimum of details that will advance your story? You'll be shocked by how little you actually need here.

Pro tip: Is there something you want your audience to remember and repeat after hearing this story? Make sure this section of the story includes that action!

#### **5. "Until Finally..."**

Now that the end is coming, your audience is leaning forward in anticipation. At the story's conclusion, what had changed?

How to balance statistics and storytelling is a common topic of discussion. Here is a good spot to include data if you have it: "And we saved \$20,000."

#### **6. "And Now We Know... And That's Why..."**

We are telling our story because we expect a specific result. This section is crucial to your influence narrative! What do you hope this story will cause employees to learn, believe, or act upon? Don't assume that your audience will understand this on their own. They will not. You must express it verbally.

Many people find this difficult. What's the topic of your story? It's about anything you say it is! You have a plethora of options here. Choose one result. The know, believe, or do model will be very helpful to you.

Consider filling in this part of the Canvas first, and then going back and constructing the story. Once you have clarity on why you are telling your story, it will help you make decisions on how you construct all of the other elements.

#### **7. "I / We Felt..."**

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According to neuroscientific research, people require these emotion words to help them understand how the story feels. People won't be able to understand your story without these terms. Therefore sprinkle straightforward emotion words throughout your narrative. We were furious. "I was shocked," "My client was confused,"

## Let your story come to life

Until you have shared your story with someone else, your task is not complete. Tell a trustworthy person that you want to test your story. Then just say it! Think about what works. What were some of the parts that didn't go as planned? Retell it after revision.

Remember to narrate the tale in your own terms. You shouldn't sound theatrical. It should just sound like you are talking.

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## There are four criteria for successful storytelling

### 1. Truth

The story must be “*authentically true*” – otherwise, trust between leader and employee will not be kindled.

### 2. Positive

In order to inspire action, stories must be positive in tone. Happy endings inspire – not negative stories.

### 3. Minimalist

Stories need to be short and to the point – told in a “minimalist form”. The story must be minimalistic so that the listener is focused on what is told and their thoughts do not start wandering off in other directions.

### 4. Contrast

Storytelling makes complicated concepts easily understandable. However, to get the desired result, complex ideas must be communicated by contrasting *the situation before* with *the situation after*. Problem-solution stories are therefore ideal for communicating complicated concepts.

## 6) WHAT TO LEARN

A proper story helps the leader to overcome mental barriers people build against new knowledge. That is why a story improves communication between people, raises their creativity and helps to find common values and solve conflicts. Stories have the ability to open the imagination of people and to increase their innovative potential. A story

can work as a catalyst of change

A well-crafted story can assist a leader overcome the mental obstacles that people have against new knowledge. Because of this, a story fosters better interpersonal communication, increases creativity, and aids in the discovery of shared values and the resolution of disputes. People's capacity for imagination and innovation can be increased via stories.

Leadership storytelling helps leaders to grow in strength by enabling them to lead authentically. Discovering your experiences helps you understand who you are as a leader, and if others can relate to you more because of your stories, that will increase their trust in you.

With leadership storytelling, you can inspire your group. Through storytelling, you may share knowledge, teach your company's values, and recognize the efforts of your workforce.

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The leader can more effectively interact with individuals under his or her control by delivering stories. Emotions can be strongly evoked by stories. Information loses its emotional impact without a tale; instead, it takes on a clinical tone. As a result, the listener might make a deeper and more meaningful connection with the content. Again, this will have an impact on the decisions made by employees because emotions are a huge factor in decision-making.

## How Can Leadership Storytelling Be Used In Business?

Clients share a story about where they have seen that storytelling could have made a difference. Here's a sampling of their stories:

- “Many times I’ve been asked: ‘Tell me about yourself.’ I have always resorted to talking about my career path... not too often do I describe who I am as a person. If I can better tell a story of who I am as a person, the rest would fall in place.”
- “A salesperson put me on the spot expecting me to dump all the reasons why our product was better than my previous company’s product. I was mostly trained to sell feature/function, but should have told a simple story on the strengths of our product from an end user’s perspective in contrast to the competitors.”
- • "In my former position, I could have provided a more thorough account of the duties, difficulties, and accomplishments associated with assisting with the introduction of a product in a short timetable to my supervisor."
- “I had to enroll patients to clinical trials.... Telling a better story, including the rationale and all the positive and negative aspects and allowing the patient to take an informed and unbiased decision created a better relationship and improved the chances to run the clinical trials smoothly and keep the study subjects engaged from start to end.”



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