

Lead Strategic Change Through Effective Storytelling

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The Association of
Accountants and
Financial Professionals
in Business

Featured Presenter

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Agenda

1. Introduction
2. The Story Behind the Data
3. The Components of Any Good Story
4. Honing Your Craft
5. Conclusion
6. Key take away



Poll Question 1:

What's the **biggest** hurdle you have in delivering presentations?

- a. I am uncomfortable speaking in public.
- b. Audience members are not always excited by accounting related presentations.
- c. I don't have time to improve my presentation materials.
- d. I don't have time to rehearse adequately for my presentations.

Poll Question 1 Results: (Placeholder)

The Story Behind the Data

The Story Behind the Data

1. Understand the company's strategy and goals and if the organization is achieving them.
2. Two-thirds of the work is preparation and analysis to produce accurate financial information. One third interpreting those results to show the firm where it stands and projecting where it's going.
3. There's both an art and science in the work of finance professionals.



FY2020: A Tale in Two Parts

FY2020: June '19- May '20

A quandary for financial professionals

March 11, 2020: The World Health Organization declared that COVID-19 was a pandemic

March 25, 2020: Paychex reported our third-quarter results

May 19, 2020: Provided a COVID-19 Business Update

The “Nike” Recovery



FY2021: Exaptation

FY2021: June '20- May '21

- **More insight but still considerable uncertainty.**
- **How to present this to all employees?**
- **What opportunities are presented?**



FY2022: X / 3X / 10X

FY2022: June '21- May '22

Without any historical context to lean on over the last 100 years, what does the future look like?



“ Storytelling is by far the most underrated skill when it comes to business.

- Gary Vaynerchuk, Author and Entrepreneur



Poll Question 2:

How much time do you spend preparing for a big presentation?

- a. Less than an hour
- b. 1-5 hours
- c. 5 -10 hours
- d. More than 10 hours

Poll Question 2 Results: (Placeholder)

The components of any good
story

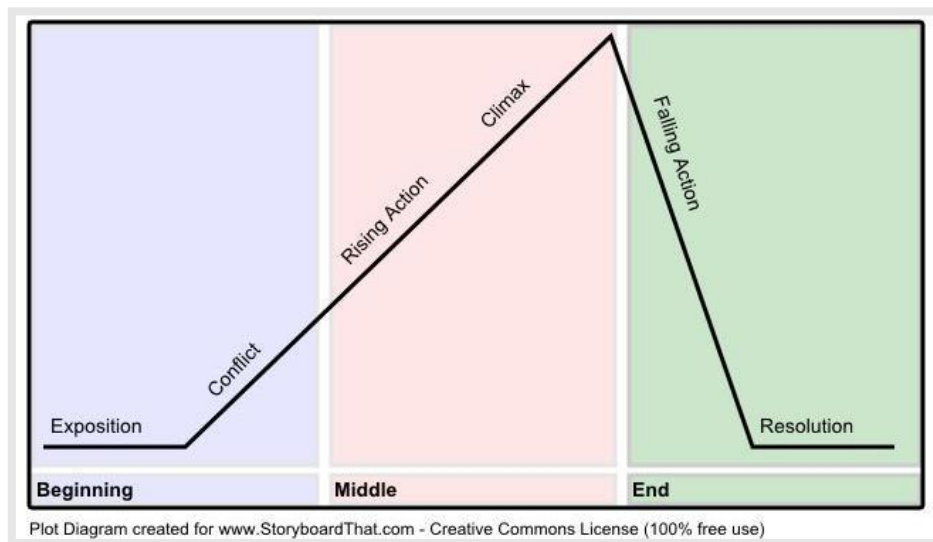
Components to any good story

1. **Plot:** Where are we going? What does the end look like?
2. **Setting:** What's the backdrop?
3. **Characters:** Who's involved?
4. **Conflict:** What are the challenges that need to be overcome?
5. **Theme:** What's the overarching message?



1. Plot

- Every story needs a beginning, middle, and the end.
- Craft your messages so there's a clear purpose and you're taking the audience from one point to another.



2. Setting

- Determine where your company stands now?
- What is your company's overall strategy?
- What's the competition doing?
- What external factors are at play like government action, regulation, etc?
- What macroeconomic factors are impacting your numbers?



3. Characters

- Which departments are involved in the messaging?
- What is your role or your department's role?



4. Conflict

- **What's the biggest challenge your organization needs to overcome?**
- **What headwinds and tailwinds should be defined?**
- **How has the environment changed versus expectations?**



5. Theme

- Is there a thread that ties your presentation together?
- Is there a focus on sales productivity, inflation, client retention, etc.?



“ Stories are how we remember;
we tend to forget lists and
bullet points.



- Robert McKee, Storynomics Author and Speaker

Poll Question 3:

How often do you formally present financial information to a group of 25 people or more?

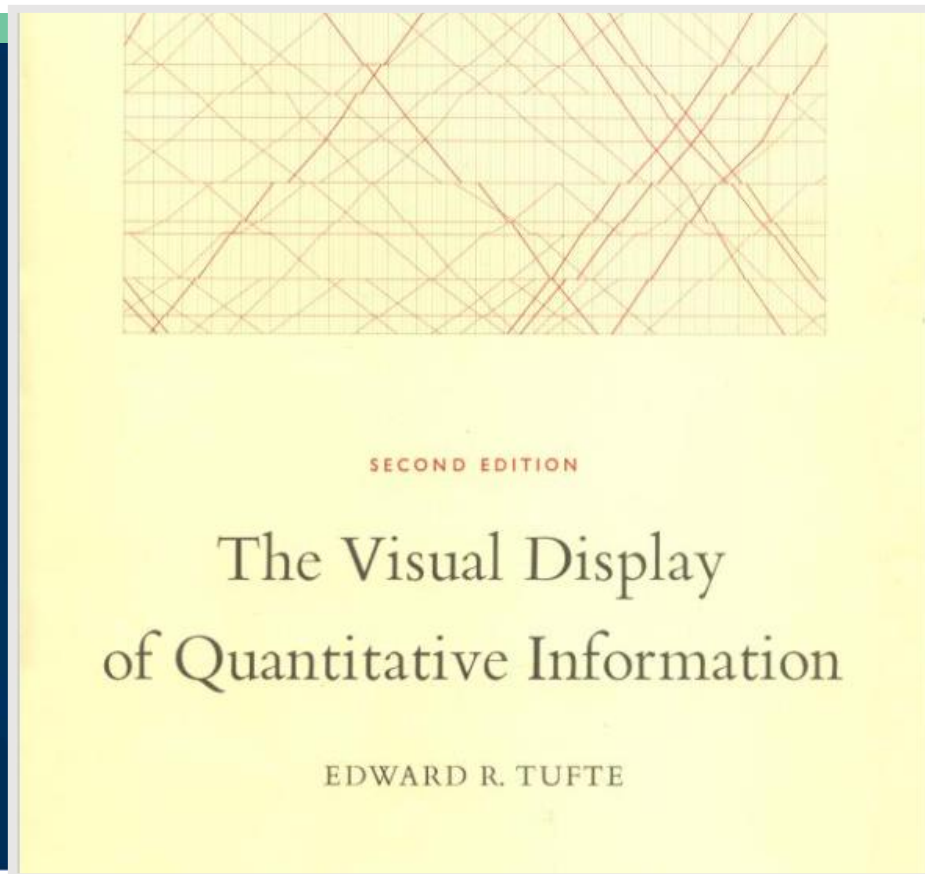
- a. Once per week
- b. Once per month
- c. Once per quarter
- d. Occasionally
- e. Never

Poll Question 3 Results: (Placeholder)

Honing Your Craft: Four steps to improving your storytelling

1. Choose the Right Visuals

- Paint a clear picture using the right visualization whether it's an analogous photo, a chart, or graph.
- Use something relatable to your particular audience.
- Consider the book, The Visual Display of Quantitative Information by Edward R. Tufte.



2. Rehearse (and rehearse again)

- Spend enough time rehearsing so it doesn't "feel" rehearsed
- Most people have an innate ability to present but just don't practice.
- Find opportunities to present wherever and whenever possible



3. Connect with your audience

- Find a point of connection with the audience
- Use humor where appropriate
- Don't give the same presentation to the accounting department as the marketing department or as the Board of Directors.



4. The story isn't about you

- Make the presentation about the audience, not about you.
- An effective presenter will recede into the background and bring the message and the audience to the forefront.
- People are affirmed when they're part of the story rather than being lectured to.



“ A story is a trick for sneaking a message into the fortified citadel of the human mind.

- Jonathan Gottschall, Collegiate Fellow, Author



Poll Question 4:

What's something that you may try to implement for your next financial presentation?

- a. Spend more time rehearsing
- b. Using relevant analogies to help express my points
- c. Thinking of the flow of my presentation telling a story
- d. Using more engaging graphics or imagery
- e. All of the above

Poll Question Results (Placeholder)

Conclusion

Summary

1. Every time you present, you're telling a story whether you know you are or not.
2. As a financial professional, your effectiveness at communicating vital information can significantly impact your organization.
3. Every presentation and story must have a beginning, middle, and end.
4. Make your presentation about your audience rather than about you. That will also make you feel more comfortable.
5. Rehearse so much that it sounds natural and extemporaneous.



Questions and Answers

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Thank you!



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