



Advancing women
Advancing transportation

How to get the response you want (aka Storytelling for Technical Professionals)

WTS - Tucson

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Selling, requesting, directing, disciplining, etc.

What do your conversations sound like?

We've been in business for 75 years and have 5,383 employees in 47 states, and we have

We're a multi-disciplined firm that delivers quality service...

What? I have a full plate already!! *Is this something more to do??*

Can you send an email about **XXX** to the client?

Please send me your final report.

Do you get the results your want?

Design and construction is complex.

- Complicated projects
- Highly technical solutions
- Plethora of regulations
- Managing risk
- Complex funding processes
- Capital Improvement Programs
- Project delivery
- Qualifications Based Selection
- Technical jargon, data, calcs
- ***Everyone is so busy!!!***

Even so...

- Complicated projects
 - Highly technical solutions
 - Plethora of regulations
 - Managing risk
 - Complex funding processes
 - Capital Improvement Programs
 - Project delivery
 - Qualifications Based Selection
 - Technical jargon, data, calcs
 - ***Everyone is so busy!!!***
- ***Everyone is so busy!!!***
 - *Clients don't have all the time in the world.*
 - *As, Es, and Cs aren't the best communicators.*
 - *Most technical people hate writing.*
 - *No one reads ANYTHING anymore.*
 - *Email? Phone? Text?*
 - *We're short-handed and need to find people!*
 - *Communication is hard!*

Most technical professionals struggle to communicate.

It's hard to explain complicated planning & engineering solutions.

People are too busy to pay attention to details.

Professionals who **communicate clearly** stand out because they help others understand complex information.

Story is the greatest weapon
to combat noise because it
organizes information
in such a way that people
are compelled to listen.

- 35+ years in engineering, construction, architecture, construction management & consulting
- Trained (expert) storyteller
- Words > Numbers
- Help technical professionals improve communication skills – written and verbal.

Today's plan

- Learn about the power of story
- See examples of how the story creates clarity
- Exercises & ideas!

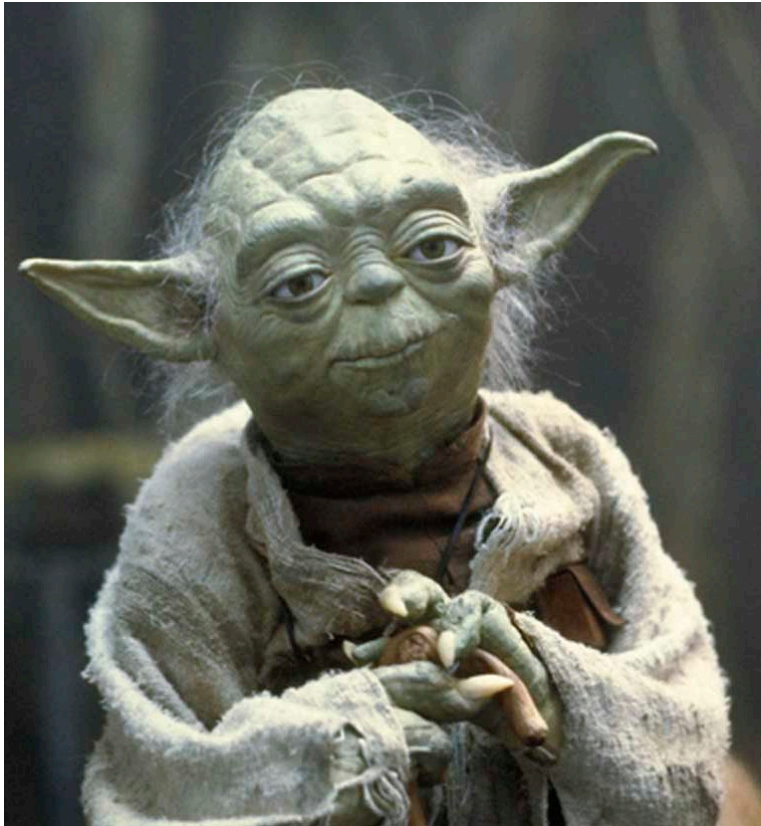


Storytelling Framework (Hero's Journey)

1. A **character**
2. has a **need**
3. and finds a **guide (mentor)** who understands their fear
4. and gives them a **plan**
5. That calls them to **act...** that results in
6. **Success...** with the risk of
7. **Failure.... *Leading to transformation***



Stories work.



1



Survive.



Conserve.

2

Keep their attention.

Talk about what they're interested in, not what you want to talk about.



3

Clarity wins.

Confusion loses.

- The brain is an energy hog... brain cells need twice as much energy as the rest of your body.
- **The brain is always working to make sense of things.**



***Survival depends on our brains discarding irrelevant data.
That's why going into the weeds loses readers (and listeners).***





*(Yes, I know this is
what you're
thinking!)*

Storytelling Framework... for winning work

1. A character... **your client**
2. Has a need ... **project issues**
3. And finds a **guide/mentor** who understands their fear... **you!**
4. And gives them a **plan... what you do**
5. That calls them to **act... call us, select us...** that results in
6. **Success... specific outcomes...** with the risk of
7. **Failure... fines, public dismay, delays, etc.**
...

leading to transformation



Storytelling Framework.... beyond clients

1. A character... **your colleagues, teaming partners, other persons**
2. Has a **need... issues, concerns, challenges**
3. And finds a **guide/mentor** who understands their fear... **you!**
4. And gives them a **plan... what to do, instructions, approach**
5. That calls them to **act ... call us, team with us, do it...** that results in
6. **Success... specific outcomes...** with the risk of
7. **Failure... fines, public dismay, delays, etc.**

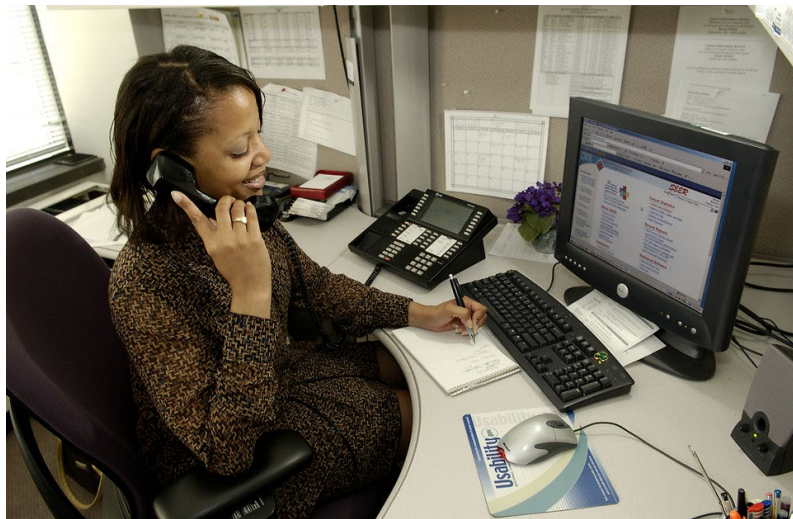
leading to transformation







You are a guide/mentor! *(Not the hero!)*





*We're telling
stories and
trying to get
people to do
things... all
the time...*

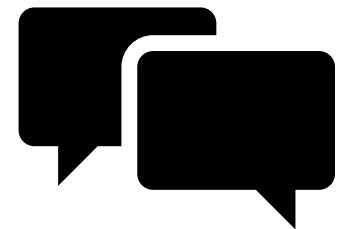
- **Proposals**
 - Cover letters
 - Qualifications
 - Experience
 - Project Approach
 - Resumes
- **Presentations**
 - Meetings
 - Boards of Commissioners
- **Emails**
- **Meetings**
- **Technical Reports**
- **Recruiting**
- Social Media
- Networking
- Brochures
- Websites
- Content Marketing

What else???



How can you apply storytelling to **your** work?

What kinds of conversations do you have?



The PSR formula.



STATE THE PROBLEM.



STATE THE SOLUTION.



STATE THE RESULT.

Before...
(marketing
message)

Acme Engineering is the only firm you need to **ensure your project reaches its full potential.**

Acme offers award-winning, multidisciplinary solutions for the engineering, architectural, and surveying needs of our clients.

After...

(marketing message)

Challenges are part of every engineering, architecture, or survey project. At Acme Engineering, our design and survey teams create solutions that minimize delays and avoid budget overruns.

If you're a subconsultant.

**Managing
consultants...**
(marketing
message)

Some subconsultants require so much managing that it seems like you should just do the work yourself.

Acme Engineers' team of professionals consistently delivers hassle-free projects, so you can focus on your work, not ours.

Use PSR for recruiting

Many gifted transportation professionals are stuck in jobs that leave them tired and unfulfilled. At Acme, you can get off the job treadmill, join a close-knit team, and do fulfilling work that is both challenging and rewarding.

Too many professionals work for average companies that cramp creativity and stay stale. At Acme you'll get to use your problem-solving and project delivery skills to make a meaningful difference with career opportunities and tangible rewards.

Many professionals don't love where they work. At Acme, we offer cream-of-the-crop planners and designers a chance to create the career of their dreams.

Emails

Mark,

We are starting a new multi-family / build to rent project in Avondale and are helping the owner prepare the project schedule. One question that came up was whether Avondale would allow us to submit CDs at risk ahead of the Development Plan approval. Are you able to tell us if this is possible or if we need to wait for approval of the DP before the CDs can be submitted? Thanks for your help.

Mark,

We are helping the owner of a new multi-family/build-to-rent project in Avondale prepare the project schedule. Would you please let us know by **Friday noon** if you will allow us to submit CDs at-risk ahead of the Development Plan approval, or if we need to wait for approval of the DP before the CDs can be submitted? Your timely response will help us stay on track with the schedule.

Thanks for your help,
John

**Before: Another
very simple
example...**
(verbal instruction)

You need to move your vehicle.
This is a no-parking zone.

**After: Another
very simple
example...**
(verbal instruction)

No parking zones are a hassle, I get it. When you park on the other side of the lot, your car will be safe and won't be towed.



How did I respond?

Thanks so much! I'll take a look at it tomorrow? Maybe have a call on it Monday? If you have time. We are finishing a huge proposal with Acme today and I need to work on some Paradise Design stuff tomorrow. It would be great to have the weekend to give myself some recovery time from this Acme monster. Then I can focus on the brochure again. Let me know if Monday would work for you.



What if I received....

Thanks so much for sending the writeup! I'll need to get through some other deadlines before I can revisit the brochure. Here are some times on Monday that work for me to have a status call. **Let me know your preference by Sunday night**, and I'll send an invite:

Monday, 3/27

8-9 am

10 – 11 am

2 – 3 pm

Apply It! What is your PSR? Why should I hire you?

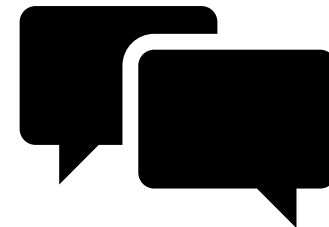
Facts

The Roadrunner+Coyote team

DB infrastructure project

Cost management is a specific client need

Commitment to community is important



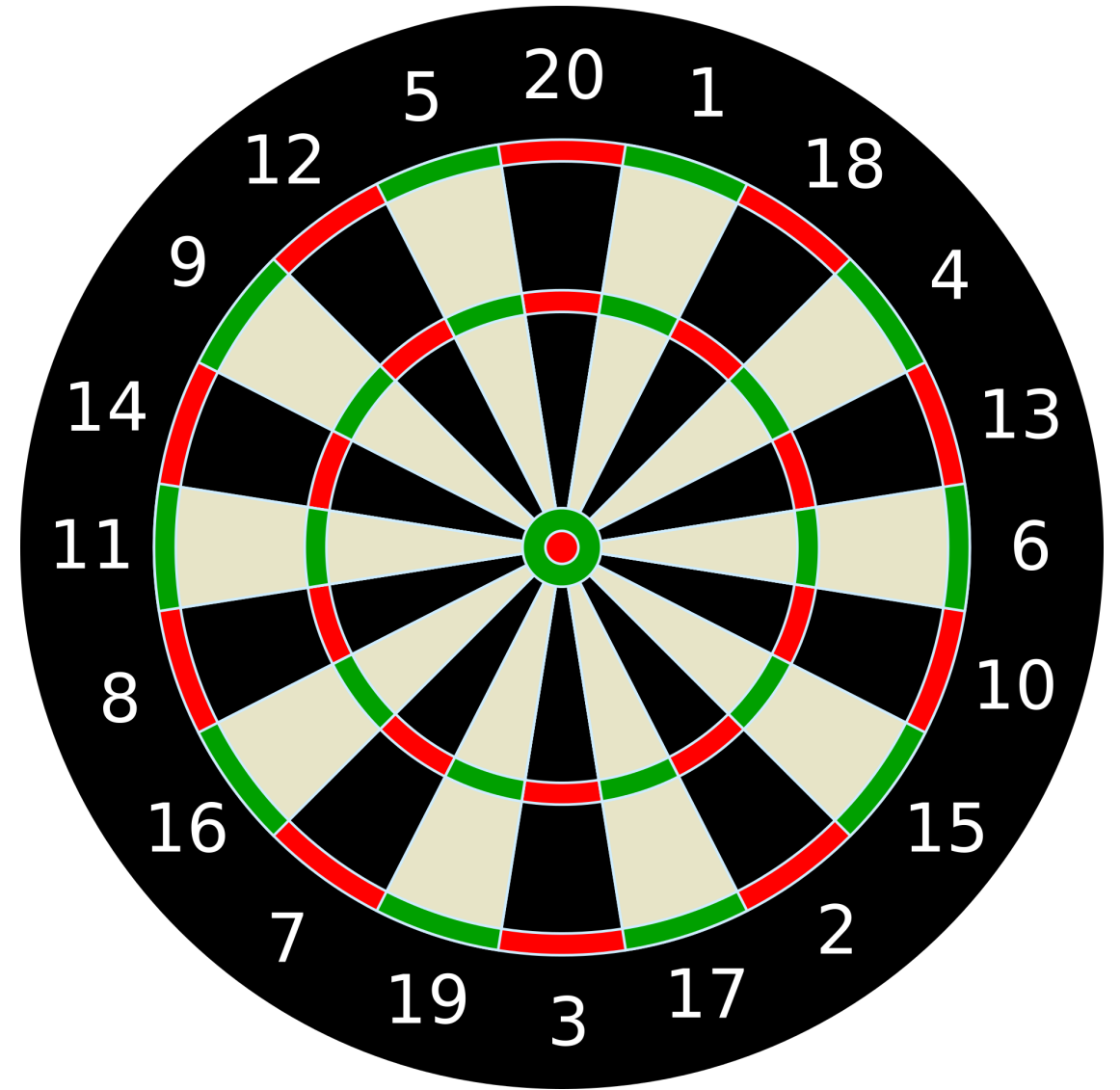
problem | solution | result

Why should I hire you?

The Roadrunner+Coyote team brings the technical know-how, and experience to deliver infrastructure improvements for the City. We have placed great emphasis on bringing together a team you know and trust, implementing a proven project approach to effectively design and build this project. Our cost management approach provides cost transparency and competitive bidding to prove we are good stewards of your investment. Our subcontractors are also local and equally invested in the community.

Dart Throwing Contest

When would storytelling **NOT** work?



Next Steps

- Ask clients, consultants and colleagues about what makes their work difficult – find out about their problems
- Simplify how to solve problems – 3 steps!
- What does success look like?
- What's the alternative?
- Use the PSR for emails.
- Less “I” and more “you”







ONE thing I
learned today....

*that I promise I
will use in a
conversation or
writing....*



Most architects, engineers & contractors struggle to stand out from the competition. My marketing toolbox is full of practical strategies and tactics that help companies communicate clearly so they win work and attract employees to grow their firm.



Stand out from the competition.

Win profitable work.

Attract great employees

Grow your business.

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