Crafting your Story

*"People think stories are shaped by people when in fact it is often the other way round!" Terry Pratchett.*

Expert authors, mentors, advisors, coaches, consultants, trainers, and speakers all to often want to show their strenghts in order to influence people. But remember: there can be no strength, without a weakness to overcome. Every story we have ever watched and enjoyed was because we witnessed a transformation and in doing so we the audience go on that journey with them.

Your Story should be about transformation. No story is worth telling unless change occurs in the hero or in us the audience. The bigger the growth the more epic the tale. For growth and transformation to occur at some point in the story the main protagonist (you) has to experience a setback or problem form which you will ultimately attempt to overcome.  Your Story should depict you initially as a slightly flawed character ( which you will later transcend), but a a charcter your audience will soon emphatize with and come to like and care for, as they see at heart you are a good person. Soon in the Story you are facing a challenge represented by a conflict between you and the main villain. This sees you catapulted on a journey where you hope to win the battle and in doing so, you'll grow in character in the eyes of the audience.

Let’s look at some well-known stories to see if this is true:

**The Lion Kin:** Simba believes he’s responsible for his fathers deaht and runs away.

**Gladiator:** Maximus must avenge the killing of this family and his beloved emperor.

**The Shawshank Redemption:** Wrongly convicted for murder, Andy must survive prison.

Stop and consider right now your answer tot he following questions, for within those answers may be the foundations for your expert positioning story.

* What adversities have you faced?
* What has shaped you tob e the person you are today?
* Why do you have such strong beliefs about certain things?
* What’s the journey you been on?
* Who have you been battling with?
* What have you had to endure?
* What do you stand for, and why?
* What loss did you have to deal with?
* What failure did you have to come back from?
* Who rejected or marginalised you?
* What’s a situation that called for your to muster all your courage?
* How did you get to were you are today?

**Outward struggle, inner conflict**

I have been teachings positioning through storytelling long enough to know that you will need an adversary for your story, so the main character has a a competitor to battle against.

Your adversary could be a person or it could be a group of people. It may not even be a person. It could be a corporation.

The summit Scene

The Conflict and struggle within your own personal story must build to a crescendo, climb to a climax or rach a Summit. You must create a moment in time where somehting has to give. Your Story has reached its pivotal moment.

At the Summit of your Story there hast o be a new insight, a discovery, or a relevation. Something happens that changes everything- you then make a breakthrough and ist often followed by a new commitment.

Too many exper positioning stories ar ruined by a non existent or poorly performed summit scene. You must take the audience tot he very moment you made your breakthrough so taht they make the breakthrough with you.

This is where you reveal the source oft he inspiration that took yo to where you are today and why you are prefectly positioned tob e a source of hope and help them.

In the Lion Kind, the summit scene occurs when Simba is faced with the task of going back to the Pride Lands and doing the right thing, but also having to risk facing his past. He is lost and longs for his father. At this poing, wise old Rafiki guides him tot he water’s edge and tells him to take a look.

That’s not my father, it’s my reflection, he laments.

No .... look harder, Rafiki enourages.

The waters change and we see a reflection in the water of Simba’s father Mufasa.

You see? He lives in you.

The Clouds above Simba part and we hear Mufasa telling Simba: Remember who you are. You are my son and the one true King. Remeber, remember.

Before and after

What makes a great story so influential i soften the difference between where our character starts in the story and who they ultimately become by the end. Contrast seems to have a huge effect on us humans, as it gives us two points on which to measure a change. The easiest way to sell a weight loss product ist o have a picture of the same person having now lost the weight.