

Telling Your Story



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Here's my 4 year old and his audience was a 1 year old. And a few months ago he told his first story. Here it goes.
Story was Once Upon a Time, The End.



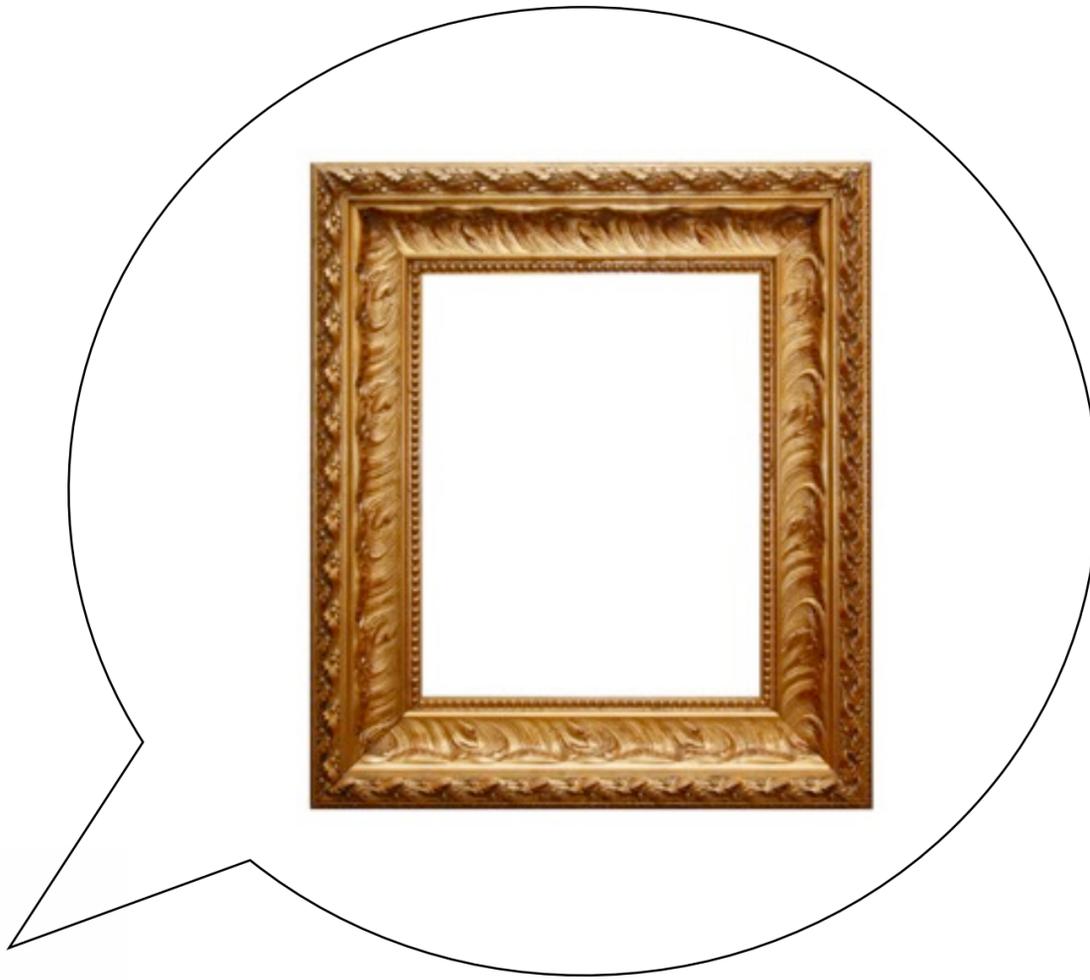
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He found the frame.
as we grow we discover sounds then words then language.
and then we discover stories. and then we learn how to tell them.



For most of us, we learned about stories from listening to mom, dad or some larger than life teacher.
And we learned to tell stories (that is, frame them) like those people did.
At some point we have all been entranced, spellbound, or hooked on a story and we wanted to do the same thing.
With OUR OWN story.



And today the most powerful storyteller isn't even a person at all. In our GoogleFoxFacebook lives We are constantly telling ourselves stories. And so many people behind those stories are paid to tell those stories. It's their job to tell good stories. So to tell your own story means being heard above and inbetween so many well told stories.

And that means if **YOU** want to tell stories these days then **YOU** have to get savvy about telling a good story about **YOU**.



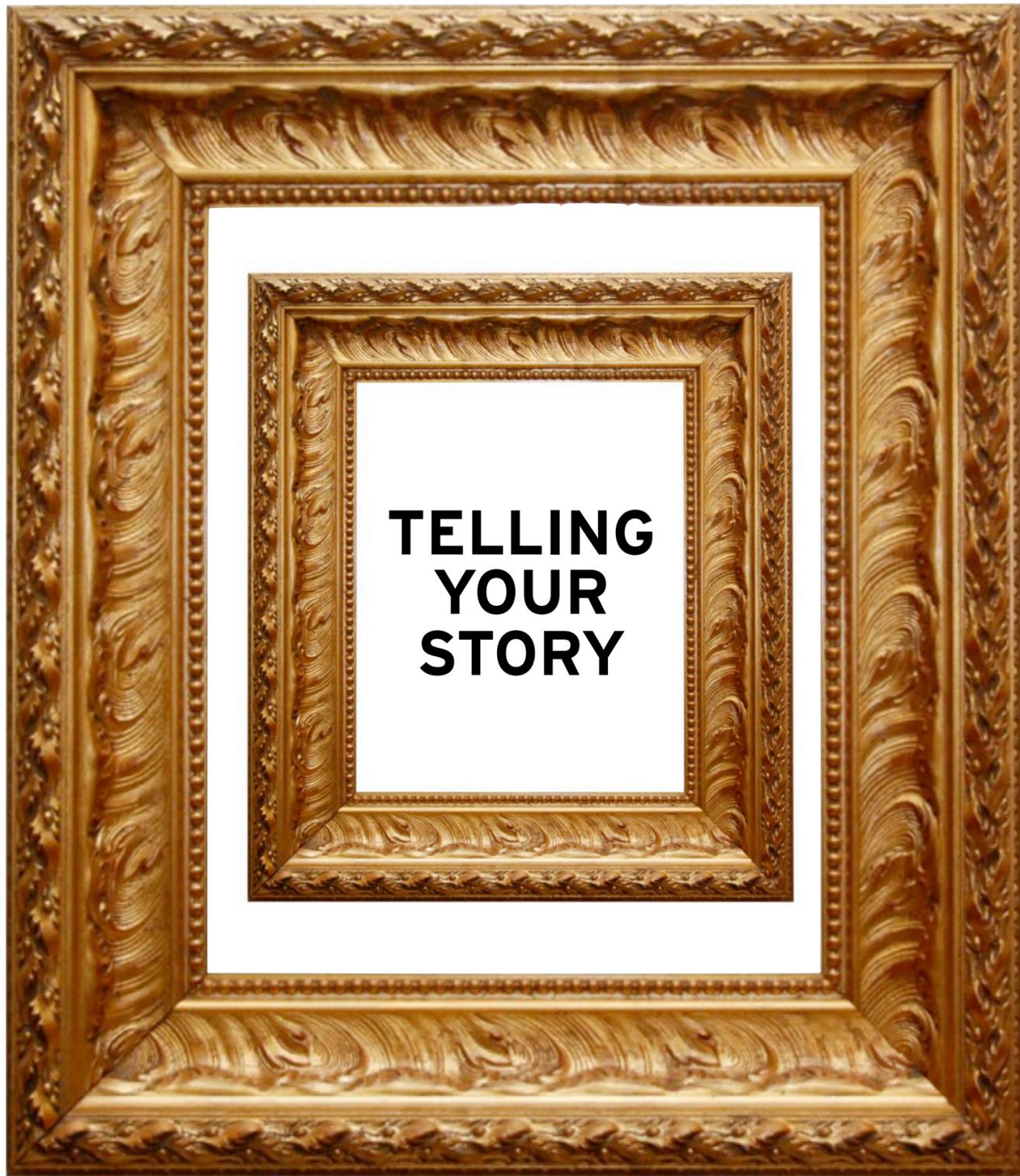
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And that's what I'm going to Focus on in the next 45 minutes.
Telling YOUR story.

I have 10 slides i want to go through. And then 3 very actionable techniques. And then 2 exercises to wrap up.

- A.** Tell them you are going to tell a story.
- B.** Tell the story.
- C.** Tell them you just told them a story.

Me completing stage A of telling a story: Tell them you are going to tell a story.

Stage A is the “Once Upon a Time”. **Always** start a story by telling them you are going to tell a story.

It can take a second or a minute. And using your kids btw is not a good strategy just for the record. You can just barely get away with it.

“Here’s what my research is about” or “My company’s vision for world domination?”

Simple stuff.

Usually we forget this and what happens is your audience isn’t prepared. The lights haven’t dimmed, the music gets louder, no podium to be seen.

And by the time they realize they are being told a story that haven’t even heard the first thing you said - which you’ve been told a 1000 times is the best chance you are going to get to tell your story.

Clarify that you are about to tell a story. Create space for the artifice of storytelling to take place.

Think of it like the opening credits of your tv show.

HOOK



But what? What do you repeat? What do you future do you set against the present? What expression does it come in?

And the thing you want to repeat is your hook. What you are about.

think of it like your google search term. what's the most effective way to get at what you are trying to look for. to say.

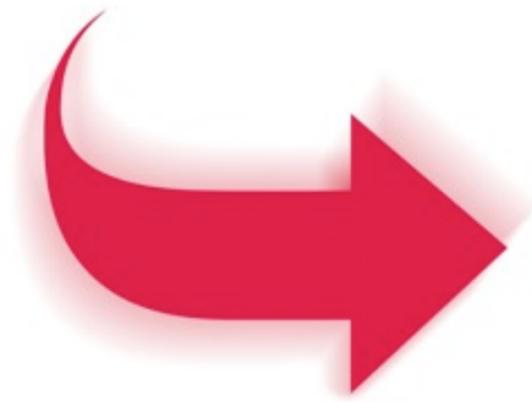
Something to hang your hat on. Something that grab us. Something real, tangible, and true!
Similar to the plot or the point or the red-thread.

but a hook has two parts - a structure and skin.



Noun(s)

Object(s)



Verb(s)

Action(s)

For those of you starting a business and trying to develop a pitch – this is very nearly your unique value proposition. It's a dressed down version of what value you are providing. At this point it doesn't need to go to great strides to be unique, it just needs to be clear and agreed upon before the next step.

Unfortunately it usually takes a lot of time just to agree on this. Are we a SOLAR company? Are we a CLEAN-TECH company? Are we a RENEWABLE company? Are we an ENERGY company?



Nissan telling stories.



Drivers

Noun



(Don't) Need

Verb



Gasoline

Noun

It's not CARS don't need gas.
And it's not DRIVERS dont need fuel.
And it's not Separating Drivers from Gasoline.
And it's not saving the world
And it's not going green

But part 2 of the hook is expressing it. Once you are CLEAR about your own intentions and mission then you can begin to dress it up a thousand different ways.



Nanotechnology turns plants into common plastic

 Recommend

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By [Ben Hirschler](#)

LONDON | Thu Feb 16, 2012 2:11pm EST

(Reuters) - Dutch scientists have found a way of turning plant matter into the building blocks of common plastics using a nanotechnology process that offers an alternative to oil-based production.

The team from Utrecht University and [Dow](#) Chemical Co produced ethylene and propylene - precursors of materials found in everything from CDs to carrier bags and carpets - after developing a new kind of iron catalyst made of nanoparticles.

Existing bioplastics, which are made from crops such as corn and sugar, have only limited use as they are not exact substitutes for oil-based products.

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[U.S. experts urge more study of nanotechnology threat](#)

Of course scientific journalism in particular is PAID to create good hooks. Here's a great example of one.

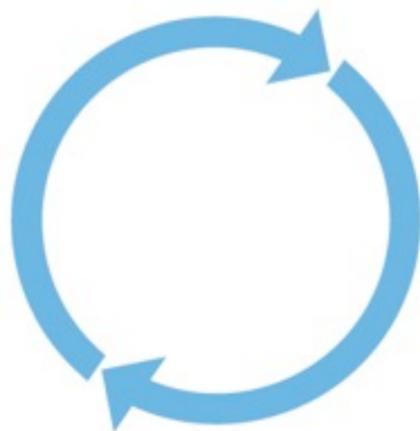
Now if you were this research team and you've been plugging away at this effort for years and you had your breakthrough you might tell the story like this:
We've synthesized ethylene and propylene from nanoparticles of iron catalyst to create an oil-based alternative.

But the headline sums it up.

Btw - i love the "related news" section on the side of the article.



Plants
Noun



Turning Into
Verb



Plastic
Noun

Plants of course isn't technically right (it's
Plastic of course isn't technically right either (it's oil alternative
even turning into isn't technically right (it's synthesizing)

Facebook

Website - To Keep - Relationships

Pinterest

Website - To Keep - Favorite Things

Gatorade

Drink - Replenish - Energy

Virgin America

Airplanes - Fly - Style

CASE STUDY

RidePalTM

Natalie Criou

Founder and CEO

ORIGINAL MARKETING LANGUAGE

Reclaim your commute time for yourself -
and live a happier, fuller life.

HOOK 1

Benefits Compel Talent To Travel To Companies

HOOK 2

Turnkey Commuting Program Management

HOOK 3

Commuter Experience Riders Love

METAPHOR



“We make companies stand out as we are the nectar that attract the birds aka best talent”

MARKETING 1

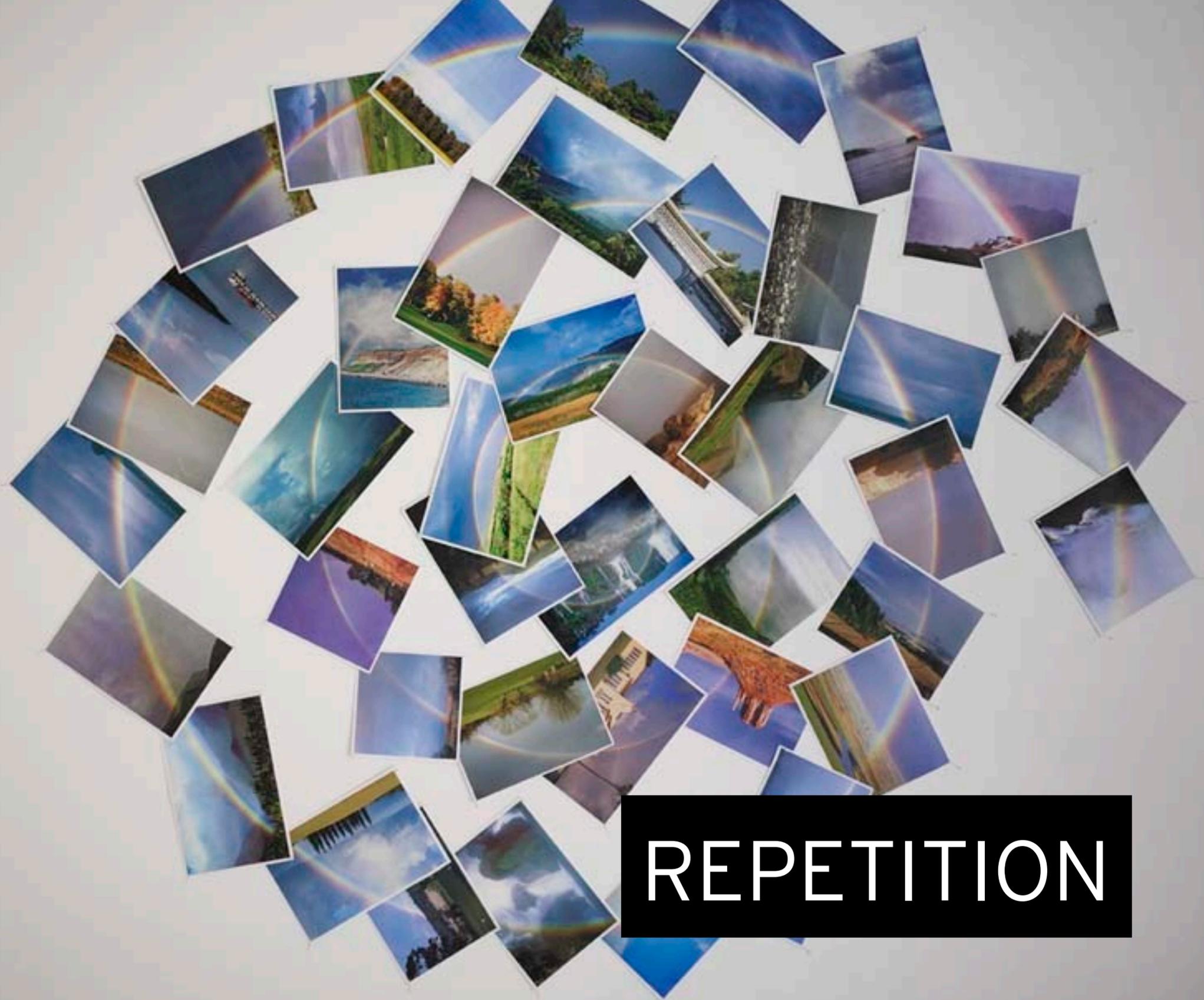
We provide hassle-free, world-class commuting services so organizations of any size can attract and keep the best talent.

MARKETING 2

Recruit and retain the best talent.

MARKETING 3

We connect butts with seats.



REPETITION

and then repeat it. Repeating things accelerates their essence.
It's a way to tell signal from noise. "I have a dream", "
Talking points can be hard to accept - it feels false - but this repetition.
Perception = reality.

Stories are the deep structure of Being.

That capital B isn't a mistake. I'm using it in the Heidegger sense.

Heidegger asks in 'Being and Time:

what is the being that will give access to the question of the meaning of being?

Heidegger's answer is that it can only be that being for whom the question of being is important, the being for whom being matters.

We get caught in this loop of self and self thinking of self. a recursion pattern for which there seems to be know handles or grips. Stories are the handles. Stories provide the meaning.

stories are not abstractions from life but how we engage with it. We make stories and those stories make us human.

We awaken into stories as we awaken into language, which is there before and after us.

The question is not so much 'What do I learn from stories?' as 'What stories do I want to live?'

What stories do I want to live? What stories do you want to live?



maybe a better way to understand this is the campfire. think back to the last time you were alone, in the dark. wild animals surrounding you. hunger and rain threatening. the fire to keep you warm, but alive. we tell stories here to keep us alive. it's what we do before we dream.



ANALOGY

FIRST ANALOGY

Many have argued that the basic building blocks of human cognition are analogies. Starting with standing and walking and eating and excreting and our various human relationships, subtle and gross, we understand one thing through another.

This is like that.

Analogy - one thing is logically like another. Making an argument.

Douglas Hofsteder says it best: "Analogy is the core of cognition". And i think that's right. Analogy gets at the logic of things, how they work and function. But now how they feel and not what they mean.



METAPHOR

THEN METAPHOR

This is that.

Conceptual metaphor theory suggests that knowledge is structured around metaphorical mappings derived from physical experience.

Metaphor - one thing to MEAN another. It is direct (unlike simile).

Metaphors, a cousin to analogies, are the building blocks of stories.

We understand our lives through and as stories. Stories are the deep structure of being. Handles for meaning in a meaningless world.

Neurologist Krish Sathian of Emory University in Atlanta wondered whether using metaphors specific to only one of the senses might be a better strategy. He and his colleagues settled on touch and asked seven college students to distinguish between different textures while their brains were scanned using functional magnetic resonance imaging. This enabled them to map the brain regions each subject used to feel and classify textures. Then they scanned the subjects' brains again as they listened to a torrent of textural metaphors and their literal counterparts: "he is wet behind the ears" versus "he is naïve," for example, or "it was a hairy situation" versus "it was a precarious situation." The language-processing parts of volunteers' brains became active regardless of whether the volunteers listened to the literal sentences or the metaphors. But textural metaphors also activated the parietal operculum, a region of the brain involved in feeling different textures through touch. That part of the brain didn't light up when listening to a literal sentence expressing the same meaning as the metaphor.

One camp claims that when we hear a metaphor—a friend tells us she's had a rough day—we understand the expression only because we've heard it so many times. The brain learns that "rough" means both "abrasive" and "bad," this camp says, and it toggles from one definition to the other. The other camp claims the brain calls on sensory experiences, such as what roughness feels like, to comprehend the metaphor.

The right turn of phrase can activate the brain's sensory centers, a new study suggests. Researchers have found that textural metaphors—phrases such as "soft-hearted"—turn on a part of the brain that's important to the sense of touch.

i mean how awesome is that. its like yr sticking your fingers in there and just making them think with your hands. massaging the thoughts out.

storytelling is a physical process.



PROVOCATION

Is now vs. What if. Back and forth. Back and forth. It's how you massage the future out.

asking a question is the same as giving an answer.

create a what if in someone's brain. hopefully your product (or vision of your product), your findings or your idea is the provocation.

it's a prototype of what you want to see in the world.

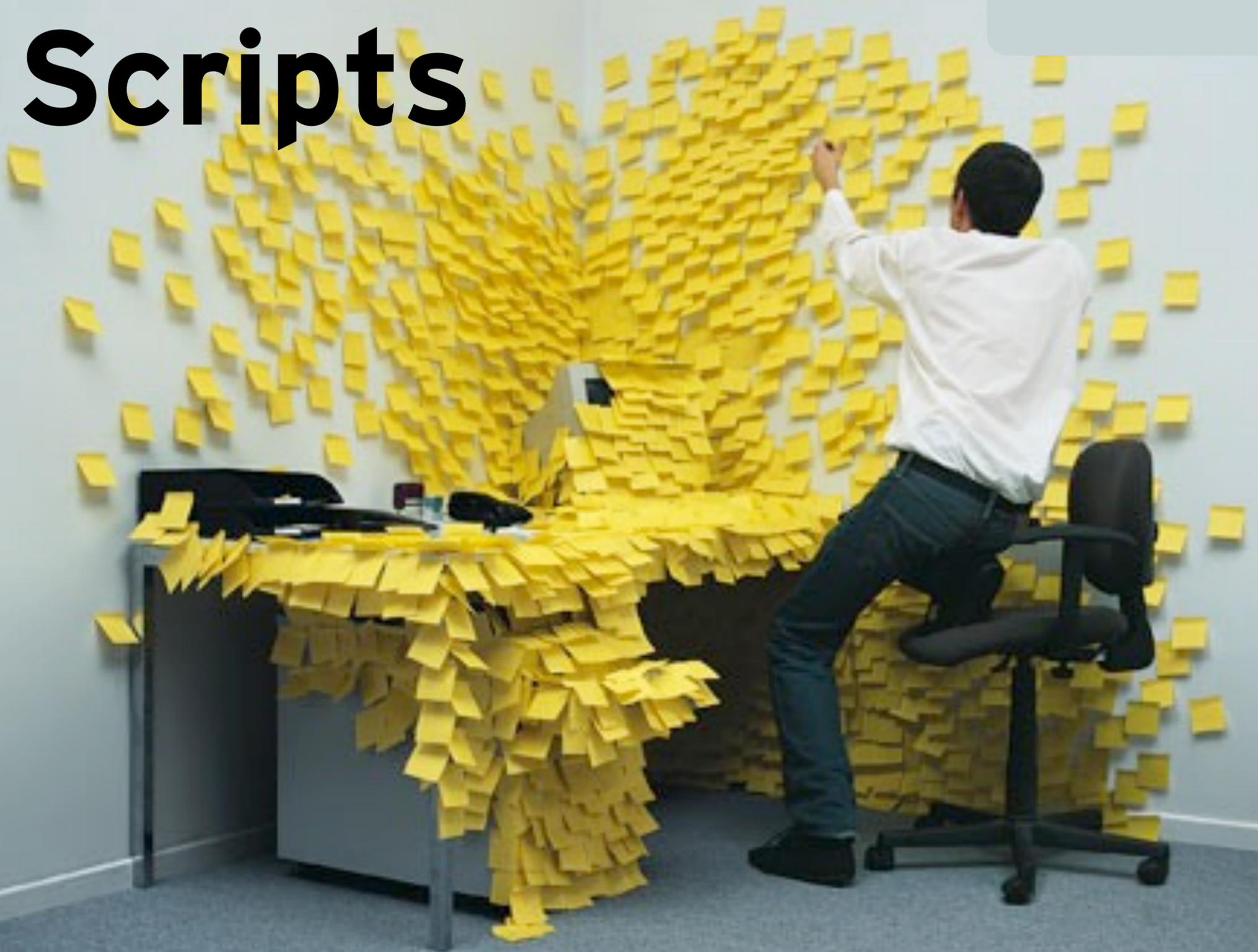
as gibson said: the future is already here - it's just unevenly distributed. and there's no way to know if you aren't living in the future.

ask people to break the rules in their mind. here you are playing with the plasticity of cognition. You are hijacking the mind's natural, innate ability make patterns and derive and deduce. If you can get there from here then why not? Prove how it's not true.

3 Tips

So to

Scripts



Think about how many presentations are going on right now. In schools, in laboratories, in clinics, in afghanistan, in this building. The large majority of people write their presentation script on the screen. Don't do that. If you find yourself reading the slide. Stop. You're doing it wrong. Don't put your script on the screen. Put it in your mouth where it belongs. Is it bad to read things on the screen. Not at all. But the presentation is what happens both on screen and in your mouth. Those are DIFFERENT things.

Improvise



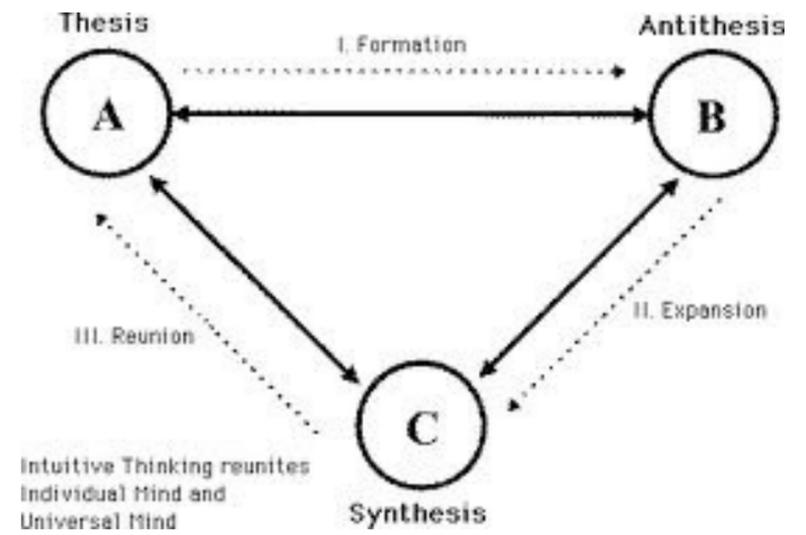
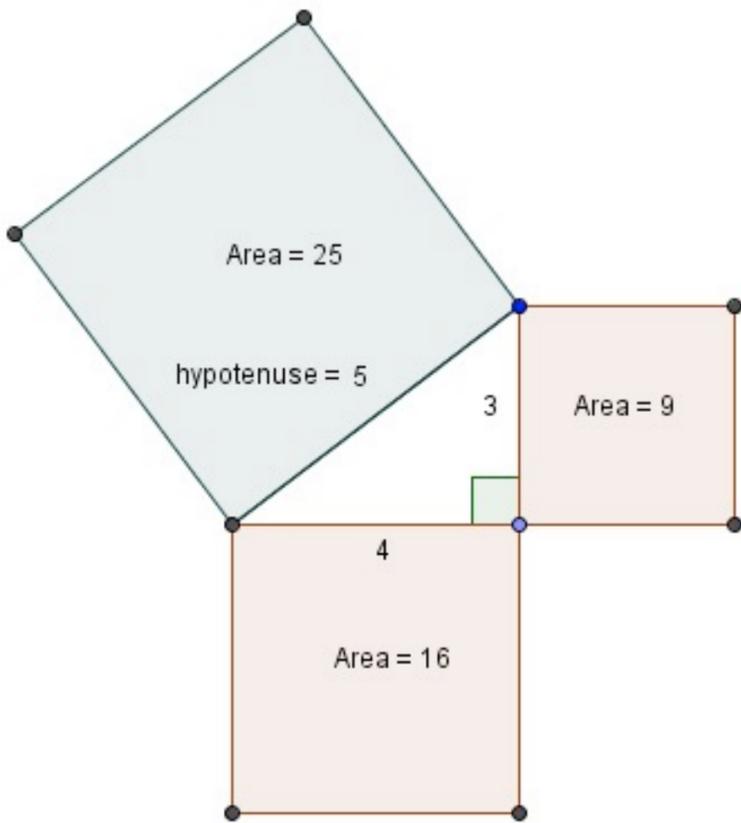
Knowing your material isn't good enough.

Knowing your material too well and you appear stiff like you don't understand or believe what you are saying

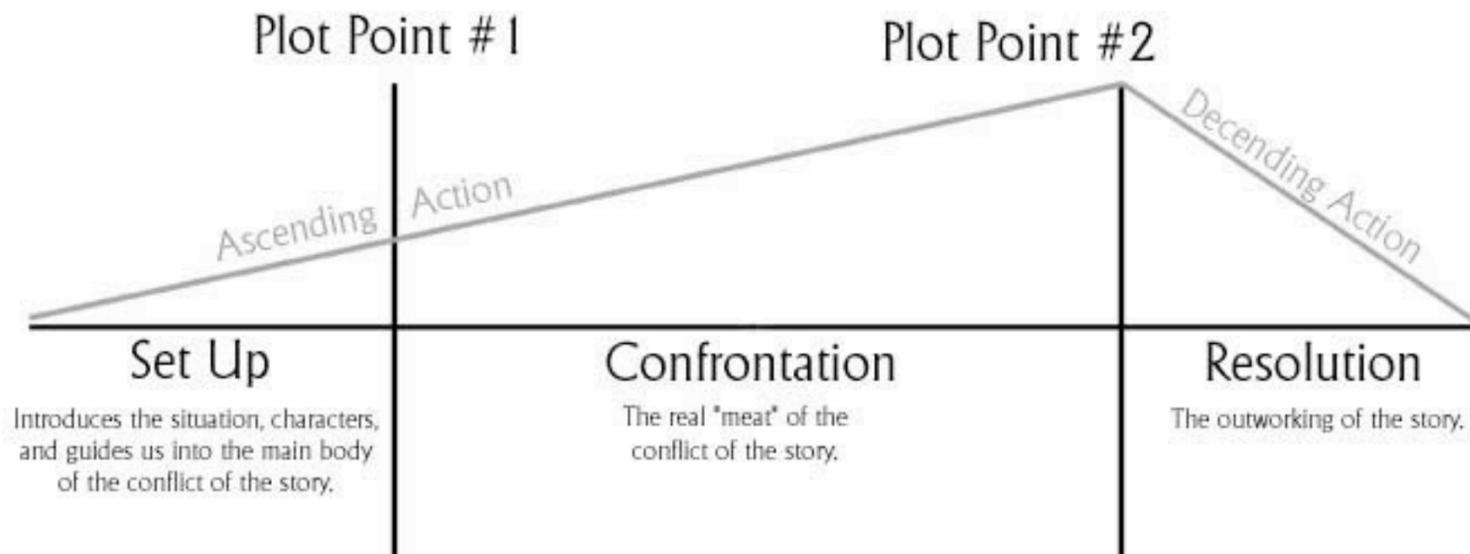
Learn how to ad lib. If you forget what you were saying or what you were talking about come back to your hook

Pechakucha - "chit chat", it rests on a presentation format that is based on a simple idea: 20 images x 20 seconds. going for 10 years

BattleDecks



3



3 is the magic number. Use it. When in doubt of how many things to make in a list – choose 3.

Beginning, Middle, End

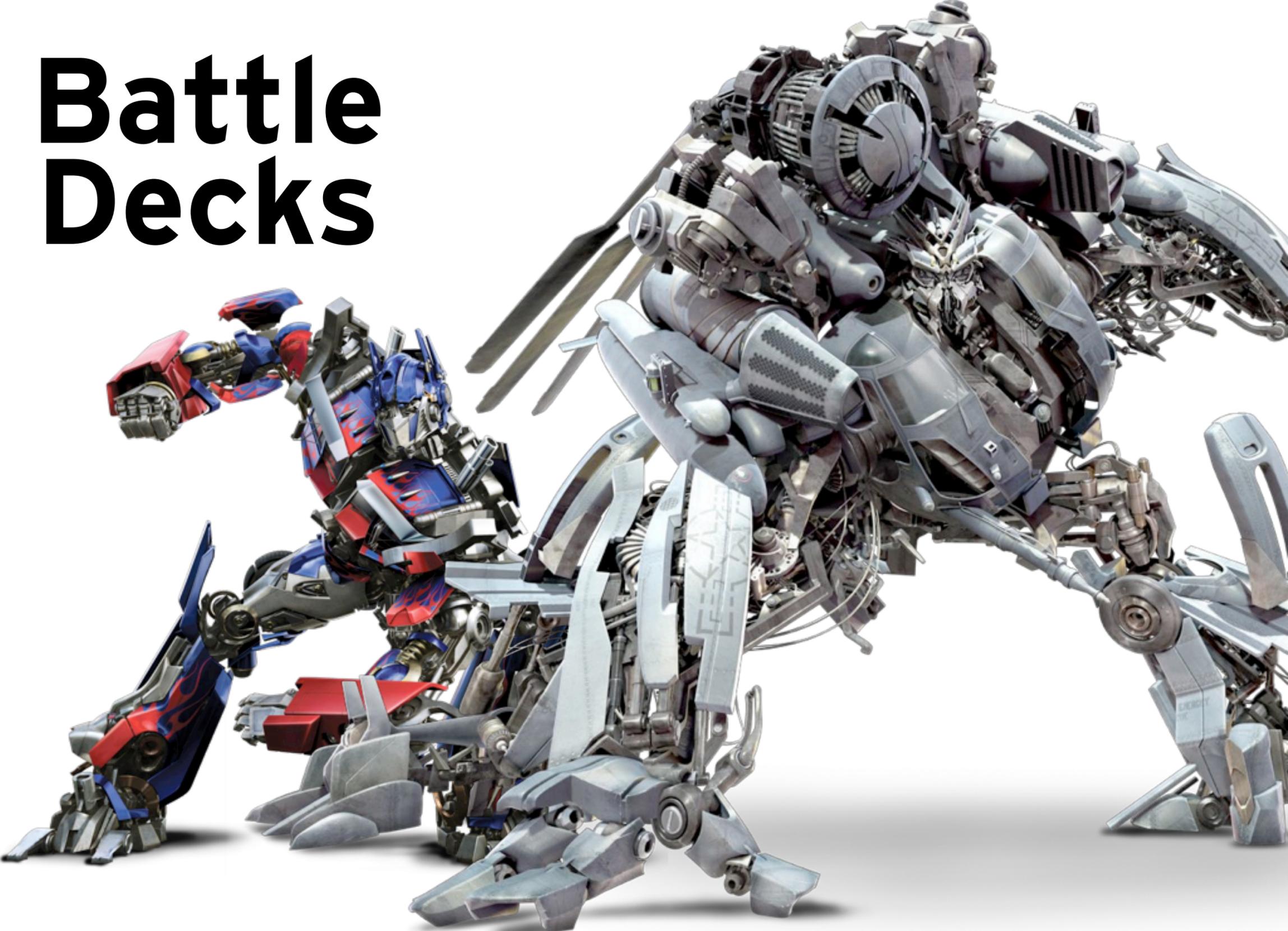
Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis.

Setup, Conflict, Resolution

We expect three. Deliver on three.

Of course this is a repetition, both the idea of 3 here as well as the conceptual notion of an enumerated list.

Battle Decks



- A.** Tell them you are going to tell a story.
- B.** Tell the story.
- C.** Tell them you just told them a story.

Those are the three tips.

and THIS is me **entering stage C** of telling a story: Tell them you just told them a story.

Storytelling – like language, grammar, rhetoric, spelling, debate and every other kind of communication – is something you learn to do. It’s something that has “best practices”. better said, storytelling is something you practice.

and if none of this makes any sense to you. if hooks and metaphors and battle-decks means nothing then think of it just as poetry. a way to



Story
Noun



Telling
Verb



Audience
Noun

The point is every story has a hook.

This is the hook for today's presentation.

These are my nouns and verbs. You, the Audience, is the "Them".

Does my story have LOTS of other nouns and verbs?

You bet! Metaphor, Humor, Repetition, Hooks, etc. It has me (the person doing the telling)
But to what end? To what point? What am I trying to say?

This. It's an expression of my hook.



Story

Noun

Telling

Verb

Audience

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THE END, unlike once upon a time, is the hardest part of telling a story. It's important because for most of life Nothing is Final. We are mostly in the middle. That's why closure is so hard.

The projects keep going, the research keeps going. The presentation may stop but the conversation keeps going.

A great way to reach closure: open up something new!



david@greenstart.com

ok. show of hands. who here finds themselves regularly telling their story.
it could be the story of your research and you tell it for more grants or to bring on students and advisors

it could be the story of your company and you tell it to hire a team and get funded.
it could be the story of you and you tell it to convince people what you want.

great. ok, now keep those hands up. (the rest of you work on your email)

who here totally knows the hook? the simple nouns and verbs of your story?

of those folks – how many think they can tell that story in 5 minutes?
of those folks – how many could do it right now?

ok – what's your name? and yours? great – could you both come up here. give me a hand. it's time to see this in action.