

THE Book on Storytelling

How to Increase Your Impact,
Influence and Income with the Power of Stories.



“This book is outstanding!
It will be my new #1 storytelling resource.”

Ed Tate, CSP
Toastmasters 2000 World Champion of Public Speaking

Michael Davis, the Storytelling MD

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***How to Increase Your Impact,
Influence and Income with the Power
of Stories***

**By Michael Davis,
*the Storytelling MD***

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To every man and woman who has the courage
to stand before other people and
share your story. Keep standing up and speaking
because *you* have a story
that *someone* needs to hear.

What other people are saying about ***THE Book on Storytelling...***

“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.”

Jerold Panas, Author & Storyteller
‘Power Questions’ (co-author)

"Storytelling is one of the most highly rated and undervalued skills that all professionals need to develop. Mastering this skill is not a choice.

Michael Davis has been an active, long-time member of the World Champions Edge speaking community. In '***THE Book on Storytelling***' he has simplified what he has learned from the best storytelling techniques and presented them in an easy-to-use format. When you apply the lessons in this book **your presentation impact will increase.**"

Patricia Fripp

Partner, *World Champions Edge*; Past President, *National Speakers Association*

"Facts, figures and data are commodities of the information age. The one tool that can make your messages memorable is a well-told story.

Michael Davis has demystified the ancient art and skill of storytelling and made it accessible to the masses. '***THE Book on Storytelling***' is a cookbook that **reveals the secrets** of master storytellers.

Michael has invested hundreds of hours in this well-researched book so that you don't have to. He has extracted the essential storytelling elements and placed them at the tips of your fingers.

Apply these lessons and processes and audiences will **talk about your presentations for years to come.**”

“This book is outstanding! It will be my new #1 storytelling resource.”

Ed Tate, CSP

2000 World Champion of Public Speaking

“Human beings thrive in the presence of connection. The #1 way to connect, without question, is through storytelling. Regardless of your profession, Michael Davis’s book gives you a step-by-step blueprint to become a **more influential communicator** through the power of storytelling. If you follow his coaching, **you will become a great storyteller!**”

Jeff Bloomfield, Author

‘Story Based Selling’

“Storytelling is at the heart of all communication. Most people think they are good storytellers. They are not. We can all learn something that can make us better and more influential. Michael Davis has

compiled powerful storytelling lessons in ***THE Book on Storytelling***. Devour it.”

Darren LaCroix, CSP
2001 World Champion of Public Speaking

"If you are a speaker looking to improve your storytelling skills, **this is the book for you**. World Class Speaker Michael Davis shows you how to develop and deliver masterful stories that are sure to keep your audiences on the **edge of their seats**. This excellent collection of tools and action steps is sure to **take your storytelling to the next level**."

Mitch Meyerson, Co-Founder of ***World Class Speaking*** and Author of ***Mastering Online Marketing***

“Michael Davis’ ***THE Book on Storytelling***’ is a well researched documentary and commentary on the value and importance on the use of effective story telling as a public speaker. He has compiled a wide assortment of information from an impressive stable of industry experts and experienced speakers and coupled it with his own experience providing the reader with both **a great depth and breadth of experience**.

His work will be a **valuable resource** to anyone wishing to expand their ability to **connect with and impact** an audience.”

Lance Miller

2005 World Champion of Public Speaking

"This book has **more concrete advice** than **any** storytelling book I've read. And I've read them all."

Paul Smith, Bestselling Author

‘Lead with a Story’ and ‘Parenting with a Story’

"Story telling is an art, but behind it, there is a science and Michael Davis captures that brilliantly. He breaks the art of storytelling into bite-sized chunks so that anyone who's interested in learning the art and science of it can become a fabulous storyteller. I love every chapter name - they are clever and creative, and draw you in as if there is a story inside them. There is no better way to not only get a point across, but to make it memorable than with a story. Michael is Masterful and **this book is THE BOOK** when it comes to Storytelling.”

W. Roger Salam, Best-selling Author & Speaker
Founder of '*Winners' Circle Mastermind*'

"Take Michael's advice and have a message - it worked for me, it worked for him, and **it'll work for you!**"

Judy Carter, comedienne and Author
'*The Message of You*' and '*Stand-Up Comedy: The Book*'

Foreword

I woke up in a hotel in Mysore, India to a great surprise. On the previous day I had spoken at the Infosys Campus and told a story with the takeaway phrase, “Your dream is not for sale.” As I crept out of bed, I saw a newspaper that had been placed under my hotel room door. I noticed a rather large picture of me on the front page. However, what pleased me the most was the headline at the top of the paper. It read, “Your Dream is Definitely Not For Sale.”

I was so excited, not for the press about me, but for the fact that they remembered and even repeated my message. After all, that’s one of the main reasons to speak in the first place. You must be remembered and repeated in order to be effective. What’s the absolute best way to accomplish this? **Storytelling.**

If I had never told that story, they would never have remembered my message. Think back to the stories you were told as a child. Do you remember the ‘Boy Who Cried Wolf?’ What was the moral? Chances are you haven’t read or heard that story in many years but you still remember the point. It probably even affected, even if just in some small way, the way you live. **Stories change lives.**

The fastest and most surefire way to become an excellent and highly effective presenter is to **master the art of storytelling**. If you can tell your story and make your point, you will be light-years ahead of what most presenters can do. You will...

- Stand out from the crowd
- Be remembered and repeated
- Be in-demand whether you're a speaker, teacher, salesperson, community leader, executive, manager, politician, parent, student, etc.
- Generate lucrative opportunities that lead to significant increases in income
- Thoroughly enjoy giving presentations because of the deep impact you'll make on each audience
- Make headlines of your own!

If storytelling is the key, Michael Davis is the locksmith. He holds the keys to your success in storytelling. ***‘THE Book on Storytelling’*** will fundamentally change the way you see storytelling. As a result, more open doors will open to you than you ever thought possible.

I've met some coaches who show you *how* to discover your story. I've met others who show you how to *develop* it. Still I've met others who show you how to *deliver* it. However, Michael Davis is the **ONLY** one I've met who shows you how to do **all three!** He's truly the one-stop-shop for remarkable stories. **Each one of these 52 tools will help you capture the hearts and minds of your audience and touch their lives in a significant way.**

For example, let's take a look at one key called the *Then, Now, and How* formula. This formula will not only keep your audience hooked and on the edge of their seats, it will also get them to take the exact next step you want them to take. I've personally used it to sell a product that brings in an **extra 6 figure income every year.** That's right. One formula can lead to an additional 6 figure income.

Consider another key Michael gives. It's called *The Heart of Your Story*. Once you find out what this key is and follow Michael's advice on how to use it effectively, it will pump life into every story you give. More importantly, it will pump life into **every audience you have.** This key is what makes your presentations and your audiences come alive!

If you want more impact, more influence, and more income, ***‘THE Book on Storytelling’*** is an absolute must. The world loves stories and cherishes the storytellers. Why? Because people are suffering from a daily avalanche of too much information and they need a way to filter through it. Hence, they look to stories as shortcuts. Who wins in this cluttered new age? Storytellers.

Once you pick up Michael’s keys, don’t be surprised to find yourself waking up in a hotel room somewhere around the world and finding that your story is being remembered and repeated. After all, you’ve learned from the best.

Here’s to touching lives,

Craig Valentine
1999 World Champion of Public Speaking
Co-Author, #1 Amazon.com Bestseller, World
Class Speaking In Action

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Introduction

“Daddy, read me a book.”

If you’re a parent, you’ve probably heard those words countless times. When my son, Brenden, was small, he said those words to me every night. I would scan his bookshelf and pull out books by Dr. Seuss or “Mother Goose” or “Morris the Moose.” I read all of those books so many times that I could almost recite them word-for-word.

Why do children love stories? When I ask audiences that question, I hear a range of answers:

“Stories are entertaining, Mike.”

“Kids learn best through repetition.”

“He’s just trying to put off going to sleep.”

All of these answers are correct, of course. Children love stories for the same reasons adults do – they’re entertaining. But properly told, stories can also be educational and memorable, and they can leave a lasting impact on audiences.

Human beings have always told stories. Before the written word was invented, stories were the only means of passing on lessons from one generation to the next. Evidence of their importance can be

found all over the world, from cave drawings to Aesop's Fables to modern day golfers who spin tall tales at the country club about their prowess at the game.

Research has proven that our brains are “wired” for stories. They help us create deeper emotional connections, make it easier for us to remember lessons, and they entertain us. Stories bind us to our past and serve as a foundation for future generations.

According to an old adage in the speaking world, “If you want to make a point, tell a story. Make another point, tell another story.” With this in mind, why do most people ignore stories, and instead resort to statistics and figures to sell their messages?

My fellow World Class Speaking Coach Deidre Van Nast has pointed out that these people probably loved stories when they were younger, too. It's doubtful that at bedtime they said to their parents, “Mommy, Daddy, I don't want a book tonight. Gimme some research about Goldilocks and the three bears. What was the temperature variation of the porridge she ate? Do you have some data about the structural integrity of those chairs or focus group feedback on the proper punishment she should have received for breaking and entering? And could you put that in a

PowerPoint presentation for me? Please, Mommy and Daddy, please?”

Somewhere along the line, these purveyors of statistics and data forgot that stories are the best way to learn. But it isn't enough to just let go of the statistics and tell any old story. Have you ever listened to someone go on and on and on, seemingly without a point? Did you wonder, “Why am I listening to this?”

That's because there is one important word missing from that sage advice about making your point with a story, and the word is: well. Tell a story, yes, but you have to tell it well.

Hall of Fame speaker and executive speech Patricia Fripp says, “Your audience will not remember what you say, but what they see in their minds. Tell stories.”¹ When your story engages emotions and is relevant, people are much more likely to buy into your message. That's the ultimate benefit of mastering the art of storytelling.

Here's a question for you: Have you ever told a story with no point that left people wondering why they were listening to it?

If you have to answer yes to that question, you're not alone. Most people have yet to learn the art of effective storytelling. As a result, their stories

don't have the impact they could have. Luckily, contrary to popular belief, great speakers and storytellers aren't born, they're made. They use a set of proven processes that create audience interest, keep their attention, and compel them to take action. And these can be learned.

At first glance, the title of this book - **THE Book on Storytelling** - may seem a bit arrogant. Who am I, a little-known speaker and author, to make the claim of writing THE book about this important topic?

If this was just a collection of *my* ideas and opinions, it would be arrogant. Fortunately, that's not what this book is.

What is it? A collection of the best ideas that I've picked up from some of the best speakers and storytellers in the world. These concepts serve as the foundation for my speech coaching and my *Stand Up, Stand OUT!* series of public speaking workshops.

Using this system, you'll benefit from the years of trial and error and tens of thousands of dollars invested by my coaches and me. Over the course of 52 chapters, you'll build one skill upon another as you master this craft.

This book is meant to be an experiential tool, a step-by-step adventure to learn how to discover, develop and deliver *Stand OUT!* stories that impact audiences and compel them to act on your message. In each chapter, you'll pick up a new 'tool' or process that builds upon previous lessons.

At the conclusion of each chapter, you'll see an ACTION Step related to what you've learned. I'm a huge believer that the best way to learn to swim is to jump in the pool and start flailing! Storytelling is no different. Actually, it's safer. If you jump in a pool and fail to swim, you might drown. If you jump in the "storytelling pool" and fail, you can just dust yourself off and try again. As speaker and author Rory Vaden has said, "Mistakes are proof that you are trying." ⁱⁱ

Don't dissect or over-think every action, just do them. Test each. Get feedback. Make adjustments. Test again. Repeat until your stories create the results you want for both you and your audience. This process has worked for Hall of Fame and World Champion speakers, it will work for you, too.

When you master this process, you can reap the following benefits:

- ✓ Make more money
- ✓ Advance your career faster

- ✓ Create more opportunities
- ✓ Develop greater confidence
- ✓ Become better known in your industry or community
- ✓ Free up more time
- ✓ Reduce the stress and anxiety often involved with developing stories

My promise to you is this: Devote just a few minutes to each chapter, then practice what you learn, and you'll quickly improve. Within one year, you'll be at least three times the storyteller you are today. (While this is designed to be a year-long program, if you want to go at a faster pace, go for it!)

My hope for you is that you'll make many 'mistakes' as a result of your testing out each new idea you learn. That will mean that you're taking chances, trying new ideas, and learning. As a byproduct of those mistakes, you'll become a storyteller people can't wait to hear. The key is to **keep taking action.**

An additional benefit of this process is that, as you proceed through the book, you'll gain a deeper understanding of your individual style and will become more comfortable being yourself.

Each chapter ends with a Recommended Resource. It may be an article, video, or book written by

another expert. I've been asked "Why would you suggest that your readers invest in other author's materials?" Because they bring unique perspectives and insight, and make **‘THE Book on Storytelling’** one of the most comprehensive books available on this subject. It is meant to provide the best value in order for you to create the most impactful version of *your* stories.

Before concluding this introduction, here is your first **Action Step** (actually two):

At the end of this book, you will find *The 12 Stand OUT! Storytelling Competencies Questionnaire* in the Appendix. Complete the Questionnaire to determine the level of skill you have right now in each of the storytelling areas listed. This will help you measure your progress as you work through the book. Although it's a self-assessment, feel free to ask others if you aren't sure about your proficiency in any of these areas.

When you reach the halfway point of the book (Chapter 27), re-take the questionnaire; then again after you complete the final chapter. This will be your 'Report Card' which shows where you've had the greatest growth.

Additionally, visit the link <http://bit.ly/1xVppwx> to download your PDF copy of **THE Book on Storytelling Playbook**. This provides a document

to record your stories, thoughts, and progress. It is an additional tool to help you gauge your growth.

As we began our journey together, remember that storytelling isn't about being perfect, it's about connecting with the people who are sitting in front of you. Craft stories from your heart and convey the messages that are most important to you, and they will Stand OUT! in the hearts of your audience.

I look forward to guiding you toward becoming a storyteller who impacts lives and leaves a lasting impression.

Always remember that **you** have a story that **someone** needs to hear.

Part 1

Understanding **Why** You Should
Tell Stories
and Where to **Discover** Your *Stand*
OUT! Stories

Step 1 - Why Tell Stories?

Why are stories so important to us humans? The most obvious reason is that they create an emotional connection, but why is storytelling so effective in business?

In his book, *Lead with a Story*, author Paul Smith highlights 10 compelling reasons to tell storiesⁱⁱⁱ:

Reason 1 - Storytelling is simple. Anyone can do it. In fact, you've been doing it since you first learned how to put sentences together and say them. You don't need a college degree to tell stories.

Reason 2 - Storytelling is timeless. Because human beings have always told stories, it isn't a fad, unlike many other ideas that come along in the business world. Storytelling is especially powerful for leaders, and it always will be.

Reason 3 - Stories are demographic-proof. Everybody - regardless of age, race, socio-economic status, or gender - likes to listen to stories.

Reason 4 - Stories are contagious. The best stories spread by word-of-mouth. Before human

beings invented the written word, the only way to pass on their stories was to “tell” them. One person told another, and they were passed down through the generations. Think about stories that you’ve heard and then shared with others. In modern vernacular, your story can “go viral” in a few hours.

Reason 5 - Stories are easier to remember. According to psychologist Jerome Bruner, facts are 20 times more likely to be remembered if they are part of a story.

Reason 6 - Stories inspire. Have you ever heard someone walk out of a business meeting and say, “Wow! You’ll never believe the PowerPoint presentation I just saw!” Probably not, because most of the people walking out of a PowerPoint presentation are just rushing to get coffee and wake up.

You *have*, however, heard people say “*Wow, I just heard this great story!*” It’s why top-selling movies and books become popular.

Reason 7 - Stories appeal to all types of learners. In any group, about two out of five people will be predominantly visual learners. They learn best from videos, diagrams, or illustrations. Another two out of five will be auditory. They learn best through the spoken word, such as

lectures or discussions. The remaining one out of five people is kinesthetic, learning best by doing, experiencing, or feeling.

The best stories have aspects that work for all three types of learners. Visual learners appreciate the mental pictures that your story creates. Auditory learners focus on words and the storyteller's voice. Kinesthetic learners remember the emotional connections and feelings from a story.

Reason 8 - Stories fit better where most of the learning happens in the workplace. According to communications expert Evelyn Clark, “Up to 70 percent of the new skills, information and competence in the workplace is acquired through ‘informal learning’”^{iv} such as what happens in team settings, mentoring, and peer-to-peer communication. And the bedrock of informal learning is storytelling.

Reason 9 - Stories put the listener in a learning mode. According to bestselling author and training coach Margaret Parkin, storytelling “re-creates in us that emotional state of curiosity which is ever present in children, but which as adults we tend to lose. Once in this childlike state, we tend to be more receptive and interested in the information we are given.”^v

Author and organizational narrative expert David Hutchens points out, “Storytelling puts listeners in a different orientation. They put their pens and pencils down, they open up their posture, and just listen.” ^{vi}

Reason 10 - Telling stories shows respect for the audience. Stories get your message across without arrogantly telling listeners what to think or do. Regarding what to think, storytelling author Annette Simmons observed, “Stories give people freedom to come to their own conclusions. People who reject predigested conclusions might just agree with your interpretations if you get out of their face long enough for them to see what you have seen.” ^{vii}

To underscore the reason *why* to tell stories, especially in the workplace, corporate storyteller David Armstrong suggests, “If there was ever a time when you could just order people to do something [at work], it has long since passed. Telling a story, where you underline the moral, is a great way of explaining to people what needs to be done, without saying, ‘Do this!’” ^{viii} This answers the question “Why?”

ACTION STEP: Begin a new habit by recording stories from your life. Don’t censor. Write down whatever stories comes to mind, no matter how

minor or major. Don't be concerned about the sequence of the stories either. Just record them.

If you do this every day for 30 days, you'll develop a habit that will create a treasure trove of story material.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE: The book, *Lead with a Story*, written by Paul Smith. Paul is a former executive at Procter & Gamble. He interviewed 100 worldwide corporate leaders to determine how they use stories to lead their companies. There are great examples that you can use as models, especially for business presentations. To get your copy, visit: <http://amzn.to/1ud9FRk>.

Step 2 - 3D Storytelling

Did you see the movie, “Avatar”? If so, did you see it in a theater? I’ll never forget the night I saw the film, just a few days after Christmas. I had heard all the buzz, but as I slipped on my 3D glasses, I was skeptical.

Within a few minutes, that skepticism was replaced by awe. Director James Cameron had created a visual masterpiece, one that made me feel like I was *in* the movie. The experience struck me so deeply, I walked out of the theater and knew that, as a speaker, that was the type of experience I wanted to create for my audiences. “Avatar” and stories like it are the root of a concept called 3-dimensional (or 3D) Storytelling.

In the world of computers and film, 3D refers to the concept of creating an illusion of depth perception. The result is a ‘you are there’ experience. 3D Storytelling is designed to develop a presentation that impacts people long after they hear you speak. The benefit is twofold: It helps the audience, and also creates more opportunities for you. Like a great movie, word will spread, and others will want to hear your message. Unlike the movies, your audience will not be required to wear

those obnoxious glasses (unless, of course, you want to add that uniqueness to your presentation).

So, what is 3D Storytelling? It's a three-step process conceived by my business partner, Jamey French. It is a formula which guides you to *Discover, Develop and Deliver* your unique stories. Actually, there is a fourth D—*Depth*. The remainder of this book will center on the 3D process. You'll discover stories with depth that connect with audience's emotions. You'll develop stories with depth that capture and keep your audience's attention. You'll deliver your stories with a level of depth that makes others feel as if they are part of the story.

The end result of this is a more impactful message and you will feel a greater level of confidence, creativity, and conviction in your ability to tell meaningful stories. This will lead to improved leadership abilities, faster advancement for your career, and higher income, and many other benefits.

How can I make this claim? I've seen it work. The process has propelled my career and the careers of many others. If we did it, so can you.

One other benefit of this program is that 3D Storytelling is a repeatable process. Many speech coaches will help you create a story, and if you

need help with another speech at a later date, you can rehire that coach again. There's nothing wrong with that approach, but do you want to be dependent on another person to create every one of your presentations?

The 3D approach is similar to the proverb "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime." You are about to learn a format that you can repeat over and over. (With all respect to the previous proverb, the process doesn't discriminate. It isn't just for men.)

Let's dive in. In your next lesson, you'll be introduced to the First Dimension of 3D Storytelling, how to *Discover Your Story*.

ACTION STEP: Your assignment is to watch at least two movies or two TV shows that you enjoy. Alternatively, you can review a couple of your favorite books. See if you recognize repeatable patterns in the stories – plot structure, theme, or genre are just three of the many types of patterns you might recognize. Patterns which appeal to you may serve as keys to your own stories.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE: Visit YouTube and watch two short speeches: one from World Champion speaker Jim Key and the other from the great speaker Tony Robbins. Their stories create

an experience for the audience. Notice how each speaker masterfully wraps his story around a foundational message:

To watch Jim Key's speech, "Never Too Late," click here: <http://bit.ly/1r1ZxJ5>. To watch Tony Robbins' speech, "The Story Behind Rocky and Sylvester Stallone's Success," click here: <http://bit.ly/1r1ZI73>.

Step 3 - Discover Your Story, Part 1 – *Uncover Your Most Meaningful Stories*

Randy Harvey is the 2004 World Champion of Public Speaking. He is also an attorney, a former school administrator, and a successful professional speaker. Most importantly (for our purposes) he's a passionate student of the art of public speaking. He offers a unique perspective that can help you as you dive deeply into your stories.

Before Randy agrees to work with someone on their presentations, he asks them to consider three important questions. They (and you) may never be able to fully answer them. In his words, “you will continually answer these questions for the rest of your life, gaining a deeper understanding of the questions.”^{ix}

Carefully give these questions thought as you prepare your stories. Your answers will help you develop messages that resonate deeply with audiences. They will also help you be remembered long after you speak.

Question #1 – *Who are you?* Nothing like a good, metaphysical question to start you off, right? Even more than the other two, this is the question you

may never fully answer. There are some additional questions that can help you answer this one:

1. *What do you most believe in?*
2. *What are the roles you play in life?*
3. *What is your philosophy of life?*
4. *Why do you do what you do?*
5. *What would the ideal you look and feel like?*

Question #1 can't be answered in just a few minutes. That's because it's meant to get to the essence of who you are. As your life changes and you experience more events, you will gain more insight into the "real you." Once you're willing to share these insights about your personality with audiences, you'll create stories that continually resonate at deeper levels.

Question #2 - *What are you about?* Some additional questions to help answer this one are:

1. *What are your core values?*
2. *How do you spend your time?*
3. *If time and money were not issues, what would you do with your time and your life? Who would you spend that time with? Where would you go?*
4. *Which values do you believe in so strongly that you would die for them? (For example: Freedom? Family? Love?)*

I know what you may be thinking right about now. “Michael, I just want to learn to tell stories. I just got started with this program, and you’re hitting me with these deep, philosophical questions! What’s up with you?”

I understand. Answering these questions will be the most difficult tasks you encounter in this course. They are placed early in the program because when you do this type of work, you are ahead of most storytellers (probably 95% or more). I promise this will pay off in big ways as you progress through the book. They are part of the foundation of your evolving storytelling skills.

The answers to this second question will unlock your core values. These are the connectors that will develop a bond with your audience and inspire them to act on your message.

Question #3 - *Where did you learn these values?*

Who or what taught you those beliefs you hold most dear? Was it a person or persons? Was it an idea you picked up from a book? Did you hear it in a class?

Wherever it came from, it was a point of change in your life. Change is the payoff that audiences are waiting for. Your best stories will be born from this third question. The answers to this will provide the catalyst for the change you

experienced and that other people might want to go through.^x

With the insight you gain from these questions, you will also have a deeper understanding of your *WHY*. In his bestselling book, *Start With WHY*, author Simon Sinek discusses the power of correctly answering the question, “What do you do?”

Most people respond with answers like, “I’m a lawyer” or “I’m a teacher.” The problem with these answers is that they don’t get to the core of why you do the work you do or why you are the person you are. Attorneys probably don’t get up in the morning eager to practice law. They do it to defend the wrongly accused or to prevent injustice. Most teachers are motivated more by the idea of molding young minds and helping kids reach their full potential.

Mr. Sinek believes that when you first answer the question by explaining why you do something, you create a deeper emotional connection and develop longer-term relationships.

This is also true with storytelling. When you answer the three questions in this lesson, you begin to understand yourself better, including why you do what you do. You will have a deeper understanding of your true nature—the “real you.”

With this new knowledge, you'll be able create stories that won't simply entertain; they'll impact others and change the way they think, feel, or act. Ultimately, that is why you stand up and speak to any audience. It's the greatest gift you can give them.

ACTION STEP: Answer Randy Harvey's three questions. Remember, this is just the first step in a journey of deeper self-discovery. Once you start the process, you'll want to go back again and again to understand yourself in new ways. If ever an exercise proved the Chinese proverb, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," it's this one.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE: The book previously mentioned in this lesson, *Start With WHY*, by Simon Sinek. This is not a book about speaking or storytelling, but it's a terrific next step to follow the lesson in this chapter.

Mr. Sinek has changed the points of view of people all around the world with this classic work. Once you understand your own "why," your influence and impact on others will change dramatically. To get your copy, visit: <http://amzn.to/1i65OV3>. If you'd like to watch Mr. Sinek's highly rated YouTube video, *Start With Why*, visit: <http://bit.ly/1r1ZTiO>.

Step 4 - Discover Your Story, Part 2 – *Your Story File*

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 and/or had little passion. Did you get the full benefit of that talk?

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

The key to uncovering your subject matter—your storytelling gold, if you will—is to review the stories that have most impacted your life. One of the best pieces of advice about choosing your subject comes from Mark Brown, Toastmasters 1995 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 and an equally powerful exercise. In the five-step process that follows, you will uncover your most important and influential stories.

To begin, create a new storytelling file with five columns. Record the following information in each:

Column One: Write down or type 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*; *Be Kind to Others*; *Spend Money Wisely*; *Don't Steal*.

Then, ask friends and family the most important lessons they've learned. Some of them may resonate with you. Add those to your list. There is no limit to the number of ideas you can add.

Column Two: Document the stories associated with the lessons in column one. Keep in mind that stories can connect to more than one message. For example, a story about your grandfather, who succeeded in business after many failed attempts and also treated every person he met with respect and fairness, 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. World Champion of Public Speaking David Brooks has noted that human beings share six basic emotions: *Happiness, Anger, Sadness, Disgust, Fear, and Surprise*.^{xi} You may have experienced one, two, or all six of these for each story. Just as you did in the first two columns, don't edit this information.

Column Four: Include all of 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 stories in which inanimate objects like books or cars were brought to life and became integral to the teaching of the main message. If some one or some thing is important to selling your message, put it in column four.

Column Five: Record the change that occurred in your life because of the incident. This is crucial to your story if it's 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 can be endless. An illness could have changed the amount of time you now spend with

family or friends; a job promotion may have altered your view of persistence; or a bankruptcy might have adjusted how you manage money.

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

You should continually add to this file. Long-forgotten stories will come to mind at a later time, while some that are meaningful now will likely lose their impact over time. Others with little importance now may become more significant later.

This lesson is a critical step in the Discovery process. Your work in this chapter will be more in-depth. The time you put in is well worth the effort. This is a foundational step. Your story file can become a source which you can refer to when you have a last minute request to speak, when you need material for a keynote address, or when 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 in this lesson.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE: The book *Did I Ever Tell You About the Time...* by Grady Jim

Robinson. Grady Jim is a legendary speaker with a wealth of stories. His messages resonate deeply with audiences. Study this book, and you'll better understand how to weave emotions into your stories. To get your copy, visit: <http://amzn.to/1lIczyc>.

Step 5 - The Six Common Emotions

The first time you heard the fable of the tortoise and the hare, you were probably surprised by the outcome. “There’s no way that tortoise could beat the hare!” When you first saw the movie “Jaws,” you were probably afraid to go back in the ocean. “I’m not going out there where a great white can have me for a tasty afternoon snack!”

When you read *The Diary of Anne Frank*, you no doubt felt anger at the plight of Anne’s family and surprise by the insight of a teenage girl who, despite her tragic circumstances, concluded, “I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are really good at heart.”

Stories have the power to move us in a way that facts and figures cannot. For example, history books will tell you that millions of lives were lost during the Holocaust. As terrible as those numbers are, it’s hard to emotionally grasp the significance of so many people gone. When individual stories from that time period are told, however, they can stir your emotions at a deep level.

The insight of a girl like Anne Frank or the heroic efforts of Oskar Schindler, who saved the lives of

over 1,200 (and was portrayed in the movie “Schindler’s List”) resonate with audiences, and they’re remembered years after they’re told.

Even the simplest of stories can connect if they stir feelings in the listener. So, how can you ensure that your stories connect emotionally? Tie them into common experiences. Remember the six most common emotions: Happiness, Anger, Sadness, Disgust, Fear, and Surprise. Without exception, every effective story I’ve heard strikes a chord with at least one of these.

The power of story goes beyond tapping into the six common emotions, though. The ultimate benefit of many stories is providing the audience with *hope*. This may be the greatest gift you can give anybody. The “Star Wars” films at their core are about redemption. The movie “It’s a Wonderful Life” is about the value of every person’s life. “Titanic” offers the belief that love can conquer time and death itself. *Hope*.

Legendary Hollywood screenwriter Robert McKee has said, “Given the choice between trivial material brilliantly told versus profound material badly told, an audience will always choose the trivial told brilliantly” ^{xii} How can your story be well-told? Start with the six emotions.

You don't have to be a famous author or Hollywood director to impact lives. In a world that too often focuses on negativity, your stories can provide the hope that others need. Tap into the human desire to hear stories, wrap them around meaningful messages, tie in at least one of the six common emotions, and you will take a huge step to becoming a presenter who inspires others to change the way they think, feel, or act.

ACTION STEP: Review the stories in your story file and determine how you can add more emotions created by each. The more feelings generated, the more likely you'll connect with your audience at a deeper level.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE: The book *Story: Substance, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting* by Robert McKee. Mr. McKee is a legendary Hollywood screenwriter who is widely known for his popular "Story Seminar."

This book isn't just for screenwriters. Speakers and presenters in many fields attend his workshop and seek his expertise. He will expand your knowledge of the storytelling genre so that you'll never watch TV or movies the same. Put his tools and ideas to good use, and your audiences will never see you the same either. To get your copy, visit: <http://amzn.to/1sTyUqT>.

THE Book on Storytelling

Michael Davis

“...The title says it all. Note, this is THE book on storytelling. I can guarantee you, it is THE best. And I’ve read them all...”

~Jerold Panas, storyteller and co-author of ‘Power Questions’

“When you apply the lessons in this book your presentation impact will increase.”

~ Patricia Fripp, Partner, World Champions Edge
Past President, National Speakers Association

THE Book on Storytelling offers a step-by-step process that teaches you how to build one skill upon another. When you reach the last page of this book, you will have a formula that enables you to discover, develop and deliver your most powerful stories that help you:

- ✓ Become better known in your industry
- ✓ Advance your career or business faster
- ✓ Increase your income
- ✓ Save years of learning time
- ✓ Have fun when you share your story with others

Invest in this book and become a presenter who Stands OUT! every time you tell your story!



Speaker, Coach and Author Michael Davis, the Storytelling MD, has studied and worked with Hall of Fame and World Champion speakers since 2001. They have taught him repeatable and time tested processes that you can now incorporate to take your stories to a world class level.

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