

APEX 2015

MASTERING INFLUENCE IN THE NEW WORLD

FINDING STORIES

Try these three simple steps to finding the right story:

1. Think in bumper stickers

- > What's the single message behind your story (purpose)?
- > Write the message or idea down as a bumper sticker.
- > Bumper stickers force clarity.

2. Scan your own life experiences

- > Look through your experiences, both personal and professional, to see what fits this purpose.
- > If your purpose is 'Step up', ask yourself: 'When did I or someone I know step up and make something work?'
- > You'll be surprised how many experiences come flooding back.

3. What does your audience want?

- > Consider your audience and what will work for them.
- > Once you have your bumper sticker, and have isolated the right experience, ask yourself: 'Who is my audience and what motivates them?'
- > Pick the right story for your audience.

MAKE YOUR STORIES SHINE WITH THESE TIPS

Tip 1: Write it down

- > Most people ramble if they try to tell a story off the cuff.
- > By simply writing it down, you further refine your story.
- > Make sure you write as you speak so that your story comes across as conversational.

Tip 2: Keep it short

- > In business, your stories should take between 30 seconds and two minutes maximum.
- > Anything longer and you risk boring or losing your audience.

Tip 3: When you think you've practiced enough, practice some more

- > The champion South African golfer, Gary Player said of his success: 'The harder you work, the luckier you get.'
- > The more you practice, the better your stories will be.
- > It may feel awkward, but nothing beats practicing aloud, whether it's in the shower or in front of your family.
- > It also helps to record your stories into your phone to listen back to them.