

STORYTELLING

Training materials

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Introduction

The starting point for presenting an idea is the story. It is obvious to say that if we do not inform those around us about what we would like to do, although a concept has been arranged in the head, and sometimes refined to the last detail, it does not exist objectively. That is why it is so important to prepare your story well. We use it intuitively, and although it may seem that some have a gift for telling stories and others do not, in practice, as with any skill, we should work in order to improve the quality of our stories. In the area of business, the process of preparing a story about your own activities, products or services is called storytelling. You can prepare yourself to create good stories for your business needs. The following document contains tips that will allow you to build your own narrative step by step. The following example illustrates how important skilful storytelling can be:

"Grzegorz Kosson, a strategist and writer who runs Brands & People, the first storymarketing agency in Poland and storytelling workshops teaching the ability to build and use stories, begins with a story taken from the book "Gulag" by Anne Applebaum. The author describes, among others, survival strategies of Gulag prisoners. One of them consisted in telling exciting stories to fellow prisoners and captors.

In a world deprived of books and films, these stories were worth their weight in gold. Everyone was waiting impatiently for the next part of the story. That is why they protected the life and health of those who were endowed with a talent for narrative. "This picture shows how much strength stories have. From a biological point of view, the story does not have any function. And yet, sometimes it can decide on survival" - notes Grzegorz Kosson, the author of the first Polish book on storytelling "Pass it on, or how to create a thrilling story for a brand", an expert on marketing communication and value management"¹.

1. Getting out of hiding

Dr Monika Górská in her article "The 3 most important rules of storytelling" writes:

"World War II ended in 2005. At least for two Japanese soldiers, who were found in the Philippines in 2005. Yoshio Yamakawa and Tsuzuki Nakauchi, soldiers of the Imperial Army, could not re-join their unit after one of their offensives. Fearing the accusation of desertion, for which they were threatened with death, they lived in hiding for 60 years, in the belief that the war was still going on. Well, we, when communicating with customers or colleagues, sometimes behave like these soldiers, hiding in the belief that the war is still going on. What war? For conviction, for the market, for who is better, price war, words of war and arguments. Many people live in the belief that there is a war going on and you have to fight your corner hard. And I want to propose to you today ... Ending the war.

I suggest you move to a new, higher level of communication with customers and colleagues. But you have to get out of hiding. Do you know what word was most often repeated during the international Content Marketing conference in Arizona last October? Regardless of whether the speaker was Jeff Walker, Dean Graziosi or

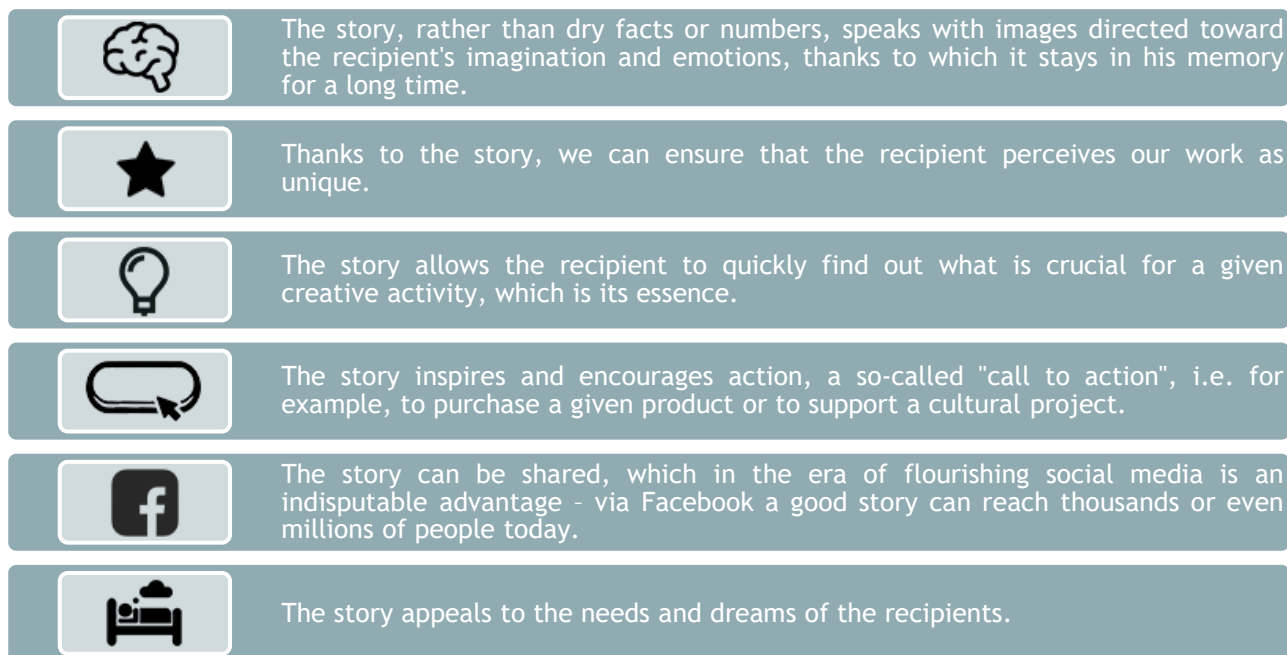
¹ Monika Maciejewska, "How to tell stories that are captivate. This skill is useful in business and personal life.", <https://www.focus.pl/artykul/storytelling-jak-opowiada-historie-ktre-porywaj?page=2>, on 12.12.2018



Brandon Burchard - this was the most common word: Storytelling. And immediately after it: authenticity².

It's hard not to agree that it is the decision to create a story and disseminate the results that actually causes the existence of an idea, company, brand, or product. The more so because storytelling is an increasingly common tool that allows the establishing of a real relationship between the sender and the recipient.

Figure 1. Why the story?



Source: study based on, Dorota Tuskowska, "Storytelling in content marketing - the captivating power of the narrative"³

² Dr Monika Górka, "The 3 most important rules of storytelling" <https://sprawnymarketing.pl/zasady-storytelling/>, on 12.12.2018

³ Dorota Tuskowska, "Storytelling in content marketing - the captivating power of the narrative", <https://www.whitepress.pl/baza-wiedzy/80/storytelling-w-content-marketingu-%E2%80%93-porywajaca-moc-narracji>, on 12.12.2018



2. Triggering emotions

To illustrate well what storytelling is in practice, it's best to use examples. Below are references to two short films whose leitmotif is to spread good.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bL9KEaike8U>

Material description: A small boy was caught stealing. The chemist is yelling at him and creating a fuss in the middle of the street. One of the witnesses of the event is the owner of a catering point. He approaches the boy and asks if these stolen medicines are for his mother. The boy nods, crying. The seller pays for the medicines and gives the boy vegan soup for his mother. The boy takes the package and runs home crying all the time. Thirty years later, the same seller, much older, weakens at work and goes to hospital. His daughter receives a list of medical expenses that mean she must sell her father's property. The point is closed and a sign with the word "for sale" appears on its door. One day, the owner's daughter, wakes up at his bed in the hospital and notices a card near his hand. There is a bill for the treatment on the sheet, the amount "0" is shown in the summary. Under the amount, the doctor wrote: "All costs were paid 30 years ago, three painkiller tablets and a portion of vegan soup". It turns out that the attending physician is the very boy whom the seller helped all those years ago.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBmaXMQI60E>

Material description: An elderly lady is with her grandchildren in a store. You can see that they are shopping carefully looking for products at the lowest price. The girl picks up some products, as if she wanted to buy them, and then sadly puts them back on the shelf. At one point, the old lady tells her to find a birthday present for her grandfather. The girl goes to the fridge with cakes, from which a young man takes out the last cake. As he realizes that the girl would like this last cake he sadly gives it to her. At the checkout, it turns out that the family cannot afford their shopping and have to give up the cake. The girl is very sorry, she does not understand why she must leave the cake despite her grandfather's birthday. The depressed family leaves the cash register. The young man, who witnessed the event, approaches the checkout. He buys the cake put aside by the cashier; it looks like he is happy that he will have it. After a while he catches up with the family and gives the girl the cake. At first the old lady is ashamed and refuses to accept the gift for her granddaughter; however, the man insists. He tells the story of how when he was a child he could not have a cake because of poverty. Then a man bought one for him. He remembered him simply as a man in the queue and because he could not repay him, he is doing so now by giving to someone else. The elderly lady asks the man to leave his contact details. He smiles mysteriously, appears to write his number and hands it to the girl, asking her, if she is able one day, to give to someone in need. When asked about his name, he replies that he is a "man from the queue". The family returns home and the granddaughter with a smile hands the cake to her grandfather. They tell him what happened to them and hand him the card that was supposed to have the man's number on it. On the card instead of the number is written "simple acts of goodness create an endless spiral." This is exactly the same sentence as the grandfather had once written on a card, while giving a cake to a little boy in a cake shop.

It is worth considering what makes these materials become popular around the world in a short time, gaining hundreds of thousands of views. It is not difficult to notice that the key here is the arousing of strong **emotions** in the viewer. Thanks to the story, it is possible for the audience to identify with the characters and establish relationships. Stories affect emotions and stimulate action. Of course, the issue of emotions is just one of many interpretative keys.

Researchers argue that a good narrative goes to the recipient at the neurological level:

"A captivating movie, a thrilling book that we absorb in one night, friends' stories from holiday journeys. Why do we like to listen to someone else's adventures? The



answer is our social nature and biology. When someone is sympathetic and kind to us, oxytocin is released into our body. It is thanks to this that we are able to feel empathy towards that person, trust her and cooperate with her. Interestingly, oxytocin appears not only in contact with another person, but also when listening to a story. The result is that we begin to feel the emotions of the characters of the story we are listening to. We feel as if we were experiencing the adventure with them. That's why we are moved by reading "The Thief of Books", a screening of "The Fast and the Furious" encourages us to sit behind the wheel of a car, and after "Dirty Dancing" we want to sign up for a dance course. But this is not everything! Research by American cognitive scientist Uri Hasson shows that the brains of the person telling the story and his listener are synchronized! At specific moments, the same areas of the brain are activated in them. The degree of synchronization depends on how well the story is told⁴.

Figure 2. How stories influence the recipient's brain



Source: <https://culturaldetective.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/brainonstorytelling-onespot.png>⁵

Exercise (15 min.)

- What would you like to tell a story about, above all? *Oral*
- What emotions will your story evoke in the recipients? *Oral*
- What stories about your activity most affect your interlocutors? Why? *Oral*

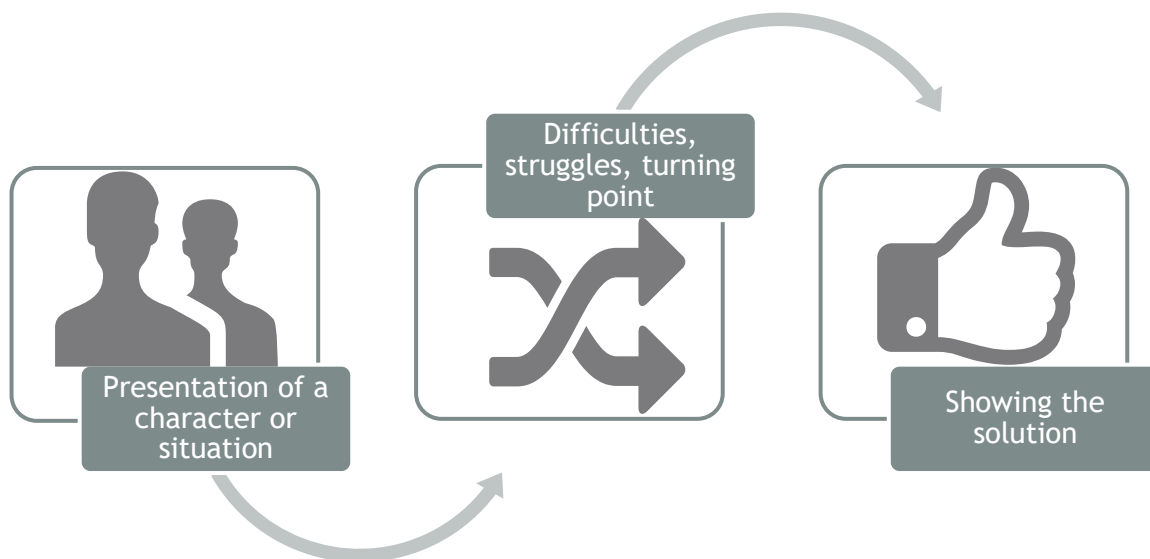
⁴ Monika Filipkowska, "Tell me a story - about website storytelling", <https://www.grupa-tense.pl/blog/tell-me-a-story-czyli-o-website-storytelling/>, on 12.12.2018

⁵ <https://culturaldetective.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/brainonstorytelling-onespot.png>, on 12.12.2018

3. Building a narrative

Good stories are characterized by certain constants. The greatest works of literature or film have so-called turning points at specific points, where, for example, the hero changes or there is a breakthrough in the action, or a solution is found. These turning points usually appear in specific parts of the work. The beginning of the work is a representation of a character or situation, later we observe the struggles of the main character, crowned with a turning point, followed by a solution.

Figure 3. The canonical parts of a story



Source: own work

The method of composition can be traced on the basis of an Allegro advertisement:

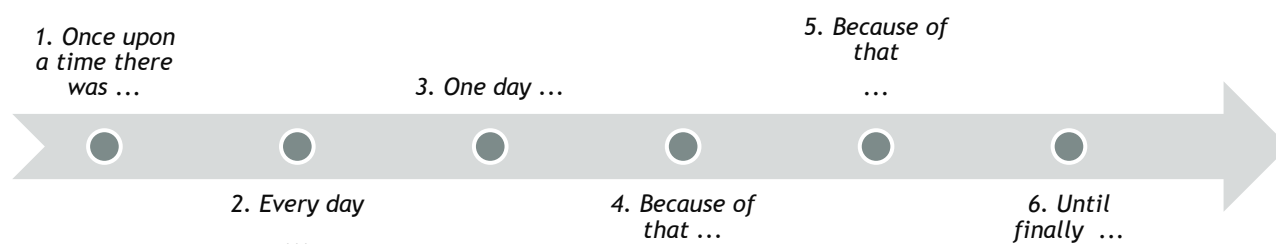
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tU5Rnd-HM6A>

Material description: An elderly gentleman orders a package of English language materials online. From that moment, learning accompanies him in various life situations: on the appliances in the house there are self-adhesive sticky notes with English names, the man listens on headphones and repeats various formulas in a variety of situations, such as on the bus and in the park, the man practices in front of the mirror, and often speaks English aloud even to the rubber duck in the bath. You can see that he is very motivated. Then the man buys something else over the Internet. The courier brings him a package with an airplane suitcase. The man packs while saying the English names of the items he has in his suitcase. While travelling to England, he repeats the phrases he has learned, including "Hi, I am ...". Finally, he reaches his son's home in England. He is welcomed by his son and his partner. After a while a little boy comes out of his room shyly. Clearly overcome, he says to him, "Hi, I'm your grandpa."

At the beginning, we become acquainted with the main character. Due to the characteristic appearance and, above all, the age of the main character, we automatically get to know him based on him fitting the stereotype and we become sympathetic toward him. We also see that he faces a task which is time-consuming and difficult for him. At the end, thanks to the turning point, we find out about his motivation and at the same time experience strong emotions, we also appreciate the Allegro brand that helped the main character.

In the 22 principles of creating a fairy tale according to Pixar, the fourth principle is a table of contents of an exemplary fairy tale.

Figure 4. The fourth principle of creating a fairy tale according to Emma Coats from Pixar

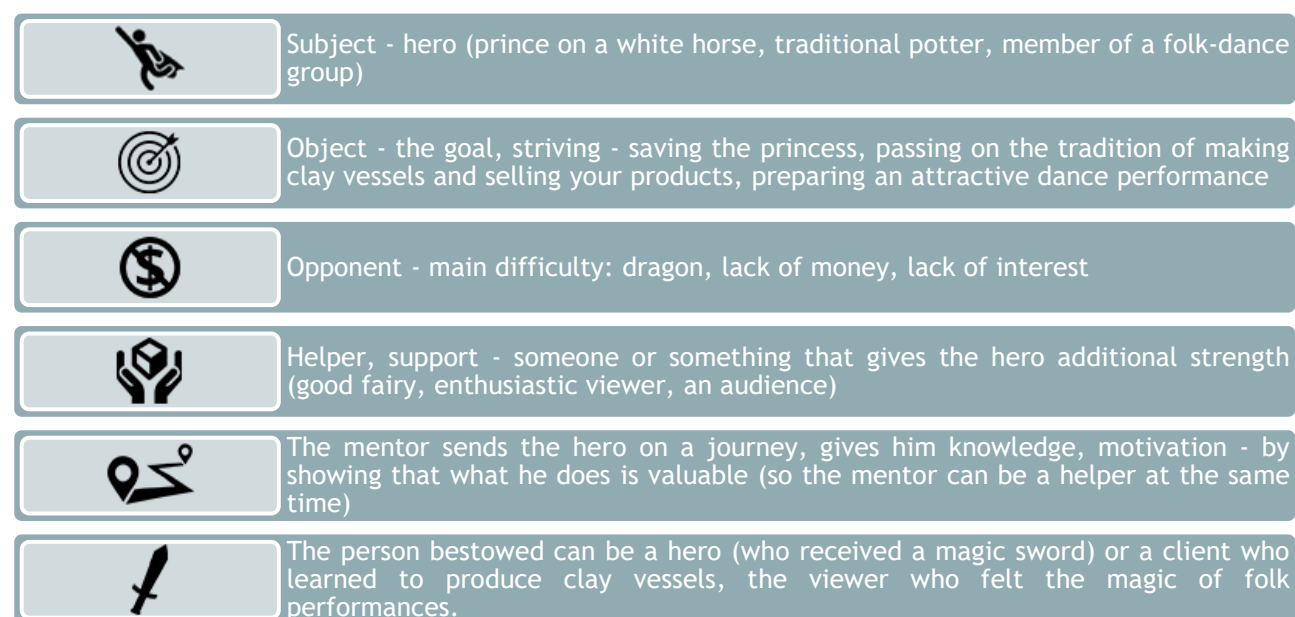


Source: based on Monika Filipkowska, "Tell me a story - about website storytelling"⁶,

The above principle fits with the canonical elements of a good story and can be successfully used to design your own stories. Based on this principle, you can easily start creating your story.

A slightly different approach is presented by Paweł Tkaczyk in his article "Schemes in storytelling - escape from boring advertisements". He cites the conclusions from the book "Culture and communication" by Edmund Leach and Algirdas Greimas who (...) studied the structure of folk tales. The result of their work is the structure of the fairy tale: six elements, some of which are balanced on the principle of oppositions.

Figure 5. Story structure based on "Culture and communication"



Source: elaboration based on, Paweł Tkaczyk, "Schemes in storytelling - escape from boring advertisements"⁷

Paweł Tkaczyk, however, proposes trying different interpretations of this scheme, in order to produce a rather less standard approach. The effect of this approach can be assignment to elements selected in the scheme:

⁶ Monika Filipkowska, "Tell me a story - about website storytelling", <https://www.grupa-tense.pl/blog/tell-me-a-story-czyli-o-website-storytelling/> on 13.12.2018, and <https://io9.gizmodo.com/5916970/the-22-rules-of-storytelling-according-to-pixar>, on 17.12.2018

⁷ Paweł Tkaczyk, "Schemes in storytelling - escape from boring advertisements" <https://paweltkaczyk.com/pl/schematy-w-storytellingu/>, on 12.12.2018



- Product and customer as helpers, the hero is someone important to the customer. For example, passing on in the family or local community the tradition of folk performances, playing an instrument, dancing or recipes for traditional dishes.
- Customer/workshop participant as hero, the creator (e.g. potter) is the helper, the product is the obstacle. The potter helps the customer make a beautiful dish. Unfortunately, the hero cannot make it. In the end, both can see that what had seemed likely to be unsuccessful was really unique and valuable⁸.

Regardless of the approach, the main issues; that is, presenting the characters, showing what they are struggling with, the turning point, i.e. overcoming the difficulties and, consequently, presenting the solution, are the key elements around which a proper narrative should be built. Of course, video materials, due to their attractiveness to the viewer, are the most desirable form, but at the same time they are relatively the most difficult to create. However, regardless of whether the material we want to tell is in writing, audio or video form, the starting point is the story itself. When thinking about what is to be conveyed, the starting point is the everyday issues related to the creative process. Regardless of the medium, the starting point is the presentation of the character.

An interesting solution was used in material promoting the Year of Cultural Heritage. It consists of several short frames showing what cultural heritage is. With the help of casual comments in the form of pop-up texts, each sequence is a separate closed form with a turning point. This material shows that creating an interesting composition does not have to be tedious. Sometimes an idea and some fun points are enough. The film is designed to arouse curiosity and it does so through understatement.

https://europa.eu/cultural-heritage/about_en

Material description: The film presents short snippets referring to contemporary dance, embroidering traditional ornaments on clothes, preparing traditional dishes, listening to music, making wine in a traditional way, folk dance, communing with material culture, and ends with the question "And what will you discover in this year?"

Exercise (20 min.)

- Based on the fourth principle of creating fairy tales by Pixar or a scheme of character description, create a short story about your creative work. *Written*
- How many stories are you able to prepare? About what? *Written*

4. Presentation of characters

In the case of the creators of culture, the creator himself is a natural candidate for the main character of the story, it can also be an institution, you can lead a narrative from the point of view of the recipient, or it can be a situation. However, it's best to start with the creator. At first it may seem difficult, especially inventing a topic poses the biggest problem. It is worth bearing in mind that stories can be told about everything, and everyday life is a good starting point. An example of a story about everyday life is one

⁸ Based on: Paweł Tkaczyk, "Schemes in storytelling - escape from boring advertisements" <https://paweltkaczyk.com/pl/schematy-w-storytellingu/>, on 12.12.2018



presented in the article by Dr Monika Górská: *If storytelling is the answer, what is the question? Three stories that will help you increase your sales:*

"It was a few years ago. Jacek was then the director of the special kindergarten "Orzeszek". To raise money for his charges, he sent hundreds of letters monthly to companies whose addresses he found in the Business Panorama. Inside the envelope there was a request for help and a lot of information: how much money they need, what they will use it for, what equipment they will buy. Only facts. Zero emotions. In general, he received an answer to one out of a hundred of these letters. A refusal. Sometimes he didn't even receive any. He no longer had strength. After training in storytelling, Jacek decided that he would change something in his communication. He started inserting a card in each envelope on which one day in the life of the headmaster of the kindergarten was described. The text on the card told his story of how difficult it was to be patient. Not when sick children are fed and they spit everything out. And not when you need to change nappies. That was easy. It was difficult for him to be patient when he was not sure each day whether he would be able to guarantee to continue taking care of these children and whether he would have enough money to keep this kindergarten going. This story was not perfect at all. There were a few mistakes and one swear word in it. But reading it, it felt that it was authentic and true. Jacek showed what he really thinks and feels. And what is important to him. Do you know what happened next? First, as usual - silence. No answer came ... But after a week, an e-mail appeared in Jacek's mailbox. "We read your letter and my wife and I want to transfer 10,000 zlotys to your account"⁹.

It turns out that in order for a story to take effect, no expenditures are required to create video materials. It is enough to change the perception of your actions and try to interweave them in the narrative. We should continue to keep in mind that when presenting a character, we do not present dry facts, as in a resume, we only locate them in a certain process, difficulties, challenges, successes and failures. We describe the character more through what he is struggling with than what he is.

A very good example of a character's presentation can be found in material referring to the promulgation of cultural heritage through the preservation and promotion of traditional recipes. The film is also associated with fundraising through the kickstarter.com platform

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/531542262/grandmas-project-sharing-the-worlds-most-delicious>

Material description: The film begins with the presentation of a character. This is done by an old lady and the young creator of a project talking directly to the camera. Later there is a sequence showing an elderly lady who is working in the kitchen, interspersed with statements directly to the camera about the concept and character of the project. One of grandmothers reads a description of the project in English and she clearly finds this difficult, which is an interesting situation. Then there is a compilation of films showing how different grandmothers cook dishes. Next, a visualization is shown of the operating principles of the website on which materials will be collected and the fact that funds are needed to create such a platform.

Exercise (25 min.)

⁹ Dr Monika Górská "If storytelling is the answer, what is the question? Three stories that will help you increase your sales.", <https://sprawnymarketing.pl/storytelling-monika-gorska/>, on 12.12.2018



- Explain what made you do what you do. *Oral*
- Explain which way you went in order to do what you do. *Oral*
- Describe your greatest achievement. *Oral*
- Write a list of actions that you could turn into a story. *Written*

5. Difficulties, struggles, turning point

The key to building an interesting narrative is the description of a struggle and hardship with which the main character copes, as in the previous example of the director of the kindergarten, where the description contained everyday challenges and fears that he must deal with. In practically every interesting story there is a smaller or bigger problem that builds tension. *Without obstacles, without failures, without conflicts there is no good story. And basically there is no story at all - it's just a description, a manifestation, a presentation*¹⁰. Regardless of who the hero of the story is, you can always show his struggles, as in the materials referring to a project of restoring monuments with traditional construction methods:

https://europa.eu/cultural-heritage/ref-media-video/erasmus-vet-project-cultural-heritage_en

Material description: The film can be seen in a German-Hungarian project. A group of young people are renovating old buildings in Transylvania. The frames showing their work are interspersed with the participants' statements about how this action affects and transforms their lives.

or from the wide world of sports presented below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=uGJGQQVNqjg

Material description: The film shows how a few moms are taking care of their children, teaching them to take their first steps, including those on skates and skis. You can see how they get up with their kids in the morning and then take them to classes. Another interwoven shot shows how the mothers accompany their children in sports activities and tournaments. You can see how they help them, how they observe and experience their failures and daily hardships. The children in subsequent interwoven shots are getting older and perform more and more difficult moves in winter sports. The level of competition is getting more and more serious. The ending presents Olympic successes and it shows how the mothers are still experiencing and enjoying the successes of their children, who are now adult athletes.

In the case of the second material, the question arises of whether to talk about failures. The opinions of experts in this respect are divided, but more often they are willing to admit that difficulties and failures give authenticity to stories:

"But I convince them that there is nothing stronger than a leader who admits defeat and shows that not everything in his life is so rosy. Then the listeners will be more inclined to listen to him and follow him. Sometimes they become convinced and then their performance is real dynamite! The story is a powerful tool of influence -

¹⁰ Dagny Kurdwandowska in conversation with Monika Górka "Everything starts with a story that we tell ourselves about ourselves. Dr Monika Górka reveals how to discover the gene of storytelling within ourselves", <https://sukcespisanyszminka.pl/monika-gorska-zdradza-jak-odkryc-w-sobie-gen-storytellingu/> on 12.12.2018



and that's why I work with my clients only on their authentic values and stories taken from life ¹¹.

Showing defeats is certainly a kind of magnet, but we should be careful not to leave a negative impression on the recipient. Most important is the turning point and how the hero copes with the difficulties, and not exaggerating the difficulties. Because only the way of overcoming them allows you to generate and promote an authentic message, which is the main goal of the story.

Exercise (35min.)

- Create a list of your everyday challenges in creative work. *Written*
 - Arrange them in a chronological or non-chronological order that builds up tension. *Written*
 - Describe how you handled the problem. *Written*
 - Based on the prepared description using available equipment (e.g. a telephone handset), film what you do creatively. Before you start filming, think about what you want to show, set up a path, think about how long the material will last, where you start and what you'll finish on. *Film task*
-

6. The message

It should not be forgotten that in the story we are telling, the effect we want to achieve is important. Building a narrative is not an end in itself. In the case of the creators of culture, the goal may be to raise funds for the implementation of tasks, increase the number of orders to perform, generally speaking to achieve business goals. The story has the task of establishing a relationship with the recipient (e.g. an investor) and exciting emotions that motivate him to support our actions, whether by becoming a customer, sponsor or advocate for our idea.

"Do not forget about the message - that is, what you are telling about. In STORYTELLING you do not tell it to be nice, or to show yourself. You tell because you have important content to "sell". Maybe it's a concept or a lifestyle of which you want to convince others. Maybe it is one of the most important "character traits" of your or your brand. Or it may be something in your service, which makes your customers happier. What is unique in you, or in what you want to convince others of? What makes their life easier or makes it take on more sense? What would people and the world lose if it were suddenly not to be here tomorrow? If from all of your story one, and only one, sentence were to be remembered, what would it be? If your story lacks a message, it's as if an engine were not installed in your dazzling Bugatti or Ferrari. It will evoke admiration, surprise and even jealousy, but ... it will not take you anywhere" ¹².

The message may be, for example, the preservation against being forgotten as discussed earlier and the simultaneous dissemination of unique recipes and the human history behind

¹¹ Dagny Kurdwandowska in conversation with Monika Górka "Everything starts with a story that we tell ourselves about ourselves. Dr Monika Górka reveals how to discover the gene of storytelling within ourselves", <https://sukcespisanyszminka.pl/monika-gorska-zdradza-jak-odkryc-w-sobie-gen-storytellingu/> on 12.12.2018

¹² Dr Monika Górka, "The 3 most important rules of storytelling", <https://sprawnymarketing.pl/zasady-storytelling/> on 12.12.2018



them. The message may also be to show the value of spreading the results of activities in discovering cultures by digitizing and sharing the results of archaeological work.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=167&v=XkjOD1WJ9Fo

Material description: The film shows shots of archaeologists working together with their statements about the work being done. In the shots you can see how archaeologists use tablets or smartphones to share the results of their work. Inscriptions are posted on the frames informing about the ideas and benefits for archaeologists of using the platform.

The main value may be spreading the idea of doing something amazing, such as a rock concert with the participation of 1000 musicians on one stage.

<https://vimeo.com/217468912>

Material description: The film shows preparations for a rock concert with the participation of 1000 musicians. At the beginning, shots are shown presenting the preparation, developing the stage, setting up dozens of drums and microphones. Then, shots are presented of the audience being entertained and musicians during the concert. Throughout the film, subtitles are inscribed on the frames, showing how the idea of the concert was born, how the crowdfunding platform was used, what amount was collected and what factors determined the final success of the project.

Exercise (30 min.)

- Based on the text from the previous exercise, rate what message it has. Is the message that comes from the story what you want to convey? *Oral*
 - Show your story to relatives, ask them to rate it and indicate what they like the most. Talk to them about how you can spice up your story. Make corrections to your story. *Written*
 - Based on the corrections made, record film material from your creative work. Just like before you start filming, think about what you want to show, prepare yourself a path. Think about how long the material will last, where do you start from and what you will finish on, whether you will ask questions to colleagues, someone will speak, or you will comment on what you are filming. *Remote*
-



7. Types of storytelling

One of the most interesting examples of the presentation of types of storytelling is the one shown in the article: "Storytelling - 6 types of stories that will captivate your audience":

Figure 6. Types of story according to "Storytelling - 6 types of stories that will captivate your audience"

Who am I?

- In this story, the hero is primarily a person - it can be you, someone associated with your company, someone recognizable or just plain Jan Kowalski. The storytelling revolves around the hero's life - who he is, what his plans were, the past, what he achieved. Remember, however, that it is also important to emphasize the "dark cards" of life - setbacks, unfulfilled plans, blunders - but most importantly, that they are the reason to draw the right conclusions. The essence of the type of "who am I" story is evolution, the change that took place in the hero, thanks to which he is now who he is. This type of story allows you to build the trust of recipients who begin to identify with many of its elements, to perceive the similarity of certain events.

Why am I here?

- The leitmotif is the path that the hero went through to the place where he has found himself now. In this story we do not stress the changes, but the meticulous, persistent pursuit of the goal. You can present the process of shaping your product/performance, trials, striving to create the perfect product, failures and further work. Talk about places, events and people on the way of the hero to the goal. Passion and commitment will have a positive effect on the recipients' trust. Such a story can also have a positive impact on sales - customers will recognize you as reliable and knowledgeable in your profession.

My vision

- Vision storytelling is based on the presentation of a product rather than a person. It is a story about how the wonderful vision that appeared in the creator's head was enacted. "My vision" will revolve around a story about prototypes, new solutions and the ideas behind them. The ideological layer is very important - the vision must be shown as a noble goal that is accomplished through the pursuit of the creators of culture. This story motivates your audience, shows them the need to take up a challenge, and also connects them to the presented concept, which, after all, you bring to life.

Learning story

- Your task is to give recipients some knowledge. The starting point may be the question "how does a specific product come about?". You are telling a story about what the specialists pay attention to, how raw materials are created, who takes care of that, what the product must go through before it appears on the market. Learning stories can be a popular-scientific presentation of a particular topic. It is important, however, for such a kind of story to be presented quite lightly, without exaggerated scientific knowledge - then it may not be precisely understood by the recipients. Learning stories create in the eyes of your audience a picture of a professional company, and the products they offer are shown to be the result of careful and thorough work of professionals.

I know what you are thinking about

- In this type of story, you must present all possible reservations, remarks, objections before they are officially articulated by the clients. Talk about what aroused your anxiety about a particular product, confirm that there is, however, no cause for concern. Try to anticipate what the public's objections to a particular product may be. When you say it, the recipients will understand that you understand their doubts, and you are not just a hustler aiming to "hit" them at any price. The "I know what you are thinking about" story has a positive effect on sales and allows for better conduction of possible negotiations.

Value in action

- Before you start storytelling about values in action, think about what values your brand should represent and which it should negate. Then you can lead the story with two tracks: a positive one, where you present how your brand implements "representative" values, and a negative one - where in practice you denounce the "negated" values. For example, you emphasize the importance of teamwork, commitment, and you denounce laziness, lack of conscientiousness. This story is primarily aimed at building consumer confidence and creating an emotional image of the brand.



Source: Based on, "Storytelling - 6 types of stories that will captivate your audience"¹³

In turn, analysing the types of story, Dr. Monika Górska distinguishes three strategic stories:

Figure 7. Types of story according to Dr Monika Górska

The GPS story

•The first of the strategic stories is the GPS story - a road story, a story of roots. It shows the key moments, the milestones that have led your activity to where it is now. It's a story that primarily shows motivation - why you and your company are doing what you do. As Simon Sinek says: "People don't buy what you do, but why you do it." When you show customers how important your team's work is, how great is your passion, what you want to change in your industry or the world, they will follow you with greater willingness. They will simply just trust you. This is how the GPS story will help you. This is not a chronicle, with chronological facts about your company. These are just milestones.

The DNA story

•This shows who you and your company or brand are. It presents what your unique VALUE is, your proposition with a unique value (DNA code). It is like a hair that is enough to show your "internal composition". The DNA story is exactly the same. You present your authentic value, something in which you are unique, and you consider whether this is also important for your clients or employees. The point is that in this story two values meet - yours and those of the person who will listen to you. This story is not always about how everything is beautiful, how wonderful you are, and how outstanding your company is. It's a story about how one of your key values has been tested. But you managed to get through it somehow. Or about the fact that it failed, but this bitter pill turned out to be a valuable life and business lesson. And this is the power of the DNA story. When you give it the right structure and skilfully tell it, something extraordinary happens. Your clients suddenly stop talking about costs, organization and logistics. They start asking for something completely different. Chemistry is being created between you, and your listeners feel an irresistible urge to do business with you.

Happy Customer

•The story of a happy customer is probably the simplest of stories. However, you need to take special care of it. Taking care means calling or writing to your existing clients, or those who have been connected to you once, and asking them to tell you their story. This cannot be just any matter story. You must strategically choose its elements so that they act on other clients and help them understand why it is worth working with you.

Source: Based on Dr. Monika Górska, "If storytelling is the answer, what is the question? Three stories that will help you increase your sales"¹⁴.

Exercise (10 min.)

- Think about what type of story you described in the previous task. Does its content match the above types? What should be done to fit it in? Should it be changed if it matches several types? Can you tell a few stories?
Oral

¹³ "Storytelling - 6 types of stories that will enchant your audience"; <https://poradnikprzedsiębiorcy.pl/-storytelling-6-typow-ciekawych-opowieści>, on 13.12.2018

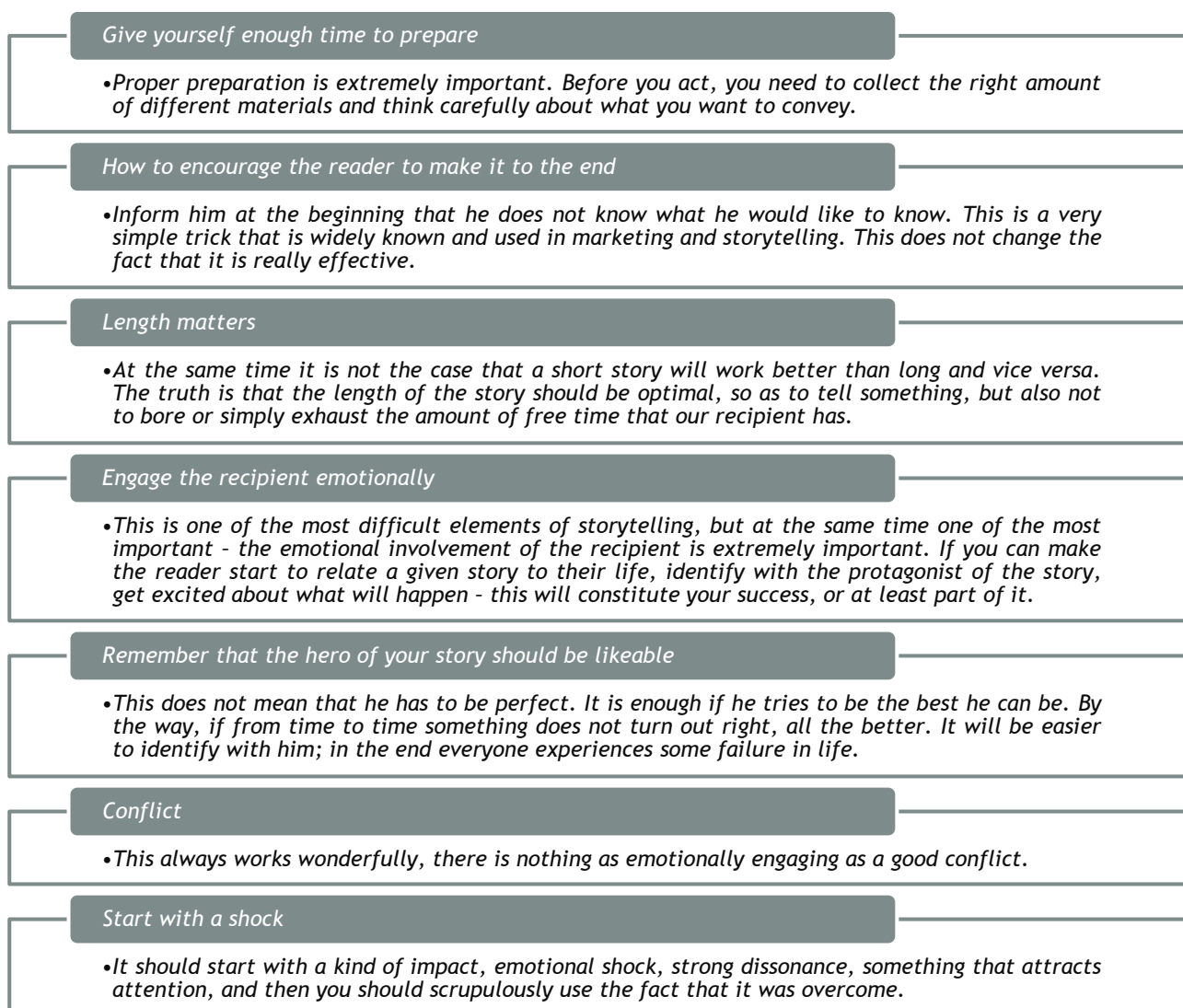
¹⁴ Dr Monika Górska, "If storytelling is the answer, what is the question? Three stories that will help you increase your sales." <https://sprawnymarketing.pl/storytelling-monika-gorska/>, on 12.12.2018.



8. Good practices

Building a story is a creative process. And as in any such process it is important to know the framework of action and certain principles. This does not mean, however, that each story should be built based on the same hard guidelines. Tips and advice are designed to help you create and critically look at your own story. It must be remembered, however, that they should be approached with a certain degree of criticism.

Figure 8. Tips for preparing and presenting stories



Source: Based on "Storytelling: 20 tips on how to build a good story"¹⁵

¹⁵ "Storytelling: 20 tips on how to build a good story", <http://blog.bloomboard.co/2016/12/13/storytelling-20-wskazowek/>, on 12.12.2018



Figure 9. Tips for preparing and presenting stories, cont.

Master your nerves, do not worry about slipping up

- *This is especially important if you do not write a story, but you have to present it to the public. Nothing terrible will really happen if it does not go well. It is important, however, that you gain practice at appearing in front of people.*

Know what you want to convey

- *There is no good story without a message. Remember that you write a story for something, you want to create a given narrative for some purpose, what is it? Do not forget to specify it, it is very important, you should have that thought in mind during the entire creative process.*

Expressive characters

- *In a good story, characters must be expressive. That is, they must also have characteristic views. Shallow and boring characters are ... shallow and boring. Nothing will happen if there are characters in your story that can irritate the audience - it will divide them, cause conflict, some people will cheer on some characters, and other people, others. It will arouse emotions.*

Use natural language

- *When writing a story, you are not an academic, you are not a businessman, you are not even a marketer - you are a man who writes to another person. So use the language that you would use naturally. Do not pretend to be someone you are not, but also pay attention to the language used by your recipient. Your story has to be understandable for him.*

Analyse other stories

- *Before you create your own good story - start wondering what you like about other stories. It would be a good idea to set up a notebook especially for notes of this type - whenever you will find something nice, make a note and remember it right away. In the end, you'll be able to create a large database of different ideas and things to pay special attention to. Good notes were the foundation of many outstanding works (books or stories).*

Your product as a solution

- *The ultimate goal of storytelling is, through good story management, showing your activity as a plot solution, solving the hero's problem, thanks to it the plot should end in a positive way.*

Source: Based on "Storytelling: 20 tips on how to build a good story"¹⁶

¹⁶ "Storytelling: 20 tips on how to build a good story", <http://blog.bloomboard.co/2016/12/13/storytelling-20-wskazowek/>, on 12.12.2018.



Figure 10. What not to do when building a story

Beware of empty phrases

• *If the use of a given phrase does not change anything, do not use it. Is it always possible to follow this rule? Probably not, even if we try very hard, something will always escape our attention. This is completely normal, and we should not be put off by this, but we should try to avoid it. Recipients do not notice them. Besides, it's not surprising. What does it do for the life of our recipient to read a message that welcomes him on the page with the content "welcome to the site"? Absolutely nothing, because it does not tell or even announce any story. If, however, from the first contact of the recipient with our site, we start to tell a story, it is much more likely that he will be interested in it and sit at our site for a long time discovering the world that we have prepared for him, immersing in our story and showing increasing engagement.*

Do not write what comes to your mind ad hoc

• *Ideas of this type usually appear to be great, at least at first glance. However, in practice, it is often the case that if something has occurred to you right away, it is very likely that it will quickly come to the reader's mind. What will be the effect? His lack of interest. The moment at which the reader knows in the middle of a story how it will end - is the moment at which his level of interest decreases. Not necessarily to such an extent that he stops reading what you have written, but the probability of him getting to the end is definitely reduced, and even if he does - it will be with much less attention. That is why it is important to think carefully about what you want to include in your story, rejecting different ideas many times, so that you can surprise the recipient with something truly original.*

Remember that what is interesting to you may not necessarily be for the recipient

• *Just because you write about something nice does not necessarily mean that anyone will want to read it, not because it is badly written, but because your recipients may have completely different interests or priorities. It may seem to you that the example of Bach or Chopin is good, and it may turn out that your readers would definitely prefer to hear something about Bruno Mars, or even Axl Rose.*

• *This is a very common phenomenon for people who are experts in a given field and fall into the so-called knowledge trap. It seems to them that everyone has the same wide range of knowledge on the subject as they do, and they behave as if this were true.*

Avoid boring fragments

• *Every story has boring, slower parts where nothing happens. Of course, at some point they must fall down, and it is not surprising. However, in the context of marketing it is important to omit such items wherever possible. Do you want to communicate something important, but difficult to receive, about your brand? It's best to do it in the "about us" tab - even if there are some longueurs there, nothing will happen because hardly anyone reaches for this content.*

Do not end the story with a moral

• *The best stories are not completely answered. We follow a fantastic story, and in the end we end up in a sense slightly emotionally broken and start to think about it, analyse it, process it, go back to it, refer to it and wonder what exactly it was, who was right, what approach is right and so on. In other words - a good story should make you think.*

Source: Based on "Storytelling: 20 tips on how to build a good story"¹⁷

¹⁷ "Storytelling: 20 tips on how to build a good story", <http://blog.bloomboard.co/2016/12/13/storytelling-20-wskazowek/>, on 18.12.2018



When creating and assessing a story it is also worth referring to the 22 rules of creating fairy tales according to Pixar:

Figure 11. 22 rules for creating fairy tales by Emma Coats from Pixar.

1. *The figure should be admired more for trying than for successes.*
2. *What the audience is interested in is more important than what interests you.*
3. *The title is very important, but you will not be able to see the whole story until you finish it. And then you will definitely change the title.*
4. *Once upon a time there was _____. Every day _____. One day _____. Because of that, _____. Because of that _____. Until finally _____.*
5. *Simplify. Focus attention. Work with heroes. Do not get lost in digressions, stick to the topic. At first you will feel like you are losing something, but in practice you will release creativity.*
6. *What is your character good at? In which situations does he feel comfortable? Put her in a completely different situation. Set a challenge for her.*
7. *Know the ending before you discover the middle. Endings are difficult and therefore you should work on them at the beginning.*
8. *Finish your story and leave it, even if it is not perfect. There is no perfect story, go on.*
9. *When you are stuck and you do not know what to write about, make a list of what will NOT HAPPEN. When you have finished, you'll have plenty of ideas for what might happen in your story.*
10. *What stories do you like? What you like in them is part of you. You must be aware of this to use this knowledge.*
11. *Transfer the story to paper. This will allow you to start working on improving it. If a story remains only in your head, even if it is perfect, you will never share it with anyone.*
12. *Forget the first thought that comes to your mind. And the second, third, fourth and fifth - give up the obvious solutions. Surprise yourself.*
13. *Let your heroes have their own opinions. Passive characters, though very friendly, will not be liked by the public.*
14. *Why do you have to tell exactly THIS story?*
15. *If you were the hero, how would you feel in this situation? Honesty adds credibility to unlikely situations.*
16. *What does the hero care about? What will happen if he fails?*
17. *No work is wasted. If something does not work - just leave it and go on. It will come back to you and it will be useful later.*
18. *You must know the difference between giving everything of yourself and fussing. Creating a story is like testing a new one, not perfecting old ideas.*
19. *Random accidents are great for propelling heroes into trouble, but not to get them out of it.*
20. *Analyse elements of a movie you do not like. How would you arrange them in a way that you prefer?*
21. *Define your heroes and their situation. You cannot just write that they are "cool." What would have to happen for you to behave in this way yourself?*
22. *What is the key and essence of your story? Try to summarize it in one sentence. How does it sound?*

Source: based on Monika Filipkowska, "Tell me a story - about website storytelling"¹⁸

¹⁸ Monika Filipkowska, "Tell me a story - about website storytelling", <https://www.grupa-tense.pl/blog/tell-me-a-story-czyli-o-website-storytelling/>, on 17.12.2018 and <https://io9.gizmodo.com/5916970/the-22-rules-of-storytelling-according-to-pixar>, on 13.12.2018



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