

Chapter 17: Becoming a Powerful Storyteller

Overview:

This chapter continues the discussion of storytelling from Chapter 5 (and throughout the book), and explains in detail why the art of storytelling is crucial to being a powerful communicator. It introduces the student to the following topics: Six steps to great storytelling; Looking through the prism; Where do stories come from?; Ten questions for storytellers.

Student objectives:

After reading this chapter, the students should be able to:

- Identify the qualities of effective storytelling.
- Describe the process of becoming a great storyteller.
- Explain the areas of communication and performance where great storytelling directly benefits the personalities and the audience.

Instructor objectives: Key Lecture Points

1. Storytelling is one of the key points in the proven Creating Powerful Radio/Powerful Communicator's process: focus, engage, opinion/position and storytelling.
2. Storytelling is used to entice the listener; it has been taught since childhood.
3. "There are no boring stories, only boring storytellers."
4. The basics of storytelling are covered in the "News" sections of the book: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How, plus, Beginning, Middle and End. However, the way the story is told with personality and tailoring it to the audience, is the key to being a powerful storyteller.
5. Stories reflect the basic themes of human nature: good and evil, right and wrong, humor, love, life's absurdities, triumph against all odds, rags-to-riches or riches-to-rags.
6. Stories that succeed are about character, and inspire, give hope, teach and move the members of the audience.

Discussion topics:

- Explain Tommy Kramer's Six Steps to Great Storytelling (pages 195 to 196)
- Explain the Prism Method: The "angle" (as in "camera angle") of a story for maximum effectiveness
- Discuss the sources for powerful stories

- Discuss the concept of “speak in pictures” and the importance of replacing “I”, “me” and “my” with “You” in telling a story
- Discuss how communication is really storytelling

Key words:

“Camera Angle”
 Prism Method
 Tell the Truth
 Make it Matter
 Never Be Boring

Class Activity:

As mentioned in the book, one of the great communicators and storytellers of all time is the late Paul Harvey. Many of his stories, both written and recorded are available online. Divide the class into small groups of two or three students, and have them do an Internet search for Paul Harvey stories (using Google or similar search engine for written stories, and YouTube for audio recordings) saving the stories and links. Reconvene the class, and have each group present their favorite story. Have the students identify the elements in the stories that align with the “Six Steps to Great Storytelling” and the “Ten Questions for Storytellers.”

Assignment:

Beyond Powerful Radio: Chapter 17 Reading & Writing Assignment

DIRECTIONS: Read pages 193 to 205.

1) Using the newspaper, the internet, an email, radio or television news, find a story that has an impact on you. Identify the source of the story and date and time you encountered it. Explain the elements of the delivery (storytelling) that engaged you.

2) Then find a “boring” story from one of the same sources. Explain what you believe is missing in the storytelling and then **rewrite** the story, using the guidelines in the chapter. Spelling, grammar and syntax will be graded in this assignment.

You may be selected to record your story, or read it in front of the class (for extra credit), so “make it matter.”