



SELL MORE WITH STORIES **HOW TO CREATE** **INTEREST IN 60 SECONDS**

**MORE APPOINTMENTS IN LESS TIME,
WITH LESS HASSLE**

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"THE BOOK ON STORYTELLING"

The **'How to Sell More With Stories'** series

Book 1: Attract Qualified Clients in 39 Seconds

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author of [THE Book on Storytelling](#) and
the **'How to Sell More With Stories'** series of books

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The '**How to Sell More With Stories**' series
Book 1: Attract Qualified Clients in 39 Seconds

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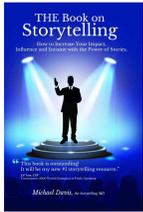
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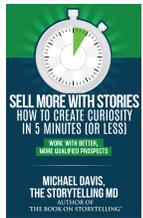
A Note From the Author

I'm grateful for the feedback I've received from so many readers of this book series. It helps others make an informed decision before buying my books. If you enjoy this book, please leave a brief review at the following link: <http://amzn.to/2hm5iny>.

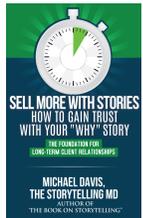
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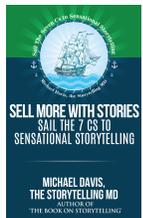
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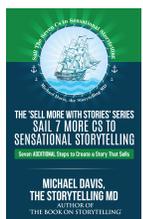
Sell More With Stories: Book 2 - How to Create Curiosity in 5 Minutes (or Less) Discover the time-tested storytelling process that is used by the best marketers and salespeople. It creates a desire in others to learn more about what you do.



Sell More With Stories: Book 3 - How to Gain Trust With Your "WHY" Story Pick up the tools to craft a story that lowers the levels of doubt and uncertainty, and develops a desire to do business with you.



Sell More With Stories: Book 4 - Sail the 7 Cs to Sensational Storytelling The most memorable and impactful stories tend to share similarities. In this book, you'll discover seven common keys that enable you to craft a narrative that leave a lasting impact.



Sell More With Stories: Book 5 - Sail 7 MORE Cs to Sensational Storytelling Pick up seven more keys to develop a story that puts in the select company - storytellers who inspire others to take action.

PREFACE

How in the world can stories help you sell more, and why should you use them?

Because traditional selling methods have become less effective. Prospective clients don't care about you, your company and your product or service — until you've established some level of curiosity and trust with them.

Storytelling offers a solution to this problem. But, only if it's done correctly.

Every day, sales professionals face the frustration of getting in their cars to fight traffic (and possibly) bad weather to attend networking events, wait in lobbies to meet with prospective clients, and far too often hear phrases like, "Thanks for stopping by. Leave me some information and I'll get back to you later," never to hear from that prospective client again.

Is it because they're poor salespeople, have no people skills, or are generally unlikable?

Absolutely.

NOT!

The problem is that these highly qualified and personable individuals have received poor training. The world of selling creates a daily conundrum for salespeople:

- Thanks to the Internet, prospective clients have more information available than ever before, so they're well-informed about what you sell.
- Global competition demands ever-increasing sales numbers — NOW! — that seemingly don't allow time for "relationship building."
- Sales training in most organizations is woefully outdated, and leads to not only lost sales, but a high turnover rate in the sales profession.

It doesn't have to be this way.

There is a method of quickly communicating, connecting, and creating value that gives you an edge. It's called '**How to Sell More With Stories.**'

The **'How to Sell More With Stories'** series provides you with proven tools and processes. They enable you to quickly connect with *qualified* prospective clients, and lay the foundation for completing more sales.

Specifically, what you'll pick up in this series is:

- How to quickly stand out from the crowd in a social or networking setting (**'Attract Prospective Clients in 39 Seconds'**)
- How to develop a desire in others to learn more about what you do (**'Create Curiosity in 2 Minutes'**)
- How to earn the trust of others in five minutes using a meaningful and memorable personal story (**'How to Gain Trust in 5 Minutes'**)
- How to craft and deliver stories that transform your presentations into experiences that enlighten other and compel them to buy what you're selling (**'Sail the 7Cs to Sensational Storytelling'** and **'Sail 7 More Cs to Sensational Storytelling'**)

In this series, you'll follow Nicole, a frustrated financial advisor. You'll read how she changes her ways of thinking and adopts the **'How to Sell More With Stories'** mindset. This new way of thinking greatly increases her number of prospective clients, sales, and ultimately, enjoyment of her work.

It's important to note that these are *not* techniques designed to close business in five minutes. For decades, salespeople have operated under the fallacy that they can meet a potential client, give a pre-packaged presentation, and close business in a short amount of time.

This may have worked at one time, but not any more.

I'm curious — Would you agree to have surgery from a doctor you just met two minutes ago?

Probably not.

Would you buy a car from a salesperson you just met two minutes ago?

Unlikely.

Would you marry someone you just met two minutes ago?

No...

OK, there are some cultures where arranged marriages are accepted. Even in those cases, the families have done their “due diligence.”

With your answers to these questions in mind, why would you expect any **one** to buy any **thing** from you after knowing you for just five minutes?

This series is designed to help you quickly make enough of a connection to “open a door,” so that a prospective client will say something like, “I’d like to talk further with you about what you do.”

Once that door is open, you can then proceed through the process by using a series of questions and stories to increase their interest. You’ll be in a position to lay the foundation for creating a mutually beneficial long-term relationship.

The 21st century customer has access to all the information she wants, and her own ideas on what works best. Providing information alone is no longer a unique selling proposition for salespeople. Dispensing ideas that are readily available creates no connection with prospective clients. Because of this, a new approach is needed if you wish to stand **out** from the crowd.

What the public wants today is **perspective**. They’re searching for new ways of using the preponderance of information so that their lives will be better.

The successful sales professional today must assume the role of thought leader and trusted advisor. Effective selling doesn’t involve “hard selling,” overcoming objections, and closing until they say “yes.” It involves open and honest conversations that uncover the frustrations and difficulties in peoples’ lives, and determining if your products or services can solve those problems.

Chances are, these ideas may be challenging ingrained beliefs you have about selling. If that’s the case, ask yourself one question:

“Am I happy with the sales results I’ve been getting?”

If not, are you willing to step out of your comfort zone to learn a better way?

If you're still reading, I assume your answer is "yes."

A question I'm often asked is, "If I implement these ideas, what type of results can I expect?"

It's a fair and relevant question, and it can't be answered. That's because there are too many factors that impact your results:

- The number of prospective clients you meet
- The industry you work in
- Your willingness to do something different, test new ideas, review your presentations, and make adjustments when necessary
- Your ability to work through learning a new way of communicating
- Your level of commitment and perseverance

With this in mind, I can confidently say that at least doubling your results in one year is a realistic expectation **if you follow the process.**

How can I write this?

Because of the results I experienced when I began using the tools you're about to learn.

I'd love to tell you that I'm brilliant and insightful about this subject. The truth is, I stumbled onto these ideas out of desperation. I learned these unique ideas about selling from successful sales professionals, successful public speakers and business leaders. I enhanced this information by conducting additional research and then practicing what I'd learned.

Before you learn about the accidental discovery, answer these questions:

If you could **double**, or even **triple**, your number of appointments in the next 12 months, what impact would that have on your life?

How would it help your career?

How much more income would you earn?

How would it affect your feelings about the work you do?

What would this do for your family?

This series is designed to help you quickly achieve those results.

The incident that inspired this series occurred in the summer of 2008...

I'm presenting a workshop for prospective financial planning clients. It's called *Wine, Women and Wealth*. It's the first time I've presented this specific program, and I'm the only man in the room, standing before 21 women.

Five minutes into my talk, I can't shake the feeling that something is wrong. After ignoring that feeling for another five minutes, it's still there.

I think, *Might as well say something, because this is going nowhere.*

"Ladies," I say, "something doesn't feel right. I'm not sure if I've done or said anything to offend you. If we don't get it out in the open, you're not going to get any benefit from this.

"So please, tell me, have I done or said something wrong?"

I feel a knot in my stomach as the silence stretches for several seconds. Finally, a woman named Leslie speaks up: "I've got a question, Michael. What's your deal?"

This question catches me off guard. All I can say is, "Excuse me, Leslie? My deal? What do you mean?"

She responds, "I've been to these types of meetings before—we get all dressed up, you buy us a nice dinner, some wine, and then we get to hear a long sales pitch. Is that what you're going to do here?"

Several attendees nod in agreement. Clearly they've had the same experience.

For a few seconds, my mind is blank. I know why I'm presenting this program, but how can I convince them?

All of a sudden, an experience from many years earlier pops into my head. It was one of the reasons I'd gotten into the financial planning business, but had never told it to anyone. I start to push it out of my mind, but then I think, *Why not? I've got nothing to lose at this point.*

I say, "Thanks for asking, Leslie. Obviously, we'd like to attract new clients with these dinners. But, for me, there's a deeper reason. It's based on an incident I had about 20 years ago..."

It was a cool Spring morning when I stopped by my Mom's house. When I walked into her kitchen, I could smell the freshly brewed coffee. Mom was sitting at her kitchen table, with a stack of papers and a checkbook lying on the table before her. She was clearly upset.

I said, "Mom, what's wrong?"

"I can't get any money, Michael!"

I said, "What do you mean you can't get any money?"

"Just like I said," she answered. "I can't get a bank loan, a car loan, or a business loan!"

I was confused. I said, "I don't understand, Mom. You've got a good job. You save money. You pay your bills on time. You even took care of all the books when you and Dad had the business. That doesn't make sense. Why won't they loan you money?"

She said, "You're right! I *do* have a good job. I *do* save my money. I *do* pay my bills on time. But the problem is, the house, the car, and the business loans were all in your Dad's name. When we divorced, he took the bills and credit paying history with him."

Silence filled the air for several seconds. Then, with tears welling up in her eyes, she looked down and said in a near-whisper, "It's like I don't even exist."

Silence fills the air of that meeting room. The only sound I hear is the room fan slowly rotating overhead.

I finally say, "Ladies, The biggest reason I conduct these dinners is that I don't ever want to see another woman feel or look the way my mom did when she said those words."

For several seconds, no one says a word. Finally, my eyes meet Leslie's. She stares at me for a couple of seconds. Then, with a smile slowly crossing her lips, she finally says, "We're good! Carry on!"

Everyone in the room laughs, the tension is relieved, and we proceed to have a lively and fully engaged event.

Before that night, when I'd presented other types of financial workshops, the sign-up rate for a follow-up appointment was 21%, about 1 out of five. That night, nearly **three** out-of-five - 57% - of the attendees signed up for a follow-up meeting.

When I compared that presentation to others I'd done, the most glaring difference was the story I told about my mom.

Could a simple story make that much of a difference?

Actually, yes. In the weeks that followed, I tested my presentations with and without stories. I consistently found that when I told authentic and relatable stories, more people wanted to meet with me for follow-up visits.

In the year following my first "Mom story," my number of appointments following either a workshop or initial one-to-one meeting increased from 21% to 65%, as I continually refined my talks and improved my stories.

If you want to find a new way of connecting with others, earn their trust, and create the foundation of long-term, mutually beneficial business relationships, read on....

FRUSTRATED YET AGAIN

Nicole is a financial advisor who's been in the business 4 years. She's attending a lunchtime networking event, her third this week.

As she walks around, a familiar feeling pops up in the pit of her stomach, and she thinks, *God, I really wish I was anywhere but here.* With some effort, she walks over to a tall man who has on a smart looking pinstripe blue suit and receding grey hair. On his name tag is written the name "Jeff." He smiles broadly at her, glances at her name tag, sticks out his big right hand, and says, "Hi, Nicole. Haven't seen you here before. What do you do?"

Nicole pauses, and then says the same words she has been taught and repeated at countless gatherings like this: "I'm a financial planner with Main Street Financial Mastery. We specialize in helping retirees live out their dreams with our unique holistic process." She then swallows and cringes as she repeats the same tired tagline her manager insists she uses, 'If you work with Main Street, we'll put you on easy street.'"

Jeff's big smile fades away. With a nod, he says, "That's interesting, Nicole. Well, we're glad to have you here. Why don't you mill around and introduce yourself to other members? Nice meeting you..."

With that, Jeff excuses himself and quickly turns to another guest.

Discouraged yet again, the anxious feeling increases as Nicole thinks, *This is such a waste of time. Nobody ever wants to have a meeting with me after we talk at these things.*

Little did Nicole know that her life was about to change.

SOMEONE WHO UNDERSTANDS

Another middle-aged man, wearing a grey suit and light blue shirt with no tie, is standing next to where Nicole and Jeff had their brief conversation. He pleasantly smiles at Nicole and says, “Frustrating, isn’t it?”

Nicole, lost in thought, says, “Excuse me?”

“Frustrating to talk to people at these events and try to get them to set meetings with you, isn’t it?” he asked.

After a long pause, a frown crosses Nicole’s lips. “It’s that obvious, is it?”

The man grins and says, “Just a little.” He sticks out his right hand and says, “I’m David, David Michaels.” Glancing at her name tag, he adds, “Nice to meet you, Nicole Jeffries.”

Looking into David’s friendly eyes, Nicole thinks, *There’s something different about this man.*

“If my guess is right, you’ve attended a lot of these events, trying to meet new clients, haven’t you?” David asks.

Impressed, Nicole replies, “Very insightful, Mr. Michaels. How could you tell?”

With a laugh, David says, “I’ve been where you are, and I’ve seen far too many sales-people and entrepreneurs just like you—people who attend networking luncheons, marketing extravaganzas, and other business-building events. It doesn’t take them long to experience the same frustrations. They give pre-scripted ‘elevator talks’ that don’t get results.”

Nicole slowly and sadly nods her head as David adds, “I’m guessing you’ve felt frustration, anxiety, or even anger. You may be seriously doubting yourself or even thinking of giving up your career because of these feelings.”

Nicole’s mouth drops open, “How did you know THAT?”

David laughs again. “Like I said, I’ve been there before.”

Then, more seriously, he adds, “If you think that you’re the problem, nothing could be further from the truth. You can be effective and stand out from the crowd by quickly grabbing people’s attention, keeping their interest, and motivating them to talk with you about doing business.”

“But how?” asks Nicole, with a hint of desperation in her voice. “My company taught me this elevator talk. They said it works!”

Shaking his head sadly, David responds, “They *used* to work. Unfortunately, these talks have been used for so many years, that people who use them sound like robots - no authenticity and no heart. They can’t possibly make a connection with anyone or earn their trust. Almost everyone at these events either sounds alike or is trying to impress you with a fancy tagline.”

A NEW WAY OF THINKING

He pauses long enough to see that Nicole is fully engaged. He continues, “The key to standing out is to stop trying to sell people when you first meet them. The underlying principle to creating long-lasting business is to develop relationships in stages.”

“Think of it like dating. You meet someone attractive. You strike up a conversation. If that goes well, one of you asks the other on a date. Typically, on that first date, you get to know more about one another. If that date goes well, you arrange a second one.

“If that one succeeds, you’re on to the third date. And the cycle continues until you reach a point where you commit to one another, or decide you can’t stand one another any more and go your separate ways.”

Nicole bursts out laughing at this. “I’ve had too many of those after **one** date,” she says.

“Me, too,” says David. “The key point to remember is that there is a series of steps that occur to develop the relationship.

“How weird would it be, Nicole, to go on a first a date and within 15 minutes be told, ‘I really love you. Let’s get married, consummate the relationship, and start planning our family?’ ”

“Uhhh, pretty strange...” she says.

“Exactly,” says David. “Now, I know that there’s the occasional demented individual who tries this, but it’s uncommon behavior and 99.8% of people don’t operate this way.

“That being the case, isn’t this exactly how many people act in networking or marketing events? They act as if, within a few minutes of knowing them, they want to ‘consummate’ the relationship and close the business.”

“I never thought of it that way,” Nicole says.

“Most people don’t,” adds David. “This has *never* been a good strategy. That’s even more so in the 21st century. There are too many options of people to do business with. Unfortunately, many companies still teach these outdated techniques because they bring in enough business. It’s too painful for them to change.”

Somewhat exasperated, Nicole blurts out, “What’s the solution, David?”

He says, “A straightforward series of proven and repeatable steps. Think of it as the, ‘We just met — should we talk more to determine if a first date makes sense?’ step.”

THE FIRST STEP

Nicole, laughing at the dating analogy, says, “I’m intrigued, David. How does it work?”

David answers, “Let’s start with an assumption that carries throughout the selling process.”

Looking confused, Nicole replies, “What do you mean?”

“Tell me, Nicole, when you think about the people you most enjoy talking with, why do you like those conversations?”

After thinking about this question, Nicole says, “Well, there’s a lot of give-and-take. Sometimes, if I need to talk, the other person listens. If she needs to talk, I listen. There’s a fair balance of talk-and-listen.”

David smiles. “I couldn’t agree more. That’s the basis of any effective communication. The problem with traditional sales training is that it’s focused on too much talking by the salesperson: ‘I tell you about me. I tell you about my company. I tell you about our process.’ I, I, I! Me, Me, Me! It’s enough to give me a headache!” David says with disgust.

Nicole, chuckling at David’s emotional outburst, says, “I’ve never thought about it that way, but, yes, that’s how I was trained. I agree that it’s extremely irritating to listen to someone blather on and on about themselves. It also reminds me of more than one bad date I’ve had, so your analogy is perfect.”

Laughing at this, David continues, “The reason I mention this is that the underlying principle to effective selling is **asking relevant questions**. Before you tell a good story, you have to understand the other person’s situation. Keep that in mind when we talk about different types of storytelling.”

Seeing that Nicole understands, he concludes with, “Questions are the foundation, but, at some point, you have to tell the other person about yourself. And *that* is when ‘**How to Sell More With Stories**’ can make you shine.”

“Okay, that makes sense,” says Nicole.

David continues, “The first step in the process is designed to answer just two questions:

“Number One, ‘How are you different?’

“Number Two, ‘What can you tell me that will entice me to spend a few more minutes talking with you?’ ”

“That’s it?” asks Nicole, with a puzzled look.

“That’s it,” David confidently replies. “Answer these two questions in the minds of a prospective client, and you’re well on your way to getting your ‘first date.’ ”

“Let me share an example. Let’s pretend we’ve just met at a social event. I’ll use my **39-Second Story**. For the sake of this example, pretend you’re a doctor.”

“39-Second Story?” says Nicole. “This should be interesting.”

David says, “Hi, Nicole. I’m David. What type of work do you do?”

Nicole replies, “I’m an oncologist. I don’t recognize you. What do you do?”

David says, “You know how a lot of doctors are worried about their changes in income?”

Getting into the spirit of the exercise, Nicole says, “Absolutely. It’s one of my biggest frustrations. I can’t believe how much change has happened since I started.”

David continues, “So, you understand. You were used to one way of running your practice and almost overnight, all the rules changed. You don’t know how to plan for business expenses or your personal lifestyle. Does any of that sound familiar?”

Nicole, with a serious look on her face, nods her head in agreement. “Absolutely.”

David continues, “If you’re like most physicians, this leaves you feeling frustrated, anxious, or even afraid, and maybe even considering leaving your practice.”

Nicole, with a hint of awe, says, “*It’s like you’re reading my mind!*”

David, with a smile, says, "I'm not a mind reader. I've just worked with many frustrated physicians. It sounds like these feelings are all too familiar to you."

"They sure are. To tell the truth, I've been feeling pretty discouraged lately," says Nicole.

"Well, you're in luck, Nicole! I fix that problem," says David, with confidence.

With a surprised look on her face, Nicole asks, "How do you do that?"

David says, "I work with you to structure your money as efficiently as possible. No matter what the medical industry, the economy or the stock market is doing, you'll always have the income you want. You'll also meet all of your obligations, and never be a burden on others."

Nicole eagerly says, "That's what I want!"

Smiling, David stops the role play. "That's exactly what I want my prospective clients to say!"

Nicole responds, "What do you mean? I want to know how you fix the problem!"

"I know, I know," says David, throwing up his hands in a defensive gesture. "Slow down, It's not time for that yet."

QUICKLY GAUGE OTHERS' INTEREST

“So, help me understand why this works,” says Nicole.

“Ok, but before I do, tell me this: How curious are you to know the answer to how I fix the problem?” David asks.

“Very, David! That’s why I asked,” she quickly answers.

“Interesting,” David says. “Imagine, Nicole, what it would be like if **your** prospective clients had the same response the next time you introduce yourself at an event like this.”

David could see the comprehension spread across Nicole’s face. “Oh, wow, you’re right! That’d be great!” she exclaims. “Now, tell me how it works!”

“Before I do, understand that with that brief conversation, I typically get one of two responses:

“The usual response is something like, ‘Hmmm...that’s interesting’ or ‘Can you tell me more?’ or ‘How do you do that?’

“The other type of response, which I occasionally get, is it that they’ll be polite, but I can tell they’re not interested.”

Nicole says, “I don’t see how they’d feel that way, but OK.”

David continues, “Either way, Nicole, I know one important fact—I either have an interested party, or I don’t. If the response I receive is disinterested, I pleasantly dismiss myself and move on to the next person.

Nicole says, “But my company taught me to keep talking to them. They told me if I ask enough questions and overcome their objections, I’ll get more appointments.”

David, clearly irritated by this, says, “That’s old school thinking, Nicole! Consumers today will not tolerate that type of selling. Tell me, do you want to do business with someone that you have to verbally fight, every step of the way?”

“Well, no!” she responds. “I hate that. It’s demoralizing and not at all enjoyable.”

“Precisely!” David says. “Sales has gotten a bad reputation because of that way of selling.”

Taking a deep breath, David slows down and says, “Look, I apologize. I’m certainly not frustrated with you, Nicole. I get mad because of companies that perpetuate old methods that aren’t effective. They give us all a bad name and make our work even harder.

“The bottom-line is, if you meet someone who’s not interested, politely end the conversation. Move on to the next person. There are thousands of people you can meet over the course of your career. Why not spend your valuable time with people who want to talk with you?”

“That makes a lot of sense, David,” Nicole says.

“Enough of that! Let’s talk about the better, positive responses. If the other person asks questions after your 39-Second Story, you’ve been invited to engage in a lengthier conversation.

“How you handle that conversation is critical, but we’ll talk about that later. For now, remember this one vital point: This is **not** the time to begin talking about your products or services. Remember the dating analogy—this is the time to see if there’s enough mutual interest to set your first meeting.”

Nicole says with enthusiasm, “That makes a lot of sense.”

David, smiling, says, “Yes, if you want to build long-term relationships.”

“You’re probably familiar with the old saying, ‘People buy from individuals whom they know, like, and trust,’ ” suggests David.

Nicole nods. “I’ve heard that way too many times.”

David continues, “There is a rarely used second part to that sentiment you’ve probably never heard: ‘People trust individuals whom they connect with.’

“What do you think is the shortest way to that connection?”

Nicole thinks for a while. “Well, we’ve been talking about a lot. I’m not sure.”

“Stories,” David says. “They are the quickest way to earn trust and create an emotional connection with others.”

WHY TRADITIONAL SELLING SYSTEMS FALL SHORT

“The problem with many of the sales systems that are still taught is that they rely on ‘techniques’ that are meant to lead or persuade a prospective client to behave in a certain way.”

“Yeah,” says Nicole. “Sounds like a lot of the training I’ve been through. I never liked those because they didn’t feel natural. They always felt ‘sales-y’ to me.”

“Precisely,” says David. “They **aren’t** natural, and prospective clients know it. As I said before, people are much too sophisticated today. They know authentic and they know phony. They won’t put up with phony.”

“And,” adds David, “despite all of these systems, many salespeople still struggle to make those essential connections that create trust. That’s because they’re too focused on facts and figures, and their own background.”

Nicole says in an exasperated tone, “Salespeople who just spout a bunch of information bore me to death. And I really don’t care about where you went to school or your company — at least not until I know how you can help me.”

“Exactly!” says David. “People don’t remember anything the salesperson says when this approach is used. In fact, they start thinking about anything **but** the person who’s talking.”

David, with a frustrated look, adds, “That happens far too often.

“Another challenge with these sales systems is that most salespeople are using similar approaches. This practically ensures that you not only sound like everyone else, you also get fewer appointments or meetings. Prospective clients feel that, ‘I’ve already heard this before.’”

WHY IS 39-SECOND SELLING DIFFERENT?

“I think I understand why this is different, but can you elaborate on it?” Nicole asks.

“When you talk with people from a storytelling standpoint, you're giving them insight into you. You make a human connection first. You're also communicating with them from the point of view of the benefits they'll receive, rather than the features you provide,” David replies.

“Benefits first. My company talks about that. But, it feels like all they've trained us to do is tell about what we sell. Help me better understand why discussing benefits first is so important.” Nicole says.

“When you talk about *what* you do — for instance, ‘I'm a financial planner’ or ‘We have a holistic planning process’ or ‘Our mutual funds are some of the highest rated’ — you're focused on the ‘what’ or ‘how’ aspects of your work.

“Remember, people don't care about what you do, or how you do it — at least, not at first. They want to know **what they'll get** — the feelings, the opportunities, the advantages — if they decide to work with you.”

“So,” Nicole interjects, “my clients want to know if their kids can go to a good college without bankrupting their retirement, rather than hear about our sophisticated retirement planning software?”

“Precisely!” says David with a huge grin. “You're catching on fast, my young Jedi apprentice.”

“Oh no!” groans Nicole, “Not another *Star Wars* geek!”

David roars with laughter. “Guilty as charged! I can't help it, I grew up on those movies.”

With a more serious tone, David continues, “When you tell stories wrapped around benefits to the client, you immediately appear different.

“It's estimated that we're bombarded by thousands of different marketing messages every day. If you don't find a way to stand out, you're toast! That's a technical term long used in the sales and marketing world, by the way.”

Nicole groans again. “Stick to your day job, David. The comic thing isn’t working for you.”

“You can’t blame a guy for trying,” David says.

He continues, “The 39-Second Story is the first step toward opening the door to a ‘next date’ and developing the foundation for a long-term, trusting relationship.

“It’s not a traditional story, where you describe characters or circumstances in depth. It *is* traditional in the sense that it describes relatable characters who experience a problem that’s solved by the work you do.”

Nicole interjects, “You can do it that fast?”

David smiles. “Think about it. You just had a reaction of curiosity, you wanted to know more, based on our role play, didn’t you?”

Nicole says, “Yeah, I really did. I see your point.”

“Actually, each of us is telling stories all the time, and don’t realize it. When we tell people about our day at work, brag about our kids, or talk about growing up — we’re sharing stories.”

David adds, “Let me give you the rationale behind the 39-Second Story, and it’ll make more sense.”

HOW DOES THE 39-SECOND STORY WORK?

“After our initial introduction, I asked, ‘You know how a lot of doctors have a problem with all of their changes in income?’

“This first sentence is designed to explain to the other person the specific group you work with — in this case, physicians.”

“It also defines a common problem that the group experiences — here, dealing with the shifts in income from the massive changes in the medical industry.”

After a pause, David says, “It’s important to know, Nicole, that most people feel skeptical about narrowing the focus of the individuals to work with. It’s counterintuitive to say that you only serve a specific target group.

“You’re right, it doesn’t feel like the best strategy,” says Nicole.

David continues, “Research has shown that the most successful sales professionals consistently work within a narrow niche of individuals. They become well-known to that field of people. As a result, they are viewed as experts in their topic within that targeted group.”

“I hadn’t thought of it that way,” Nicole says.

David adds, “Keep in mind that you’re not excluding yourself from working with others. In fact, the most successful salespeople find that individuals in ancillary industries often approach them to do business. The reputation they’ve developed in their niche market makes them more desirable to work with.

“For example, financial advisors focused on working with general practice physicians could get referred to podiatrists, internists, and orthopedic doctors. They could also attract people in other professions like pharmacists, dentists, or medical supply companies.”

Nicole, silently nodding, says, “I think I understand. It makes sense.”

“Good,” says David. “Now, your answer to my first statement was, ‘Absolutely. It’s one of my biggest frustrations. I can’t believe how much change has happened since I started.’

“It’s important at this point to allow the other person to respond to your initial statement. Far too many salespeople keep talking, and don’t create the environment for a conversation. The other person may not respond to you, but pause long enough to give her the opportunity.

“Keep in mind you’ve just said something she’s probably never heard at a networking event. She may even be dazed because you didn’t sound like a pre-programmed robot!

Nicole laughs at this. “I’ve heard way too many people who sound like that!”

David continues, “Slow down and give her a chance to comprehend what you’ve said. The more opportunities she has to be engaged in the conversation, the more likely you’ll make a connection and plant the seeds of trust.

“Now, my next words were, **‘So, you understand. You were used to one way of running your practice and almost overnight, all of the rules changed. You don’t know how to plan for business expenses or your personal lifestyle. Does any of that sound familiar?’** ”

David adds, “Acknowledge that you heard what the other person has said before you launch into the next part of your story. Remember, it’s not about getting your pre-scripted talk out as fast as possible. It’s about allowing a two-way conversation to unfold.”

Nicole, nodding her head, says, “I see the value in a real conversation. It’s better to talk *with* someone rather than *at* them.”

“Couldn’t have said it better myself, Nicole,” David says with a sparkle in his eyes.

He continues, “Once you’ve responded, describe the emotional reactions that your typical clients have experienced because of the problem you’ve described. In our conversation, I talked about how my clients don’t know what to do in the midst of all the changes in the medical world.”

“For this part to connect with others, you must highlight the difficulties people are experiencing. The stronger the emotions, the better. Until you touch an emotional chord in others, they won’t be moved out of their comfort zones and open to hearing about what you have to offer.

“That’s a different way of looking at it, David,” Nicole interjects. After a pause, she adds, “When I think about it, I usually don’t make a major purchase unless I feel like I have to do it.”

“Precisely,” says David. “When we’re comfortable, we tend not to seek out change. The status quo feels okay. Our jobs as sales professionals is to highlight that life won’t be OK if the unexpected occurs. But, this *isn’t* the time in the conversation to do that. We haven’t earned that right yet.

“At this point, my next words were, **‘If you’re like most physicians, this leaves you feeling frustrated, anxious, or even afraid, and maybe even considering leaving the medical profession.’**

“This sentence tells others that you’re listening, and you understand the negative emotions they’re experiencing. It also escalates those feelings. The more intense their emotional response, the more likely they are to listen to your offer.

“It’s as if you’re ‘in their heads.’ At some level, they think, *This person understands me.*’ When they feel understood, their defenses begin to drop; they hear a possible solution to their problems.”

“Wow, all of this makes so much sense,” says Nicole.

David continues, “Nicole, I *loved it* when you said, ‘It’s like you’re reading my mind!’ ”

Nicole laughed, “Even though we were role playing, that’s exactly how I felt. It’s like you knew what was going on in my head!”

David, with a smile, says, “Like I said, I’m not a mind reader. It just feels that way because I may be the first person who’s had this level of conversation with you. Remember, I’ve worked with many frustrated physicians.”

He pauses, then adds, “It’s important that you say something like, **‘It sounds like these feelings are all too familiar to you.’** ”

“I think I understand why,” says Nicole. “When I feel like you understand me, you don’t seem like a typical salesperson to me.”

“Exactly!” says David. “Your response was typically what I hear.”

Slightly embarrassed, Nicole says, “Ummm, exactly what **did** I say?”

David answers, “You said something to the effect of, ‘Yeah, I’ve been feeling very discouraged lately.’”

“If you’re a good prospective client for me, then that’s the response I want to hear. See, if you’re comfortable, chances are almost nil that you’re going to change or be open to hearing about a new way of looking at your situation.”

Nicole says, “David, I can see where it’s important to get other people to feel the consequences of not acting in their own best interest.”

“That’s the key, Nicole! It’s *their* best interest. Some people have said that this way of communicating is manipulative. I couldn’t disagree more,” David says, a hint of irritation in his voice.

“Too many people are walking around today kidding themselves, especially about financial matters. They have a false sense of security. If we don’t shake them up, they’re headed for serious problems down the road!”

“Wow, David,” Nicole interjected. “You’re fired up!”

David stops, shakes his head slightly, his cheeks turning red. He adds, “I guess I do get upset when I think about the attitudes salespeople have to endure in order to improve their client’s lives.”

“I hear you,” says Nicole. “I understand why people leave this business. It’s tough enough to do this job without the public being so negative about our profession.”

“Agreed,” says David. “But, with fresh concepts like **Sell With a Story**, we might be able to change that.

“Now, I need to get off my soapbox,” he adds with a smile.

THE KEY TO THE 39-SECOND STORY

“The last part of our conversation is the most important aspect. It’s also the point where most salespeople kill the conversation. It’s when you’ve answered my statement that ‘It sounds like these feelings are all too familiar to you.’

“My next statement was, **‘Well, you’re in luck, Nicole! I fix that problem.’**

“Without thinking, you asked the question: ‘How do you do that?’”

David continues, “As I said earlier, that’s what I want to hear!

“I tell you ‘I fix that problem’ to create a need in the other person to learn more about the work I do. After describing the painful emotions this individual is experiencing, it creates a feeling that you understand that person. You’re offering a glimmer of hope that you can relieve this person’s pain. She’s eager to learn more.”

“And if she’s interested, she’ll ask you to tell her more, won’t she?” asks Nicole.

David flashes a broad smile. “You’re a quick study, Nicole. That statement — ‘I fix that’ — creates curiosity. If the other person has **any** interest in what you do, she’ll ask.

“The biggest challenge at this point is to allow the impact of those three words to sink in,” he adds.

“How do you do that?” Nicole eagerly asks.

“Shut up,” says David.

“Excuse me!” says Nicole.

“Oh, I don’t mean now,” David quickly replies. “I can be a jerk, but not that much of one! What I mean is, say those three words, ‘I fix that,’ and then stop talking.

“One of the biggest challenges for salespeople is to stay quiet long enough to allow the power of their best statements or questions sink in.”

“Yeah, I’ve heard of that,” says Nicole. “I learned long ago that the first person who talks after the salesperson asks the question loses.”

With a grimace, David quickly responds, “Somehow I knew you’d say that. I’ve heard that for decades, and I couldn’t disagree more.”

“Why?” Nicole asks.

“Think about the premise of that statement, Nicole,” relies David. “It implies that there is a winner and a loser in the selling situation; if the prospective buyer responds first, you, the seller, win. If you speak first, the buyer wins.

“That’s a ridiculous sentiment **if** the product or service you’re selling is worthwhile. If the person doesn’t buy what you’re selling, you both lose. The other person doesn’t gain the benefit of your offering and you don’t help a new client and earn a commission. You each win only **if** what you’re offering is in her best interest and she buys.”

“And she only buys if you develop a mutually trusting relationship,” Nicole proudly interjects.

David says, “You’re getting it, my friend. You’re getting it!”

He continues, “That’s why even people who sell a lot from that win-lose mentality are often stressed and burned out. Selling is a war to those people, and not an enjoyable relationship building experience.”

“OK, I get that,” Nicole says. “So tell me more about this ‘shut up’ concept.”

David smiles, “It’s pretty simple, actually. When you make a powerful statement or ask a question, be quiet for several seconds. The silence allows the other person to feel the implication of what you’ve said. She considers the ramifications in her own situation, and how her life might be better with the solution you may have to offer.

“Too many salespeople talk themselves out of sales because they’re afraid of silence. They don’t understand that the quiet is where the prospective client begins to move past thinking and feels the benefits of working with you. She may be picturing what life would be like if she gets the same result as other people you’ve helped. You’ve got to give her the time to do that.”

David concludes with, “At this point, Nicole, I ended our conversation with **‘I work with you to structure your money as efficiently as possible. No matter what your industry, the economy or the stock market is doing, you’ll always have the income you want. You’ll also meet all of your obligations, and never be a burden on others.’**”

He continues, “How did you feel when I said that?”

“I was intrigued. I wanted that same result,” Nicole answers.

“Why do you think you had such a strong emotional reaction?” David asks.

“Well... I felt like you were giving me results that I want. I actually felt a moment of envy about the person you were describing,” she says.

“Interesting. That’s the power of a well-structured story. I painted a picture of how life could be for you,” David points out.

“Yes! That’s it! I want that feeling,” Nicole concludes.

IS THIS REALLY A STORY?

“Now, you may be thinking, that’s not really a story, is it?” David says.

“Well, it’s not like the bedtime stories I used to hear as a kid,” Nicole says with a laugh.

David smiles, “I understand your knee-jerk feeling. But consider this: The 39-Second Story has the traditional elements of a story — circumstances, character, conflict, cure, and change in the life of the character.

“It highlights an emotional shift and a change in the circumstances of your character — an individual who represents the group you work with — in my earlier example, physicians.”

“OK, makes sense,” Nicole concedes.

David continues, “Once you’ve delivered your 39-Second Story, be careful. You’ll most likely receive a positive response from the other person. She’ll probably ask questions about your business. This is where many salespeople slip back into selling mode.

“If you do this immediately after delivering the 39-Second Story, all of the positive feeling and connection can evaporate. You’ll begin to sound like every other salesperson.”

“So, what do you do?” Nicole asks.

David continues, “Remember, after the other person has heard your 39-Second Story, one of the emotions she’s feeling is curiosity. The correct next step when asked questions is to increase that curiosity. For example, if you’re asked, ‘That’s really interesting, can you tell me more?’ or ‘How do you do that?’ use this response:

‘I’d love to. But I’m curious. Would you be comfortable with a doctor who, upon first meeting you, writes out a prescription, hands it to you and says, “Here, take this”?’

David adds, “Every time I ask someone this, the answer is ‘No!’

“When I ask ‘Why?’ the response is always, ‘Because you don’t know anything about my condition or what’s wrong with me.’

“I then say, ‘Listen, this works for most of my other patients, go ahead and take it. You’ll be fine.’

“They always respond by saying, ‘No!’ and say ‘There’s **no way** they’d go back to a doctor like that.’ ”

Nicole interjects, “I don’t blame them. That’d be crazy!”

David smiles, “That’s the point. This doctor example is a terrific parallel to the approach of so many salespeople who try to close business too quickly. They act like doctors prescribing medicine long before they know what’s wrong with you.”

Nicole says, “David, that’s a great metaphor! I’ve never had it explained to me like that.”

David continues, “At this point, Nicole, I finish by saying, ‘Since I don’t know anything about you, it wouldn’t make sense for me to just dump a lot of information on you. Would you mind telling me about you?’ ”

“So, you’re creating a conversation,” Nicole interjects.

“Yes,” David replies, “and there are two reasons this works:

“One, it allows the other person to talk about herself, which most people love to do.

“Two, far too many salespeople jump into a long explanation of the work they do without knowing anything about the person to whom they’re speaking. This ‘hit-or-miss’ approach means you might get lucky if you happen to bring up a service or product they might need.

“Chances are very good that you won’t. You’re much better to learn more about the other person so you can tailor your next words to her situation.”

THE NEXT STEP

“Once you know something about the other person, you’re in a position to share your 2-Minute Story. That will further increase her interest, as well as your chances to set an appointment with her.”

“Two-minute story? You mean there are more types of stories for me to learn?” asks Nicole in a mock-exasperated voice.

David says, “Yes, but that’s for another day. If you remember nothing else, remember this, Nicole: **The only goal of the 39-Second Story is to create enough interest to continue the conversation.**”

“David,” Nicole says, “this is the best talk about selling I think I’ve ever had. Would you be willing to work with me to improve my sales?”

“Hmmm, I love your enthusiasm. You’re a quick study, and you’re clearly open-minded about new ideas.” David slightly leans in toward Nicole, and in a near-whisper says, “I’ll work with you under one condition.”

Eyes wide, Nicole expectantly says, “What’s that?”

“You have to be willing to do the work. Follow the steps; practice to get comfortable with asking questions and telling your stories; record yourself; accept feedback; review your presentations; and repeat the process.” David says.

Nicole doesn’t hesitate. “David, if I don’t make a drastic change, I’ll be out of this career in six months... or less. I really love financial planning; it feels like a calling. I don’t even need to think about it. I’m willing to do the work to make the changes,” she says with an air of assurance.

“Fantastic!” says David. “Before we even think about the 2-Minute Story or any other aspect of this process, it’s vital to create the foundation for your 39-Second Story. I’ll send you the template and a sample conversation like we had in our role play. Use it to refer to in order to create your first version.”

“Cool. Can’t wait to get it. I’ll work on it right away,” Nicole says with enthusiasm.

A REVIEW

Before they part, David finishes by saying, “Here are some key points to remember about crafting your *60-Second Story*:

- **Specificity is vital** to touching people’s emotions. Be specific about who you serve, and the emotions your clients felt before they worked with you.
- Once you develop the first version, you must **practice**. Every chance you get, rehearse these words. This will help you get comfortable and test the reactions of others to what you’re saying. It’s cliched, but true — practice creates comfort with your words. When you don’t have to think about what you’re saying, you can focus on the other person
- This exercise is about **connection**, not *perfection*. People want to do business with individuals who are like them. Since they’re not perfect, neither should you be.

“All right, my young friend,” says David. “I have a feeling you’ll be one of my best students. Let’s get together in two weeks and see how you’ve progressed.”

With that, they shake hands and depart.

YOUR 39-SECOND STORY TEMPLATE

Below is the template to craft your 39-Second Story. Many people find it helpful to refer back to the role play between David and Nicole in order to create their own story.

39—SECOND STORY TEMPLATE

“You know how (name of your target market) **has a problem with** (name common problem of your target market)?”

WAIT FOR RESPONSE

“They (name of a common action they take) **and don’t get the results they want. This usually leaves them feeling** (name negative emotions often incurred when the action fails). **If they don’t find a way to correct this problem, they** (name a negative consequence of not solving the problem.)”

WAIT FOR RESPONSE

“I fix that.”

BE QUIET UNTIL THE OTHER PERSON RESPONDS (NO MATTER HOW LONG YOU HAVE TO WAIT.) ASSUMING YOU’RE ASKED ‘HOW DO YOU DO THAT’ - OR SOME OTHER VERSION OF THOSE WORDS - SAY THE FOLLOWING:

“I work with you to (describe an action you take to improve their situation) **so that you can** (describe a result of the work you do) **and** (describe positive emotions experienced from this change).”

FINAL THOUGHTS

As you create and practice your 39-Second Story, keep these ideas in mind:

1. You **will** make mistakes—more than once—as you begin to use this process.

Why?

Because it's new. New presentations take time to internalize and feel comfortable. Never forget that the other person has *no idea* what you plan to say. If you leave something out, it's OK. You'll say it better the next time.

Keep testing. It's easy to use something a few times, and, if it doesn't work, quit using it. This is why most people fail in selling. They don't get success with one process, so they quit that one and start another. They keep looking for new ways to sell without ever mastering any of them.

2. If you've not been getting good results in networking, marketing, or initial meetings, what have you got to lose? Most likely, what you're saying at these events makes you sound like most other people. The **How to Sell More With Stories** process makes you stand out because it's different. It works if you give it time.

3. If the other person doesn't react, or has a negative response — GREAT! He's just saved you a lot of time. You won't chase after him, trying to persuade him with old-fashioned selling methods that usually don't work.

Be grateful he told you “NO.” Move on to the next person.

To help you understand the power of the 39-Second Story, consider the example of Todd, a financial advisor. He had heard me speak at a local financial planning organization months earlier. He called me one morning:

“Michael, you won't believe it. I was meeting with a retired woman, Ella, for the first time. It wasn't going well. I was giving the “approach talk” my company taught me. She wasn't responding at all. I thought about what you taught us, and decided I had nothing to lose.

“It was almost out of desperation I said, ‘Ella, you know how most retirees are afraid of running out of money and becoming a burden to their kids?’

“She looked at me for several seconds, and said, ‘I know that all too well.’

“I said, ‘How do people usually feel about that?’

“She thought for a moment, and then said, ‘They get anxious and scared and have no idea what to do.’

“I said, ‘That’s been my experience, too. And that creates a bigger problem. They get so scared or frustrated, they often make poor decisions. Or worse, they don’t do anything.’

“I waited for a few second and then said, ‘This can have serious ramifications later in life. They may run out of money, or not be prepared for unexpected health problems.’

“Ella said, ‘Todd, that’s *exactly* what I’m afraid of.’

“I said, ‘Ella, you’re in luck. I fix that.’ Now, I didn’t pause like you suggested. I went right into the next part. I said, ‘I show you how to handle your money so that you always have a monthly paycheck and you’ll never have to depend on your kids to take care of you.’

“Michael, that completely changed the tone of the conversation. By the end of our visit, we had set our next meeting. That one also went well. It’s very likely we’re going to create a plan for her and manage all of her half-million in assets. This 39-Second Story really works!”

Do you want to begin to create a deeper relationship with prospective clients and earn their trust?

Start with your 39-Second Story.

Your Help is Appreciated!

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In the third book of the series, Nicole learns the storytelling process that enables you to:

- **Quickly get past** the walls of distrust and skepticism of prospective clients
- Create a **deeper connection** with others
- Lay the foundation for **long-term mutually beneficial** client relationships

This storytelling process will **separate you** from other salespeople. You won't simply spew facts and figures at prospective clients. This type of story can **shorten your sales cycle, build trust faster,** and lay a foundation for longer-term client relationships.

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Book 4: [Sail the 7 Cs to Sensational Storytelling: Seven Steps To Create a Story That Sells](#)

In this book, you'll discover the seven keys to crafting stories that: get you noticed, create more selling opportunities for you, save you time, make you more money, and enjoy the selling process more. Your stories will **grab the attention** of listeners, **keeps their interest,** and compel them to **act on your message.**

When you incorporate these seven steps into your stories, you'll become a trusted salesperson that changes the lives of your clients and customers.

To discover these keys to storytelling that inspire action and motivate change in others, [click here](#).

Book 5: [Sail 7 More Cs to Sensational Storytelling: Seven More Steps To Create a Story That Sells](#)

In this book, you'll discover the seven keys to crafting stories that: get you noticed, create more selling opportunities for you, save you time, make you more money, and enjoy the selling process more. Your stories will **grab the attention** of listeners, **keeps their interest**, and compel them to **act on your message**.

When you incorporate these seven steps into your stories, you'll become a trusted salesperson that changes the lives of your clients and customers.

To discover these keys to storytelling that inspire action and motivate change, [click here](#).

You May Also Like:

If you enjoyed this book, you'll love, [THE Book on Storytelling: How to Increase Your Impact, Influence and Income With the Power of Stories](#). It contains advanced tools, processes and tips from some of the best storytellers in the world. You won't find this treasure-trove of ideas in any other book.

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I offer one-on-one coaching over Skype, Google Hangout, or whichever medium is most popular today. I'll help you breathe life into your stories and business presentations. We'll work on your material, structure, humor and delivery. For more details, contact me at mike@speakingcpr.com.

Also, you're invited to connect with me on Twitter (@SpeakingCPR) and Facebook (Speaking CPR) to pick up new storytelling and presentations skills ideas.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

When asked how he earned the moniker “The Storytelling MD,” Michael Davis replies, “Although I greatly admire the work doctors do to earn their MD, I took a different route. I didn’t go to school for 8, 10, or 12 years. Instead, I studied public speaking and storytelling skills since 2001. Also, I was born with the initials ‘MD.’ Combine the two, and you get ‘The Storytelling MD.’ ”

Michael’s passion for storytelling and public speaking was not obvious early in his life. As a child, he was shy and reserved—not an indication he’d grow up to be an author, professional public speaker and presentation skills coach.

This is especially surprising because of an incident in first grade that caused so much embarrassment he became afraid of speaking to groups of any size. That experience affected him well into adulthood.

As a young financial planner, his seminars about money were poorly delivered. He was given an ultimatum: “Become a better presenter ... or ELSE!!” This stirred up all of his anxieties about public speaking.

Because of that threat, he joined [Toastmasters International](#) in 1994. There he quickly discovered a passion for the art of public speaking. He learned that crafting and delivering impactful presentations is a learnable, repeatable skill.

In the years that followed, he became a voracious student of the craft. He also realized that he loves to help others improve these skills. That inspired him to start the company, [Speaking CPR](#).

In 2011, Michael earned the designation Certified World Class Speaking Coach. The processes and skills he teaches increase your visibility, create more opportunities for advancement, save you time, and may also increase your income.

To keep abreast of new ideas from the speaking world, he works closely with World Champion and Hall of Fame speakers. He also studies the work of Hollywood screenwriters and professional comics to expand his knowledge of presentation skills and offer a unique perspective on these topics. Because of his dedication to the craft, Michael is sought by speakers all over the world.

In addition to the 'How to Sell More With Stories' series, he's produced numerous audio programs, is a contributing author to three public speaking books - including the Amazon #1 Best Seller [World Class Speaking in Action](#) - and is the author of [THE Book on Storytelling](#). He coaches speakers around the world, and conducts public speaking and storytelling skills workshops throughout the year.

Michael also works closely with speakers in the [TedX Cincinnati](#) event, and has successfully coached several speakers in the Toastmasters International World Championship of Public Speaking annual contest.

Michael is a candidate member of the [National Speakers Association](#) (Kentucky Chapter) and a member of [Toastmasters International](#).

For more information, or to contact Michael about coaching your group or speaking at your next event, visit his website, [SpeakingCPR.com](#), or email him at: mike@speakingcpr.com.

ONE LAST THOUGHT

You may not have climbed Mt. Everest, won Olympic gold medals, or discovered famous ships at the bottom of the ocean. That's good, because neither have most of the people you meet.

Chances are, you **have** had problems like: relationship issues, financial struggles or feeling unhappy with your job or career. These are relatable to every person you meet.

My point is, your life experiences are far more impactful than you realize. When you learn how to craft them into meaningful and memorable stories, you'll create a lasting impact on others. You can improve other people's lives, even if the impact is as small as helping them find a new way to drive to work that reduces their stress levels.

You have stories that other people need to hear. Tell your stories. Someone needs to hear them.

Warmest regards,

Michael Davis, *the Storytelling MD*