



**Sock It To 'em With Stories**  
*Storytelling Basics for Toastmasters*  
Presented by Lynne Leite

I. Who should use stories in their communications?

- Anyone who wants to be an effective communicator
- Example: politicians

II. Why stories? Three Powerful Practical Reasons

- Make your message more memorable
  - We are wired for stories
- Increase your influence
  - Stories make you relatable
- No need for notes
  - Telling a story is easier to remember, more natural

III. When to use stories?

- Whenever possible!
  - Even a boring meeting or training session can be made more memorable by utilizing appropriate stories
- Exceptions
  - Evaluations, emergencies

IV. Where do you find stories?

- All around you
- In your memory bank
- In magazines, newspapers, books, biographies, Internet - but remember to fact check
- From friends
- Always be on the lookout for a good story, and then write it down for future reference
- Almost anything can become a story

V. What is a story?

- Recounting something that happened
- A story is *not* a speech and a speech is *not* a story

VI. What is a story's simple structure?

- Set up
- Struggle
- Solution

VII. What kinds of stories should you use?

- Appropriate for your talk and audience
  - Remember, the story is not for *you*, it is for your *audience*
- Always true, unless it is a tall tale or you make it clear you are making the story up for the sake of illustration
- Personal stories - always good
- Stories about others - also good, but verify accuracy
- Humorous, inspirational, mysterious, tragic - think of all the types of stories and how they could be used to make a talk more effective
- Build your speech around one story, or use multiple stories to build your speech.

VIII. What is the moral of the story?

- To be significant, your story should have a moral to it
- Begin with the end in mind
  - What's the purpose of your story?

IX. How to use stories for more effective, entertaining and memorable speeches

- Think of your storytelling like a boxing match, your sparring partner is the audience
- Start with a HOOK
- Friendly sparring in the middle
- Remember, you don't want to shadow box - that is boring because you know exactly what your opponent is going to do
  - In other words, you want a real partner, your audience, and you want to engage them throughout the match
- Move with purpose.
- Surprise your partner with vocal variety.
- To be memorable, end with a KNOCKOUT.
  - Give your endings punch. No one remembers the matches that end with a decision, but everyone remembers the knockout.

## X. Toastmaster Storyteller: Put it to use

- Manual Speeches
- Table Topics
- Storytelling Manual
- Tall Tales Contests
- Work
- Speaking outside the club

## Additional Resources

### Books:

- Parkin, Margaret, *Tales for Trainers, Using Stories and Metaphors to Facilitate Learning*, Kogan Page Limited, 1999
- Denning, Stephen. *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling: Mastering the Art and Discipline of Business Narrative*. John Wiley & Sons, 2005.
- Silverman, Lori L. *Wake Me Up When the Data Is Over*. Jossey-Bass, 2006.
- Simmons, Annette. *The Story Factor: Inspiration, Influence and Persuasion Through the Art of Storytelling*. 2nd Revised Edition. Basic Books, 2006.
- Simmons, Annette. *Whoever Tells the Best Story Wins*. AMACOM, 2007.
- Wacker, Mary B. and Silverman, Lori L. *Stories Trainers Tell: 55 Ready-to-Use Stories to Make Training Stick*. Pfeiffer, 2005.

Articles in Toastmaster Magazine (you can find articles from 2007 to present online in the magazine archive section of Toastmasters.org):

- Special Storytelling Issue, August 2006
- Put Your Audience in Your Speech, August 2007
- Leading by a Tale, February 2009
- What's Your Hook? November 2009
- The Glory of the Story, March 2010
- The Strength of a Story, July 2011
- Political Storytelling for the Modern World, September 2012
- Mastering Storytelling, September 2012