# WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

BY PARK HOWELL

the business of **Story**.



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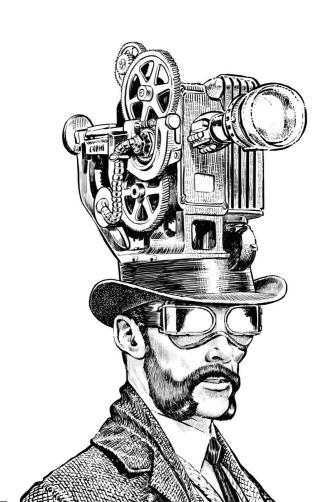
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ISBN 978-1-7343081-0-5 Printed in the United States of America

Park&Co
4144 N. 44th Street
Suite 1
Phoenix, AZ 85018
www.businessofstory.com

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#### **HOW TO PROJECT YOUR STORIES**

You and I are visual beings. We tell vivid stories to project indelible images in the theater of the mind so people can see the world as we do.

But storytelling is hard unless you become an intentional storyteller.

Therefore, if this magical little handbook has found you, then you've probably found yourself learning the applied science and bewitchery of storytelling in a Business of Story keynote or masterclass. This guide will show you how to craft and tell compelling stories that light up the imagination, connect with your audiences and move them to action. Imagine that.

#StoryOn!



# FIND YOUR FOCUS

Begin by using the primal power of the And, But	AND:
& Therefore foundational narrative framework to	
clarify your message. This helps your audience	
immediately grasp the point of your story.	BUT:
Set the scene:	
AND (raise the stakes):	
	THEREFORE:
BUT (identify the problem):	
THEREFORE (reveal the solution):	
	What one word describes your theme?
(Did you see how I used the ABT on the previous page?)	
(Did you see now I used the ADT on the previous page:)	



PRACTICE YOUR ABTS	



#### **CRAFT A SMALL STORY FOR BIG IMPACT**

You have crafted your ABT to clarify the theme of your message and now it's important to support the promise of your premise with a mighty short story. But most people default to impotent generalized information. Therefore, use the five primal elements of a story to take your audience to a moment in time that illustrates the business point you wish to make.











WHEN

WHERE

WHO

**ACTION** 

AHA



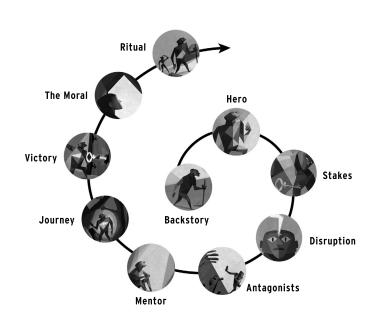
When did this moment happen?	
Where did it occur?	
Who is the central character?	
What happened and what was the surprising outcon	ne
What is the "Aha moment" learned from this experience that supports the theme of your ABT?	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·



CAPTURE YOUR SHORT STORIES	



#### THE STORY CYCLE SYSTEM™



#### **OUTLINE THE SCREENPLAY OF YOUR STORY**

You've set the stage with your ABT, revealed your one-word theme to keep you focused and you have unearthed an engaging anecdote that supports the promise of your premise. But what if your story has taken on a life of its own and you need to command the stage with a presentation? Therefore, use the Story Cycle System™ to lead your audience on a narrative journey they will never forget.

The 10-step Story Cycle System™ is powerful because it's distilled from the timeless narrative structure of the ancients, inspired by the story artists of Hollywood, influenced by masters of persuasion, guided by trend spotters, and informed by how the human mind grapples for meaning.

Now, let's bring your story to life by outlining your content in each step found on the following pages.



### **BACKSTORY**



All epic journeys begin in an interesting setting. In your backstory, describe where you have been, where you are now, and where you want to go. Set the stage for your story, and start with the end in mind.



### HERO



Describe the main character in your story: You! And it's okay to be vulnerable. Audiences love an underdog - a "reluctant hero" - who is thrust into action by outside influences, or something you caused to happen.



# STAKES



What do you want to achieve in this story? It must be meaningful enough to drive you, against all odds, in pursuit of success.



### **DISRUPTION**



An "inciting incident" is an action, either selfimposed or triggered by outside forces that has turned your life upside down and caused you to take action. Define *that moment* that propelled you into action.



#### **ANTAGONISTS**



Who and what are the obstacles and antagonists that stand in the way of you achieving your goal? This can be a person, place or thing, and there are often more than one. Don't forget about your own self-doubts, fears and other internal demons.

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# **MENTOR**



Every hero has a mentor who provides a special gift through wisdom, experience, and often a tool or resource that makes success possible. Who has been there for you, and how have they helped you along the way?

#### **JOURNEY**



Vividly describe the highs and lows of your journey. As they say, "If you haven't been through something tough, you don't have what it takes to be a hero." What happens that makes your quest even more difficult, and your victory even sweeter?


#### **VICTORY**



In the face of overwhelming odds, what did you overcome to achieve your initial success? What does that success look like, and how does it make you feel?

### **MORAL**



Reveal the universal truth found in your story that anchors your audience by connecting their beliefs and values with yours. What is the moral of your story?

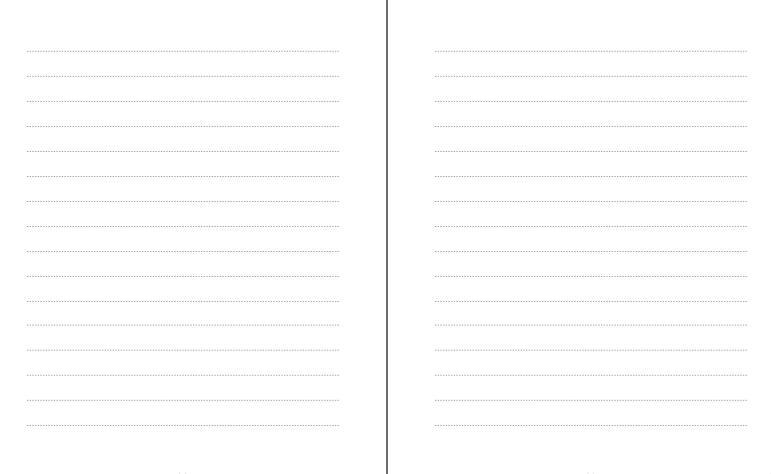
#### RITUAL

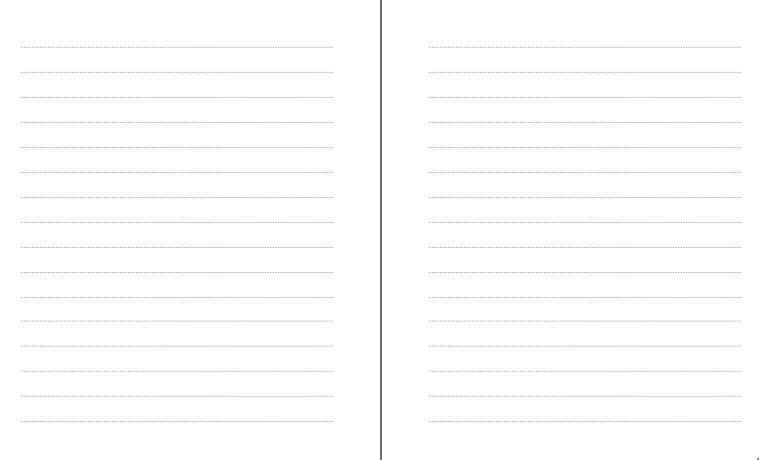


In the telling of your story, what do you want your audience to think, feel and do? How will you make your story *their* story?


WHAT'S YOUR STORY?	









# THE APPLIED SCIENCE AND **BEWITCHERY OF STORYTELLING**

Each of the narrative frameworks derives its power from the primal three-act story sequence that our



This AND this...

brains seek to make sense of the world we inhabit.



Act II

Conflict

BUT then that...

**ACTION** 



Act III

Resolution

THEREFORE...

AHA

Share an example anecdote:

with your ABT:





WHERE



WHO

Craft your long-form narrative with the Story Cycle System™:



Hero

Backstory



Stakes









Mentor



Journey





Moral



42



For 35+ years, Park Howell has guided leaders of purpose-driven brands to achieve exponential growth for themselves, their organizations and the people they serve. He loves to consult, teach, coach and speak on the applied science and bewitchery of business storytelling to help you excel through the stories you tell.



For more storytelling resources visit businessofstory.com

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