

Story Tell... Story Sell!

by Craig Harrison

Nothing succeeds like success! And in sales, nothing succeeds quite like success stories.

Are you sharing yours? Why not?

The secret is in how you share your successes.



LEARN TO TELL THIRTY-SECOND "SUCCESS STORIES." During sales calls, a quick-hitting story can make or reinforce a point in memorable fashion. Success stories may be told in response to a question, to serve as a testimonial, or even as an aside. Did you know you have a storied past?

Stories work for several reasons: they're more memorable than numbers, names and dates; and listeners enjoy the drama: a problem followed by a solution, a mystery solved with a twist, or a creative workaround to a seemingly insurmountable obstacle. Also, your listener can find him or herself in the story. A good story will resonate with prospects.

According to Gay Ducey, a Past President of the National Storytelling Association, "We're wired for stories, individually and collectively. Since the time of Odysseus we've been told stories. Since we were little kids we've been read and told stories. This is how we've been conditioned to learn; our morals and our values are taught through stories."

Look at your sales history and pick out an accomplishment. Now tell the story behind the accomplishment. It states that you helped a past client increase sales 60%. But tell how you did it. Cite a “before vs. after” description. What was the secret? Stories that reveal secrets captivate.

The Three S's Of Success Stories

Success stories offer a setting, a situation and a solution. Remember, you're the hero of your stories. Your decisions, actions and insights made the difference.

Here is an example:

“We recently received a call from a merchant unhappy with their current vendor. They were paying high fees, receiving poor service and experiencing frequent security breaches. In short order we were able to launch a wireless processing system that was more secure, more reliable and even less expensive. Through customization we were able to address their foreign and domestic needs, which is a strength of ours.”

Not only does this success story demonstrate an ISO's ability to solve problems, it showcases an understanding of business, markets and methods.

Stories can demonstrate your professionalism, customer service, researching ability, creativity, problem solving inclination or other strengths. Here are a few examples:

- Your analysis of existing processing statements and identification of cost savings
- Your experience with a variety of systems and payment methods: credit, debit, phone and gift cards, etc.
- Your skill in designing billing systems that cross borders and time zones and convert currencies

Review your past work history and identify the stories within each accomplishment. Now tell them to others. Don't forget the moral to your story: the point the story tells about you (and your firm), your skills and credits. And remember, yours is a never-ending story. ■

Craig Harrison is a professional speaker, corporate trainer and communication consultant who makes customer service and communication fun and easy. Contact him at 888.450.0664 or through solutions@craigspeaks.com for help in improving your customer service orientation and communication skills. Visit his website at www.craigspeaks.com for more resources and solutions.

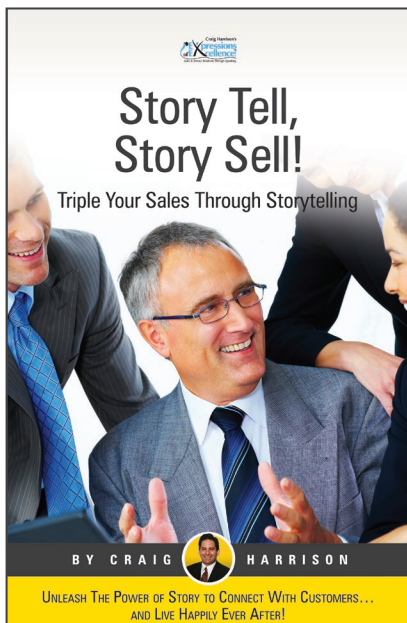


Photo by Julie Brown.

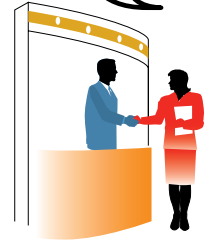
“Once Upon a Job...”

SALES THROUGH STORYTELLING: *STORY TELL, STORY SELL*

“It reminds me of a recent client...”



Harnessing the Power of Storytelling To Sell Your Consulting Services, Skills And Products



One of the most powerful ways to connect with prospects, customers, clients, colleagues, co-workers and others is through storytelling. As humans we're hard-wired for stories. We're conditioned to respond to them...and we do!

Why Stories Work

Stories resonate with listeners. They allow the listener to connect emotionally with the storyteller. Listeners hear themselves in the stories they are told. Best yet, stories are memorable. Facts and figures are forgettable. A good story is remembered and retold. And here's a secret: you have a storied past!

Success Stories Sell

“Success” stories succinctly showcase your skills, past accomplishments, values and style. Through your story a listener can easily gauge your professionalism, confidence level and acuity, and so much more. As a result, they like, trust and buy from you!

Learning Objectives

- ▶ Use Craig's Setting-Situation-Solution telling format
- ▶ Mine your past for “success” stories
- ▶ Learn to tap universal themes through your stories
- ▶ Receive tips, coaching and practice telling yours

How the Presentation is Delivered

Participants take past accomplishments and tell the story behind them, using Craig's format and template. Craig shares sample stories to showcase multiple qualities and helps each attendee craft theirs. A fabulous worksheet assists attendees in developing and delivering their stories live!

About Your Presenter

Craig Harrison has been telling stories since he went door-to-door at age eleven selling Used Jokes. He's told stories in China, Jonesborough TN and throughout North America. The founder and principal of Expressions of Excellence!™, Craig is vice-chair of the STORYTELLING ASSOCIATION OF ALTA CALIFORNIA, founder of the NATIONAL SPEAKERS ASSOCIATION's Storytellers PEG and past president of the NSA's Northern California chapter. A humorous storyteller himself, Craig will help your group tell their stories with signature style and ease.



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