

## How to create a compelling story

Before we get into the nitty gritty, let's examine what makes an effective story – Does it attract attention, communicative, memorable in some way? There is no real check list of such story attributes: A great story has at its core, content, and style that blend together and impact the listener. Think of an intriguing, involving narrative with a [key strategic](#) message as a starting point.



What does it mean to be intriguing?

Think of what kind of content you have looked at lately (Video, E-book, blogs etc) that was thought-provoking and relevant. Think of a few humorous & inspiring elements that invoked a sense of awe or brought into focus a dimension that was overlooked. You remember that right? Now if you remember it, so will your audience, your story needs to score highly on one or more of these dimensions.

Let's look at an example - Let's say you glance at an intriguing subject line and open an email. The email begins with, "It was a gloomy and rainy day in mid-May of 1931 when a young 28-year-old marketer Neil, who at the time was the [advertising](#) manager of P&G's Camay soap, sat down at his typewriter and wrote perhaps the most significant memo in [modern marketing](#) history." Does that perk up your ears? What memo? Why the memo? Why was it important? Who is this guy? What happened to him? You are instantly drawn in. Create intrigue and make it interesting.

Is the Story Authentic?

People are convinced by authenticity, anybody can make things up like a fairy tale. But when a fairy tale is told or depicted in an authentic way along with the the settings, characters, and challenges, it suddenly feels real. If not, the story is very likely to be perceived as phony or worse, contrived as selling effort. There needs to be solid substance behind the story and its message.

An example of another story involving Skype : Sarah from Indiana and Paige from New Zealand were each born without half of a left arm. Their respective mothers wanted them to connect & get to know each other, but how do you bridge that gap and actually have a meaningful conversation when you are so far apart? The solution - Use Skype to connect daily so the girls could share their world with each other while invoking a deep friendship. Apparently, Skype later brought the two girls to New York, where they had an emotional

meeting. This type of authenticity involving Sarah and Paige helped to generate an emotional response and connected Skype with the emotion without even having to advertise the use of Skype.

How Involving is the content of the story?

Ask yourself, Does the content want to make you care? or stimulates a cognitive response, like a belief change, or an emotional feeling of warmth or awe? Will it make their hair on the ends of their head rise even one bit? Might it cause the viewer to act-maybe they do so by passing along the story to others? A passive audience means that the story and inherent messaging is weak.

Final Thoughts

In addition to intrigue & authenticity, stories are stories and aren't facts. Stories have a key strategic message, that relates back to the brand. The biggest factor in creating engagement goes back to whether they are presented & communicated with flare and professionalism and in the right channels with the right communication plan for your target audiences.

What stories do you want to create for your brand?