



## Discover Your Meaningful Stories

Welcome to the First Dimension of Storytelling – the Discovery step.

A common question coaching clients ask is, “What are the popular subjects?”

On the surface, this seems like a reasonable question. If you can discover the hot topics, especially those that people will pay for, why not talk about those?

Dig a little deeper, though, and you’ll discover that this is not the best method to choose your topic.

Why?

Think about a presentation you’ve heard where the speaker clearly wasn’t an expert, or didn’t present with a lot of passion.

Did you get the full benefit of that talk?

Probably not. An expert, or someone with a deep interest in the subject would’ve been a much better choice to present that material.

The key to uncovering your subject matter — your storytelling ‘gold’ — is to review the stories which have most impacted your life. One of the best pieces of advice about choosing your subject comes from Mark Brown, the 1995 Toastmasters World Champion of Public Speaking. He asks the question, ‘If this was your last day on Earth, what advice would you want to share with a favorite child in your life?’

That’s a powerful question. It’s an equally powerful exercise.

In the five-step process that follows, you’ll uncover your most important and influential stories.

In your speaking file, create five columns. Record the following information in each:



**Column One:** Record the most important lessons you've learned in your life. Don't edit at this point, simply record them.

Examples of this could be: The Importance of Persistence; Why to Be Kind to Others; How Spending Money Wisely can Create Good Habits.

There is no limit to the number of ideas you can put down. Add to this list by asking friends and family the most important lessons they've learned. Some of them may resonate with you. Add those to your list.

**Column Two:** Write down the stories associated with those lessons (from Column One). Keep in mind that stories can connect to more than one message. For example, imagine a story about your grandfather. He succeeded in business after many failed attempts. He also treated every person he met with respect and fairness. This could lead to messages about persistence, or, treating people with dignity.

Again, don't edit at this point. Record every important story in your life.

**Column Three:** Record the emotions created by those stories. Remember the six common emotions:

Happiness, Anger, Sadness, Disgust, Fear, and Surprise.

You may have experienced one, two, or all six of these for each story. Just as you did in the first two Steps, record these without editing.

**Column Four:** Record the characters involved in your tale. Note that characters don't always have to be human beings. Animals can play a crucial role in your story. I've even heard great tales where inanimate objects, like books or cars, were 'brought to life' and were integral to teaching the main message.

If someone or some thing is important to selling your message, include it in this column.

**Column Five:** Write down the change that occurred in your life because of the incident. This is crucial to your story if it is going to have a lasting impact. Without change, the story doesn't provide benefit to your audience.



The types of changes you or other characters experience could be endless. An illness could have changed the amount of time you spend with family or friends; a job promotion may have changed your view of persistence; or a bankruptcy could change the way you view handling money responsibly.

You now have the first version of one of your most important speaking tools, your Story File. This file will be a source that you continually refer to, and use to create your most impactful presentations.

It's important to note that you should continually to add to this file. Long-forgotten stories will come to mind at a later time. Those that are important now could lose their impact. Some which currently don't have impact may become meaningful later.

This lesson is a critical step in the Discovery process of story creation. Your work this week will be more in-depth. The work you put in is well worth the effort, however. This is a foundational step.

This file can become a source which you can refer to when you have a last minute request to speak, you need in-depth material for a keynote address, or maybe you're looking for a topic for a speech contest.

**ACTION STEP:** Create the first version of your Story File. Use the 5-step process discussed this week. Ask others for their input; be open to new ideas as they come from your memory and from outside sources.

### **RECOMMENDED RESOURCE**

The book, "Did I Ever Tell You About the Time..." by Grady Jim Robinson. Grady Jim is a legendary speaker, a master storyteller who has a wealth of stories. His messages resonate deeply with audiences.

You'll learn from one of the best how to 'dig deep' for stories that will have the greatest impact on others. To get your copy, [click here](#).

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

## Other Recommended Resources

### 1) **52 Storytelling Tips**

In 52 weeks you'll learn World Class storytelling tools and processes that enable you to create stories that hold audiences in rapt attention, gain their trust, and compel them to take ACTION!

This series of content-rich lessons begins upon registration, and continues on a weekly basis for one year. You'll receive a weekly email with a 5-minute audio lesson and PDF copy of that week's lesson. This is a manageable dose of storytelling content each week.

You'll be able to upload each lesson and listen at your leisure whether in your home, office, or car.

This weekly program is absolutely FREE! You simply register, open the weekly audio lesson, and, if you choose, upload the PDF attachment which offers a transcription of that week's lesson.

To register, visit: <http://speakingcpr.com/52-storytelling-tips/>

### 2) **'THE Book on Storytelling'**

Public speaking and selling are two of the most essential business skills. Storytelling is the heart of each. 'THE Book on Storytelling' is designed to teach you the fundamentals of storytelling that gets results.

CEOs, salespeople, managers, and others who give presentations can benefit from this book. You'll pick up a series of proven, step-by-step process to discover, develop and deliver your unique stories.

Additionally, it is filled with recommended resources from other storytelling experts - authors, speakers, Hollywood screenwriters and more. This book gives you the tools to dig as deeply into this subject as you want.

When you implement these ideas, your stories will enable you to:

- => Become better-known in your industry
- => Create more opportunities
- => Advance your career
- => Increase your income
- => Reduce the stress and anxiety sometimes associated with creating stories
- => Develop deeper levels of trust faster with your audience

To get your copy, visit: <http://amzn.to/29MJEZF>

### 3) **'Sell More With Stories' Kindle book series**

One of the biggest challenges for salespeople is quickly attracting new clients. For many, this is a daunting task.

Why?

Because old school methods don't work - they fail to quickly break down barriers and earn trust.

If you'd like to double, or even triple, your number of new clients, then the new Kindle series 'Sell More With Stories' is for you.

Read this series and you'll discover the keys to:

- => Quickly earn trust from prospective clients
- => Shorten your sales cycle
- => Create more selling opportunities
- => Work with more qualified prospective clients
- => Enjoy the process of attracting new business
- => Work only with people you want to
- => Feel more confident in networking and social situations

To begin your journey to gain these benefits, get your copy of the first book in the series. Visit: <http://amzn.to/29nIMrn>

### 4) **'Go Ahead and Laugh: A Serious Guide to Speaking With Humor'**

Eleven professional speakers and humorists share over thirty techniques to get your audiences laughing.

Speaker and presentation coach Rich Hopkins analyzes each speech, and walks you through each titter, chuckle, and guffaw. He shows you how to apply each technique to your next speaking opportunity.

If you don't think you're funny, if you don't think your topic could possibly create a laugh - this book is for you - and your audiences that desperately want to Go Ahead and Laugh!

To get your copy, visit: <http://bit.ly/2jrS8K9>

## Michael's Raving Fans

"I would **highly recommend** Michael to anyone that has to give a speech. Michael is **the** guy that you have to get and work alongside. I've done a lot of speaking and never had an experience like I did with him to get ready for my Ted X talk. The guy's **amazing**, and I hope to work with him again in the future."

~ Anthony Muñoz, **NFL Hall of Fame**  
Founder, **Anthony Munoz Foundation**

"I'm **thrilled with the results** of our work together. Michael **patiently worked with me** to narrow down my stories to a relevant message that tied-in with the theme of the event. I **highly recommend** Michael for presentation skills coaching. He knows how to speak and teach **at a level that few can match.**"

~ Justice Richard Bernstein, **Michigan Supreme Court**

Our attendees were pleased with Michael's ideas about how to develop and deliver a World-Class Story. They left the event with a repeatable process that will help them create stories that will impact and influence others.

Michael helped us to present a **content-rich workshop** that our attendees have come to expect. I **highly recommend** Michael for speech and presentation skills coaching for your group or organization. He knows how to **speak and teach at the world-class level**, which is rare."

~ Darren LaCroix, **CSP and 2001 World Champion of Public Speaking**  
Founder & President, **The Humor Institute, Inc.**

"Investing in Michael is one of the **best investments I have ever made.** I speak on the subject of diversity in the workplace, which can at times be a difficult topic to discuss.

Michael taught me a repeatable process that allows me to create a foundational concept, a logical structure, an opening that grabs the audience's attention, and a conclusion that **encourages my audience to take action** that will save them time and money.

Michael is easy to work with, flexible with his schedule, and a wealth of information about the art of speaking. If you need to improve your presentation or speech, I **highly recommend you consider hiring Michael.** It's **one of the best investments** you can make in your own growth."

~ Natalie Holder, Founder, **QUEST Diversity**

"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.**"

~ Joanne Westwood, **Westwood Virtual Associates, LLC**

“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**

“Tonight, Michael Davis and Daniel Matthews presented a program for our NSA chapter on ‘How to Deliver Outstanding Presentations.’

“Boy, did they deliver for us! We are a group of mostly veteran speakers, with a few who are new to the business. Michael and Daniel taught each of us so much that we can use to develop our presentations and how to better tell our stories. We learned how to create our presentations in a better format. There was so much that we can use to **elevate our talks** so that we engage our audience.

**I highly recommend** Michael Davis or Daniel Matthews for your next program.

~ Vivian Blade, President 2014-2015, **National Speakers Association, Kentucky Chapter**

“From the very beginning of time, we have been telling stories. Stories are engaging, motivating, compelling, memorable. That’s why **everyone must read** Michael Davis’ ‘THE Book on Storytelling.’ It is an amazing cornucopia of tips and ideas he has collected over the years from some of the best in the field.

The title says it all. **This is ‘THE Book on Storytelling.’** There are 52 chapters, each a gem. What follows each chapter is a “Recommended Resource.” **This alone is worth the price of the book.** I can guarantee you it is THE best. And I’ve read them all.”

~ Jarold Panas, Co-Author, **‘Power Questions’**

“I just read the whole (‘Sell More With Stories’) collection. Best of the best, it as **a must** for every leader and storyteller!!!”

~ Richar Ruiz, Director of Consulting, **American University**

## Michael's Background

When asked how he earned the moniker 'the Storytelling MD,' Michael Davis replies, "Although I greatly admire the work doctors do to earn their MD, I took a different route. I didn't go to school for 8, 10 or 12 years. I have studied public speaking and storytelling skills since 2001. Also, I was born with the initials MD. Combine the two, and you get 'The Storytelling MD.'"

Michael's passion for storytelling and public speaking was not obvious early in his life. As a child, he was shy and reserved – not an indication he'd grow up to be a professional public speaker and presentation skills coach.

This is especially surprising because of an incident in first grade that caused so much embarrassment he became afraid of speaking to groups of any size. That experience carried over into adulthood.

As a young financial planner, his seminars about money were poorly delivered. He was given an ultimatum – "Become a better presenter.... or ELSE!!" This stirred up all of his anxieties about public speaking.

Because of that threat, he joined Toastmasters International in 1994. There he quickly discovered a passion for the art of public speaking. He learned that crafting and delivering impactful presentations is a learnable, repeatable skill.

In the years that followed, he became a voracious student of public speaking and storytelling. He also realized that he loves to help others improve these skills. That inspired him to start the company Speaking CPR.

In 2011, Michael earned the designation Certified World Class Speaking Coach. The processes and skills he teaches help you increase your visibility, create more opportunities for advancement, save you time, and may also increase your income.

To keep abreast of new ideas from the speaking world, he works closely with World Champion and Hall of Fame speakers. He also studies the work of Hollywood screenwriters and professional comics. This expands his knowledge of presentation skills and offers a unique perspective on these topics. Because of his dedication to the craft, Michael is sought by speakers all over the world.

He is a contributing author to three public speaking books, and is the author of 'THE Book on Storytelling' and the Kindle book series 'Sell More With Stories.' He presents public speaking and storytelling skills workshops throughout the year.

Michael also works closely with speakers in the Ted X Cincinnati event, and has successfully coached several speakers in the annual Toastmasters International World Championship of Public Speaking contest. He has been a guest expert on the podcasts: 'Speaking of Wealth,' 'Speaker Match Radio,' 'The Sales Whisperer,' and 'The Business of Story.'

Michael is a candidate member of the National Speakers Association (Kentucky Chapter) and a member of Toastmasters International.