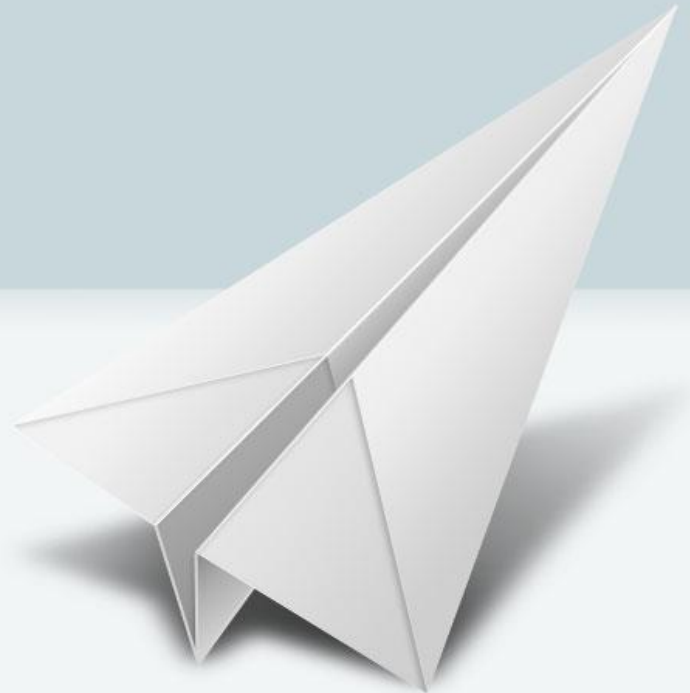
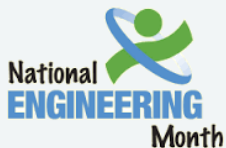


The Power of Storytelling

Creating Stories That Take Flight

Erin Rodgers
contacterinrodgers@gmail.com





A Bit About Me

Hi, I'm Erin. I'm a writer, performer and storytelling coach in Toronto. As a comedy performer and storyteller I've performed across Canada and in the US. Storytelling has been a life long passion of mine.

This passion that has led me to create story events such as Awkward: A Storytelling Show which was featured as one of the top shows of the Canadian storytelling movement in Macleans Magazine and Splitsider Magazine.

I was also thrilled to be the producer of the Toronto Storytelling Festival (the largest urban storytelling festival in North America) for two years. In 2016, I launched Interviews with Storystars, which quickly become North America's #1 storytelling interview blog.

In my coaching work, I have taught workshops on storytelling and writing in both Toronto and Montreal as well as private coaching with clients across the country. In January of this year I launched the sold out "Starting to Write" series of workshops in partnership with She Does the City.

Agenda



- Why Stories?
- What is a Story/What is Storytelling?
- Elements of a Great Story
- You're a Star
- 5 Senses
- The Awesome is in the Details
- Story Structure
- What Story?
- Tips From Pros
- Q & A



Why Stories ?

- Our brains love patterns and narratives. It's how we make sense of the world
- Mirror neurons in the brain of your audience light up in the same places that they would if they were directly experiencing the events directly e.g. if you describe smelling fresh grass the olfactory section of their brain lights up
- 65 – 70% of information from stories is retained, compared to 5-10% of information from simple data (London School of Business). Stories help attendees to remember the event and the things they learned
- In a world of sound bites, stories shine. They feel more genuine and real. They are a great way to get the messages of NEM to the next generation of Engineers & Technologists, as well as to the general public.
- Stories excite and inspire an audience and make a presentation lively and memorable. They are a heavy hitting instrument that make any public speaking to any audience more effective
- Stories make people connect emotionally to your ideas/cause/campaign etc as well as you as a person. You become a “face” of NEM and someone to look up to




What is a Story/Storytelling

Storytelling is presenting a true experience from your life that has a beginning, middle & end. It is a glimpse at a section of time and how it influenced, taught or changed a person. A story usually centres on a single person (you)

It Includes:

- People having a felt experience
- People reacting to incidents
- People taking actions
- People connecting to each other
- People having thoughts and feelings about these experiences
- People experiencing a change (even if it's just a change of mood)

A story has a protagonist who “drives” the experience by taking action, making decisions etc. In true storytelling, the teller is almost always the protagonist/driver



Elements of a Great Story

- CHARACTERS - You and your team
- PLOT - What events brought you here*
- SETTING - Where does your story take place (physically, what year etc)
- CONFLICT - What is the problem that this story solves? e.g. I didn't think I belonged
- POINT OF VIEW – How you feel, what inspired you etc

Stories help to introduce, clarify, or underline important aspects of the event. They serve to inspire the audience, present them with new ways of thinking about the work of Engineers & Technologists and allows them to connect with the vision of the event creators

*Plot is much less important than emotions & point of view



You're a STAR

- You are the hero of your own story
- Why is this story important to you? (doesn't have to be a stated part of the story)
- For storytelling in a professional setting, how did this experience change how you think about your work, what work you do etc
- What is the most important part of the story for you? When did you feel a belief shift, a part of your personality changing, a major part of your life changing?
- We care about your thoughts, actions, beliefs, physical reactions etc. The audience experiences the story as you
- Eliminate unnecessary plot so we can focus on your experiences



5 Senses

The outward experience of people, places & things. You can use sense “evidence” to prove your feelings/experience and add interest.

e.g he was nervous -> he was dripping sweat

- Sight
- Smell
- Taste
- Sound
- Touch



The Awesome is in the Details

- Specifics make a story come to life

It was a classroom vs It was a drab, airless classroom. The scent of generations of sweat and sawdust hung in the air

- Specifics stop the audience from being distracted from your story because they are wondering about details
- Keep asking yourself, how did I feel exactly:
 - In my body
 - In my mind
 - With my emotions

Remove unnecessary details – If a detail that happened doesn't move the story along, remove it for a better story



Story Structure

Imagine the story is a highway. Put a “roadmarker” in your mind where the climax is. The rest of the story is driving TO the climax and then driving AWAY from it

Who were you before the experience?

How did you feel during the experience?

How were you or your work changed after the experience?



What Story?

The story should be important to you
Is there a story that you love to tell?

Some examples:

When was a time I was most inspired?

When was a time I had a eureka moment?

When was a time I made a difference?

When was a time I was very nervous about a problem but tried something anyways?



Tips

Rehearse Your Story With a Friend or in Front of a Mirror Was there any part of your story your friend didn't understand?

Avoid Jargon & Acronyms Don't risk losing audience members who aren't familiar with these phrases. Remove all acronyms and industry specific phrases

Be Present When You Present. Make eye contact with your audience and speak clearly

Tell a Story You Love. Audiences respond to an enthusiastic teller. If the events of the story inspired you they will likely inspire others

3-5 is Magic. Avoid stories that go over 5 minutes. 3-5 minute stories appeal to all attention spans while still allowing the teller to connect with and inspire an audience

Thanks so much!

Any Questions?

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