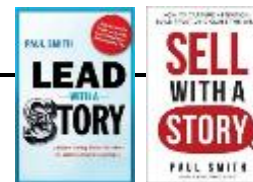


Storytelling Course Cheat Sheet



Story Selection

1. What's your objective? What do you want the audience to *think, feel, or do* after the story?
2. Think of a relevant success, failure, or moment of clarity around that objective
3. Can't find a real story? Use a folktale, or make one up (but let audience know you've made it up)

Find Great Stories: • Create a story “wish list” • Capture stories that happen around you • Recall stories you hear others tell • Search your past • Interview colleagues: share your wish list and ask open-ended questions about specific moments • Create venues for sharing stories

Story Structure Template

Step	Answers these questions:	Sounds like...
Hook	1. Why should I listen to this story?	“I think the best example I’ve seen of that was...”
Transition In		
Context	2. Where and when did it take place? 3. Who is the hero and what do they want? What other background needed to understand character motivations?	“Back in __, at __, there was __, and they were trying to...”
Challenge	4. What was the problem/opportunity?	“Then, one day...”
Conflict	5. What did they do about it? Show the honest struggle between hero and villain, even if internal. Not too easy.	“So they ____, and then they ____, and so they ____.”
Resolution	6. How did it turn out (for everyone)? How are things/characters changed as a result?	“Eventually...”
Transition Out		
Lesson	7. What did you learn?	“That’s when I realized...”
Action	8. What do you think I should do?	“And that’s why I think you should...”

Story Elements

Basics: Relatable hero, relevant challenge, honest struggle, worthy lesson

Emotion: Identify relevant emotions. Use “tell me,” “show me,” “make me feel,” and dialog techniques to develop the most important. Avoid unwelcome emotional manipulation

Surprise: At beginning to get attention; at end to seal it in memory. Lead with an unusual event, use flashback, skip one element in the context, or hide a critical fact until the end

Dialog: Replace scenes where you *describe* what characters meant with what they actually said (outer) or thought (inner)

Details: Replace generalities with specifics. Show, don't tell. Pick one important scene and describe it in vivid detail. Use metaphors

Length: 3-5 minutes to tell (450-750 words)

Accuracy: Set expectations about accuracy of story. Would someone who was there be offended at your version?

Delivery: Oral: focus on the story, not physical performance. 5 or 6 filler words a minute is okay. Conversational tone.

Written: write the way you'd like to speak – 15 words per sentence, small words, active voice, Flesch-Kincaid of 7-8

Practice and Save: Stories should be unscripted and extemporaneous, not memorized. Walk and talk with imaginary friend to practice. Save your story in outline form