

How to Use Stories to Cut Through the Information Overload

Individuals may represent much of the accomplishment of ministries at your church, but the real work of ministry is often done through teams. Whether a staff team comprised of full and part-time employees or a volunteer team comprised of various degrees of dedicated members, teams are the backbone of church ministry. And yet, most leaders at one time or another are frustrated by the lack of progress of the team toward accomplishing their assigned task.

THE QUICK SUMMARY - [The Orange Revolution](#) by Adrian Gostick and Chester Elton

The Orange Revolution provides a simple and powerful step-by-step guide to taking your team to the breakthrough level, igniting their passion and vision to bring about accomplishing a shared vision.

The Orange Revolution model begins with clear visualization and articulation of the team goal, challenges team members with clear commitments to the team and to each other, and wraps up with breakthrough results and sustained success.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

The people on your teams are overwhelmed with information, and in your attempt to help motivate them to move forward, you may be inadvertently contributing to the slowdown. Already confused and overloaded, they assume that your added request will only make things worse.

Enter the story.

Stories are the most powerful delivery tool for information - more powerful and enduring than any other art form. In the land of complex reality, story is king. Story makes sense of chaos and gives people a plot. Stories can help people who are stuck become unstuck.

There are no guarantees that using story to motivate your team will come out the way you want. But story, on the average, works much better than telling your team "this is the way it's going to be."

Story is like a computer app you load into someone's mind so they can play it using their own input. The best stories play over and over and create the outcomes that fit your goals and ensure that your team keeps moving forward.

Great leaders use story to express their passion and illustrate, illuminate, and inspire their team to greatness itself.

When you want to influence others, there is no tool more powerful than story.

Teams that are focused on wow results have a charming habit of telling stories that exemplify what they are trying to achieve.

Great teams create a narrative. As teams succeed, they tell their stories again and again. They are partly their history, but they also explain to others who they are and what they do.

Breakthrough teams tell stories frequently and with passion. It is a secret ingredient of their success. The power of their stories is in the specificity and vividness, which are the very elements that make them memorable. They get repeated – typically with the same enthusiasm in which they are told.

Stories are vital in helping individuals understand how world-class results are achieved and in making the possibility of doing so believable. Such tales have a way of perpetuating success. The listener retells the story, and more important, internalizes its message and becomes part of the story.

- Adrian Gostick and Chester Elton, [The Orange Revolution](#)

A NEXT STEP

As you use stories with your teams, you will be using a mixture of credibility, evidence and data, and emotional appeal. You cannot persuade through logic alone, or even logic supported by your credibility. A leader uses stories to illustrate, illuminate, and inspire his team.

What story can you include in your next team meeting? Think about a story (either personal, about someone else, or related to your organization) that you can use in your next team meeting. Telling stories to your team – and then having them repeat them to others – is the virtual equivalent of taking people on a field trip. The use of story will enable them to experience your message at a much more profound level.

Excerpt taken from SUMS Remix 2-3.

*This is part of a weekly series posting excerpts from one of the most innovative content sources in the church world: **SUMS Remix** book excerpts for church leaders.*

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