# Communicating Using Storytelling Practices

Tell a Story of Success That Sticks

## Tell a Story, Back It Up with Data

We are more likely to remember stories than data points, so weave stories into your presentation–use data points to enhance key messages from your story. Provide opportunities to recall your story throughout the presentation to highlight and emphasize key points.

## Frame Stories with Solutions

When beginning a talk, first discuss a solution to the problem instead of the problem itself. Describing the impact of a problem first may cause your audience to feel that any solution is too small. By framing your story with success, you are able to empower your audience to engage with SOAR.

Once you have shared your success (story) you can then provide details about the problem, underscoring the power of your solution.

## Present the Most Important Information at the Beginning

To be sure that you catch the majority of your audience, put the most important information at the front of the presentation. Reinforce and expand on those points throughout the remainder of your presentation.

## Establish Value of Your Material to Audience, Then Objectives

Most audiences will come to your presentation wondering what this presentation will do for them. Encourage audience connection to your presentation by establishing first how the information can make a difference in the audience’s work or lives, then share the learning objectives of your presentation.

## Myth-Busting: Do Not Say Its Name

When correcting misinformation, do not repeat the incorrect information. Audiences already know it–restating the misinformation may cause them to subconsciously tune out the correct information. Instead, refer to the misinformation in the abstract as misconceptions, incorrect information, myths, etc. Provide detail on the correct information **only.**

## ****Make Your Presentation Stick****

Use adult learning techniques to make sure your presentation sticks:

* Chunk your information out into major themes and/or messages
* Use alliteration and rhymes to emphasize key take-away points
* Employ the rule of threes to create a more satisfying presentation for your audience

### Encourage Audience Reach

Don’t be afraid to ask your audience to reach back and recall earlier parts of your presentation. Encouraging recall on information presented earlier will ingrain your message into the minds of your audience members.

## Build Effective PowerPoints

Your slides should be guiding points of your presentation, not a comprehensive itinerary. The best slides will not be useful to audiences without the presenter to give them context. Instead of providing the slides to your audience after a presentation, share a one or two-page document that highlights the key points of your presentation.

## Organize Slides Around Messages, Not Topics

To encourage presentation stickiness, organize your slides around messages. Connect the dots for your audience rather than letting them draw conclusions from the information you provide. Then back up that message with an image that illustrates your message. Learn more about this method, known as the [Assertion-Evidence Approach](http://www.assertion-evidence.com/).

## More Images, Less Text

The human brain can process images 60,000 times faster than they can process text. In addition, our short-term memory can process a limited amount of information at once. What does this mean for your slides? In short, pare down your slides to only the most essential information and use images to illustrate your messages. A good rule of thumb is no more than 3 bullets and 20 words per slide.