

The Ridiculously Easy Guide to ... telling your story



START AT THE BEGINNING

Half the art of storytelling is knowing where to start. Find the moment when things first started getting interesting, and get in the information people need to understand the story early on.



MAKE IT HUMAN

All your listeners and readers are humans — they want to know about the emotional journey as well as the nuts and bolts.



MAKE 'EM WAIT

In a Board Report or a newspaper article, you want to know the main point straight away. In a story, let people wait until the end to find out what happened. Suspense is your friend!



THE TELLING DETAILS

You should get in just one or two really telling details — things that struck you at the time and you remember. If they struck you, they'll strike the audience.



THRILLS AND SPILLS

Stories should be exciting. You may not (and probably shouldn't) have car chases, but the thrills and spills of your own emotional highs and lows are what the audience wants to hear. If there was a moment when everything looked like it was going to fail, include that as well as the triumph at the end.



THE MOMENT OF CLARITY

In most stories, there will have been a moment when you suddenly realised that things weren't exactly as you'd expected. In writing a Board Report, you might want to play these down, but in a story, they are crucial. If you're struggling to know where to put the climax, it's usually at the 'Aha' or even 'Oh no!' moment.



AT THE END, STOP

Real life isn't packaged into compartments, but stories have to be. You've set out some hopes and fears at the beginning, so the end is where the hopes are realised and the fears have been avoided. Draw a line there — better to leave them wanting more than ramble on.



CONFLICT

We like to live our lives without conflict, but stories thrive on it. Whether you were competing with others, or just against the clock or a budget, make sure you don't gloss over the difficulties you faced and overcame.