

# Success Stories

**ASTD**

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**Lynda McDaniel**  
**Director**



Association for Creative Business Writing



**FM**  
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***“People don’t want more information. They are up to their eyeballs in information. They want faith—faith in you, your goals, your success, in the story you tell.”***

- Annette Simmons, *The Story Factor*

**Success Stories**

# The challenge of the written word



# Stories to the rescue!

Set you apart

Stickier  
messages

Stories activate your  
brain in ways far  
more creative than  
lectures.

Trigger  
emotions



EMOTIONS

***“[A story] takes people out of their critical left brain and switches them into their emotionally engaged right brain. They are no longer on the outside judging your idea; they are inside experiencing it. That’s the essence of buy-in.”***

- Sam Horn, *POP*, (Pg. 174.)

**Success Stories**



**Six structural stages**

**Integrate stories**



**Creative techniques**

**Story inventory**

**Build your confidence**

# HELLO

my name is

1. Turn to a partner.
2. Tell about your name, e.g.,
  - How you got it.
  - What you like about it.
  - What you hate about it.

## Six structural stages

Integrate stories



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**Where can  
you use  
stories?**



**Presentations**

**White Papers**

**Blogs**

**Elevator Speech**

**Reports**

**Articles**

**Books**

**Speeches**

**Newsletters**

**Coaching**

**Cover letters**

**Meetings**

**Proposals**



# Stories for trainers

1. Who I am.
2. Teaching.
3. I know what you're thinking.

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# Who I am

1. Build trust, cooperation.
2. Offer personal stories/struggles.
3. Preempt objections.

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# Teaching

1. Your vision.
2. Telling isn't training.
3. Complexity vs. "skill-set modules"

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# I know what you're thinking

1. Preempt objections.
2. Read their minds.
3. Dispel fears.

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**STORIES SHOW  
(NOT TELL) US  
HOW TO ACT.**

***“Storytelling doesn't replace analytical thinking ... It supplements it by enabling us to imagine new perspectives and new worlds. ... Abstract analysis is easier to understand when seen through the lens of a well-chosen story.”***

***- Daniel Pink, A Whole New Mind.***

**Success Stories**

# Know your audience

- Write *to* them, not *at* them.
- Answer WIIFM?
- Offer solutions.



# Bullets can be deadly

You need to:

- Work closely with your staff.
- Show empathy.
- Encourage their participation.
- Get results.

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**Tell a story**





# Six steps to successful stories

1. Hook
2. Scene
3. Complications
4. Development
5. Resolution
6. Conclusions/action

Success Stories



**Pains**

**Questions**

**Solutions**

**Benefits**

**What ifs**

**Forecasts**

**Foreshadowing**

# Set the scene

1. Take your readers there.
2. Use senses.
3. Add description.

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# Let's write!

1. Think of a story:
  - Memorable action by a boss (good or bad)
  - Kindness of strangers
  - Amazing serendipity
2. Create a hook and set the scene for your audience.

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# Explore conflict/complications



# Complications

1. Inner conflict
2. Interpersonal conflict
3. External/universal conflict

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An open white door is shown from a low angle, leading out to a vast, flat green field under a clear blue sky. The door is slightly ajar, and the view through it is sharp and bright. The field extends to the horizon, with a faint path or track visible in the distance. The overall scene is bright and open, symbolizing opportunity and growth.

**Development:**

**Tie into  
a bigger  
message.**

# Development

1. Simple and clear
2. Brief
3. Concrete
4. Fresh, yet credible
5. Relevant

Success Stories





## Find resolution:

- Brisk
- Compelling
- Clear

# Offer conclusions/action

1. Make the conclusion the logical next step.
2. Inform and inspire.
3. Incite action.
4. Put message to work.

Success Stories

- 1. Turn to a partner.**
- 2. Briefly tell your favorite story.**
- 3. Explain it's conflict and resolution.**
- 4. Explore situations in which you can use it.**





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# Tap into storytellers' toolkit

1. Foreshadowing
2. Alliteration
3. Rhythm and rhyme
4. Vivid Verbs
5. Senses

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# Foreshadowing

1. When we started our reorganization process, we had no idea it would play out the way it did. We followed four key steps and a little later I'll share with you how we got a lot more than we bargained for.

2. We didn't know at the time what effect our actions would have on the company's bottom line. Later, I'll go over each step so this won't happen to you.

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# Alliteration

Lyrical repetition of initial consonant sounds in two or more neighboring words or syllables

- *wild and woolly*
- *threatening throngs*
- *Better Business Bureau*
- *Words that make you wealthy.*
- *Grammar Girl*

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# Vivid verbs

Sometimes, "to be" verbs get the job done right. But too many "is," "are," = an audience that's z-z-z-z.

(To be) *She is very tall.*

(Vivid) *She looms over the class.*

(To be) *The copy is full of errors.*

(Vivid) *Errors choke the copy—and its message.*

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# Use the senses

- Fiction writers do it. Why should they have all the fun?
- Show, don't tell:
  - Shaking hands as they try a complicated device?
  - Frowning, muttering under their breath, or scratching their heads?
  - Laughing?

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# Senses

Put yourself in the situation and imagine it fully—the feelings, smells, tastes, sounds, and sights. Not all senses are appropriate, so pick a few to trigger your readers' emotions and immerse them in your message.

- The quiet penetrated the office.
- The office reeked of school lunches.
- The staff welcomed his laughter, loud and deep.

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# Rhythm and rhyme

- Rhyming phrases = easier to remember.
- As we read, we hear words, so rhythm is important.
- Rhyming adds to flow.
  - *From boring to soaring.*
  - *Have fun, even when you're under the gun to get the job done.*
  - *Living rough is tough.*
- Stuck for a rhyme? Go to [www.rhymezone.com](http://www.rhymezone.com)

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# Let's write!

Take another look at the story you just started.

Can you add:

- Senses to your scene?
- Foreshadowing?
- Vivid verbs?

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# Tell stories in stages

Encourage readers to keep reading

Thread story throughout

Tie it all together at the end.



# Bright ideas: Observe & interview

A hand holding a glowing lightbulb against a blue sky with clouds and a green field. The lightbulb is the central focus, emitting a bright white glow. The background is a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds, and a green field is visible at the bottom. The overall scene is bright and positive, symbolizing ideas and innovation.

- Take out the ear buds.
- Pay attention.
- Start eavesdropping.
- Interview bosses, colleagues, clients.

# **Don't trust your memory!**

- Index cards
- Small journals
- Recorders
- Cell phones





## **Story Inventory**

- **Snorkeling in Key West**
- **Waitress @ Waffle House**
- **Boeing contract**
- **Dreadful first drafts**
- **Janitor brainstorming**
- **Dressing Junior**

# More story sources

1. Fables
2. Parables
3. Historical stories
4. Colleagues' stories
5. Current events
6. Books
7. Movies

**Practice and test.**  
**Play to your audience.**





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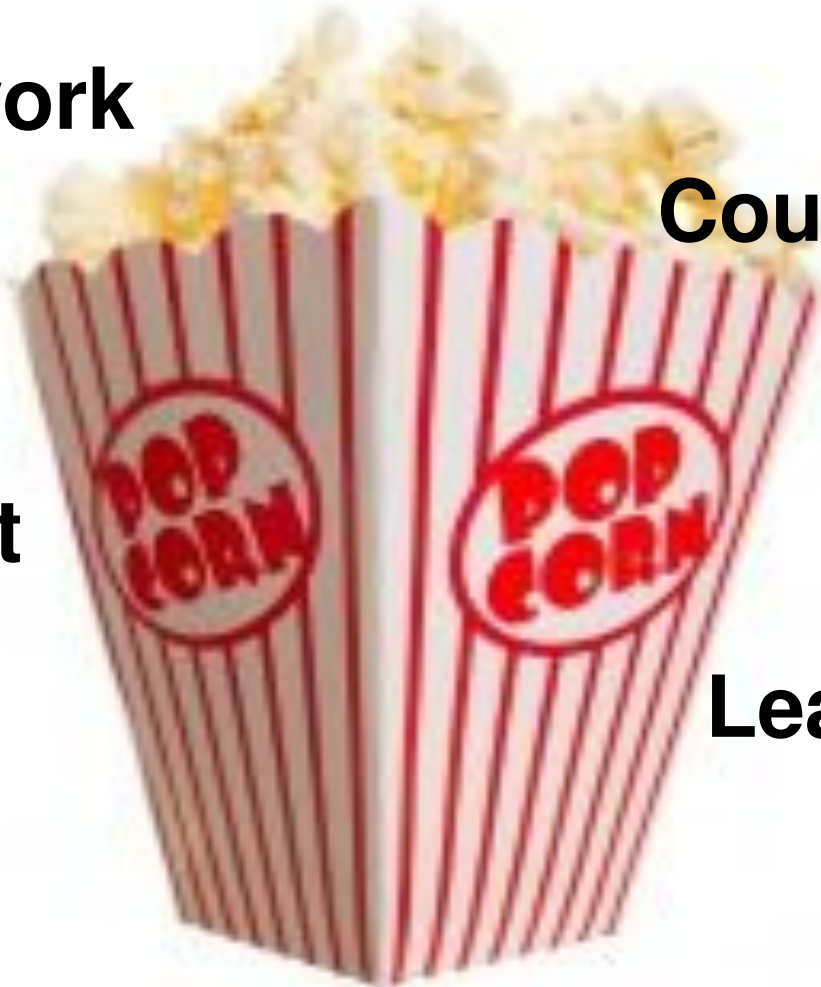
# Let's go to the movies!

**Teamwork**

**Courage**

**Trust**

**Leadership**





# **Teamwork**

**“Shawshank Redemption”**

**“Stand By Me”**

**“Finding Forrester”**

**“My Dog Skip”**



# **Courage**

**“Erin Brockovich”**

**“To Kill a Mockingbird”**

**“Chariots of Fire”**

**“Cider House Rules”**

**“Ghandi”**

**“The Miracle Worker”**



# **Trust**

**“You Can Count on Me”**

**“Spitfire Grill”**

**“The Winslow Boy”**





# **Leadership**

**“Ghandi”**

**“To Kill a Mockingbird”**

**“Star Wars”**

**“Star Trek”**

**“Schindler's List”**

# Redemption

Without it, stories are just blathering.

Redemption doesn't mean saccharine platitudes—just that something moved forward:

- Understanding
- Appreciation
- Courage
- Energy

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**Build your confidence**



- 1. Turn to a partner.**
- 2. Share your favorite new idea.**
- 3. Explain how you'll use more stories at work.**



# Thanks!

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Let me know if questions come up for you:  
[director@afcbw.com](mailto:director@afcbw.com)



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