



STORY MYTHOS

A MOVIE GUIDE TO BETTER BUSINESS STORIES

Thank you all for the opportunity to share a bit of my StoryMythos content with you at your event. I hope you found it helpful, provocative and actionable. I know we covered a lot so if you have any questions about what I shared please reach out at storymythos@gmail.com.

Remember, you are ALL storytellers! You don't have to be a professional writer, director or speaker to be a powerful storyteller. Humans have and always will use story to inspire, inform and entertain. There is NO guaranteed formula for a great story (or all movies and books would be huge hits). The key to creating and telling a powerful story is understanding your audience, mastering foundational story principles and lots of practice and drafts. Like anything in life, the more you do it, the better you will get.

One critical part of creating a good story is iteration - **writing is re-writing!** It's called a first draft for a reason...it's not meant to be your last! You will inevitably create and share some bad stories, deliver some bad presentations, or work on projects that fail. That is OK...that is how we learn. Elon Musk has always said, "If things are not failing, then you are not innovating enough". Keep going until you get it right. In his book *Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell reminds us it takes 10,000 hours of practice just to begin being an "expert." Go ahead and get started!

In the end, the business world doesn't really set many trends in storytelling but the industry of stage, page and screen does. It is up to the business world to keep up with those trends. Learn them, immerse yourself into the current hits and dig into the "classics" to understand what makes something "timeless" (start with the *AFI 100 Greatest American Films LIST*). Understanding pop culture is part of being in business and marketing, regardless of what your product is. You have to know what people are talking about, watching and reading.

So, here are few other thoughts:



1. **A Great Story Makes Me Care.** Create a story that stirs human spirit and thought. Dissect the stories that you love. Why do they work so well? When you tell a story you need to quickly establish Who you are? and Why I should care? Know your audience! After all, the story is really for them.

2. **Story + Data.** If you really want to influence or inspire people it will be through emotion, not just numbers. It isn't Head OR Heart...it must be Head AND Heart! The advantage humans bring to evaluating data and numbers is emotion, alone they can lose power and memorability. Don't forget to share why the numbers are meaningful - what is the story behind them and what is truly at stake? Emotion is what gives something priority and creates impact. Marketing and business stories should always remember...consumer first, data second.

3. **Develop Rich Story Ingredients.** There are 5 story ingredients that are part of my "story recipe". You first must have a HERO that you can relate too and understand, an OBSTACLE that is powerful and full of tension, TREASURES that are strong enough to motivate the hero, a powerful CLIMAX to resolve the story and an emotionally resonant TRANSFORMATION that clearly illustrates the change from the *before* to the *after*. But, just like cooking, simply having these ingredients doesn't guarantee a great story. That takes practice and know-how. It takes failure and iteration. Get feedback as you create! Share your story with your friends and colleagues. Leverage editors!

4. **The Consumer is always the Hero.** If you make your brand, company or product the Hero then where is your consumer? You just removed them from the story! Brands are the Mentor character, there to guide and inspire the hero and to provide them with items that will help them on their journey (e.g. products and technologies). Unleash your inner *Dumbledore!*

5. **Conflict and Obstacle are the lifeblood of your story.** Your story can only be as powerful as the forces of antagonism allow it to be. If you are solving a weak problem you will most likely have a weak story. Watch out for problems based on a choice between a positive and a negative because that is really no choice at all. Dilemma and tension are where the power in a story lives. Great stories bring to life REAL choices and the effects those choices have on people.

6. **Build a STORY research library at home.** Practice and research, that is how you get better. Here are a handful of books on storytelling that I would recommend checking out:

- *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell (or watch the PBS Special *The Power of Myth*)
- *The Writers Journey 3rd Edition* by Christopher Vogler
- *STORY* by Robert McKee
- *Wired for Story* by Lisa Cron
- *Steal Like an Artist* by Austin Kleon
- *Jaws in Space* by Charles Harris
- *Make it Matter* by Scott Mautz
- *The Story Factor* by Annette Simmons
- *The Storytelling Animal* by Jonathan Gottschall
- *StoryMythos* by Shane Meeker

Note: Also watch the YouTube video *Everything is a Remix* by Kirby Ferguson

If your team would be interested in a StoryMythos keynote or workshop please contact me at storymythos@gmail.com.

GOOD LUCK, HAVE FUN AND TELL YOUR STORY!



Available on AMAZON and Kindle: [Click Here](#)

"I've long believed - and counseled - that the best and most memorable way for us to communicate our values and learnings - is through stories. Stories that link a principle of lasting importance to a specific event brought to life like it is a movie. You see it, you feel it, and you don't forget it. We don't tell enough stories, and we don't tell them as well as we should. Shane Meeker's book, "StoryMythos," addresses that reality by providing an illuminating, highly engaging tutorial on how to develop strong stories. Infused with sharp and relevant examples from movies, Walt Disney and P&G, one leaves this book not only better appreciating the power of storytelling but knowing how to make it happen."

- **John Pepper, Former CEO of Procter & Gamble and Former Chairman of the Board The Walt Disney Company**

