

THE
STORY
SELLING
METHOD

WORKBOOK



PHILIPP HUMM

HELLO

Struggling to find the right story to share with your client?

Don't worry, I gotcha!

This workbook will teach you the 5 most important stories for any sales conversation.

Check out each story type, get inspired by the examples, and brainstorm ideas in the exercises.

In no time, you'll have a collection of stories that you can use strategically to leave lasting impressions.

Have fun!

Philipp Humm



“

Inside each of us is a natural-born storyteller, waiting to be released.

— Robin Moore

”

5 MOST CRUCIAL STORIES TO BUILD TRUST, STAND OUT, AND BOOST SALES

**CONNECTION
STORIES**

**INDUSTRY
STORIES**

**SUCCESS
STORIES**

**DIFFERENATION
STORIES**

**RESISTANCE
STORIES**

STORY TYPE #1

CONNECTION STORIES



OVERVIEW

PROBLEM

We spend hours and hours on unmemorable small talk about the weather, traffic, or weekend plans. While there is nothing wrong with that, it's a missed opportunity to build rapport and bring your relationship to the next level.

SOLUTION

Start your meetings with a *connection story* to build rapport.

Connection stories are short, personal accounts of recent experiences that reveal more about who you are.

You can talk about something interesting that happened lately, a new skill you've picked up, or something that surprised you.

TIPS

Keep 'em short: This story type is super short, about 30 seconds, maybe 60 if it's an incredible story.

Focus on the right question: After your story, ask them, "How about you? Have you ever been in [situation of your story]?" It's important to pick a question they can likely respond to with a story themselves. If you pick a question that is too niche, you won't get a story in return.

SAMPLE STORY



Dorina Rigo

CEO and Founder of Fit Boots

Dorina: “Hi there. How’s it going?”

Buyer: “I’m good. How are you?”

Dorina: “Awesome. I had a really cool thing happen this morning. I went to my favorite coffee place to order my daily muffin. And right when I got my card out, the owner, Joe, shook his head and said, ‘Dorina, all good. This one is on the house.’ I said, ‘For real? Why?’ And he said, ‘Just because.’ He made my day. I realized that you can change someone’s day by tiny gestures. Anyway, has that ever happened to you? Was someone very nice to you for no real reason?”

Buyer: “Hmm... let me think. Actually a few days back, this old lady...”

STORY PROMPTS

Is there anything interesting that has happened lately? Here are a few prompts to get you started.

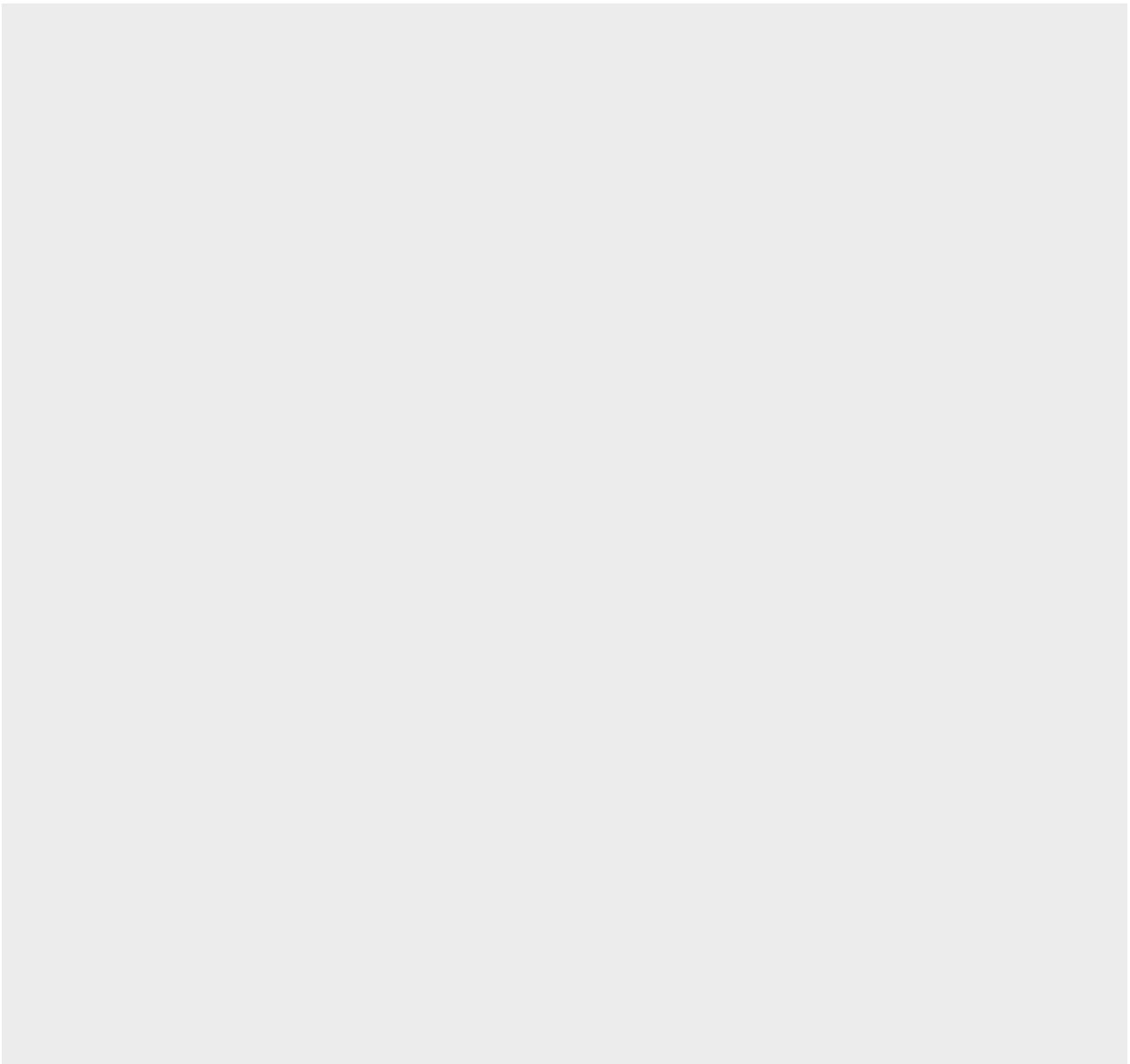
Prompt #1: Was there a moment where you felt a strong emotion (e.g. laughed, cried, got angry, felt nervous)?

Prompt #2: Have you picked up any new skill recently or did something that you've never done before?

Prompt #3: Did you fail or succeed at something recently?

YOUR STORY

Pick one prompt from the previous page and craft a short story around it. Remember to include a question at the end that asks your listener for their experience.



STORY TYPE #2

INDUSTRY STORIES



OVERVIEW

PROBLEM

In the the *discovery* phase, sellers ask a few questions to find out what challenges the buyers face. Occasionally, this can overwhelm the buyer as they may not feel comfortable sharing their deepest challenges or they may not even be aware of them.

SOLUTION

Pause your questions for a moment and ease the *discovery* by sharing an *industry story*.

Industry stories delve into the challenges or trends that you've observed in your buyer's industry or business landscape.

TIPS

Reference authority: If you can, try to reference some sort of authority in your story. Authority could come from business leaders, economists, or other well-known industry experts.

Validate your observations: Check in with your buyer on how they've experienced the challenge you outlined. If they confirm it, it helps you frame and tailor your offering.

SAMPLE STORY



Scott van Deylen

VP of BD, Tabula Rasa Healthcare

Scott: “So, I’m just the guy in the middle. But I talk to dozens of pharmacies on a weekly basis and they’re telling me what their pain points are. Would it be helpful if I shared what is impacting these other pharmacies, similar to the one you own?”

Pharmacy owner (his buyers): “Sure. Go ahead.”

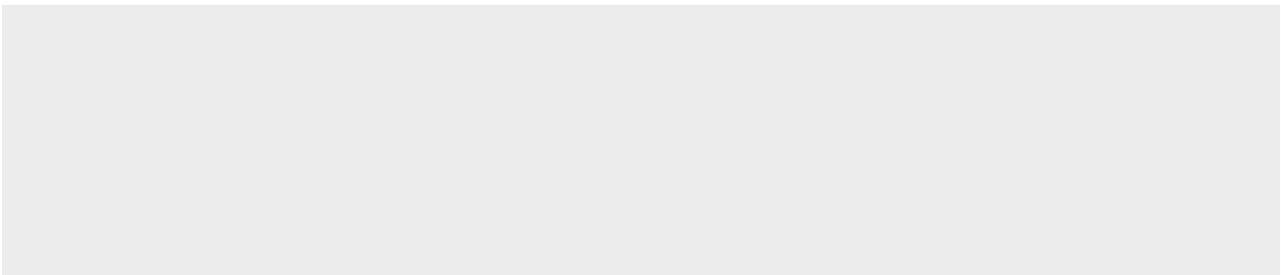
Scott: “Great. So first, a very common pain point for our customers is the shrinking reimbursements on their prescription medications. They used to get paid \$10 for the average drug. Now they’re getting paid \$3. Why? Because pharmacies are getting penalized by Medicare’s adherence measurements. If your patients who are 65 and older come in less than 80% of the time to fill their prescriptions, then you, the owner, gets a penalty. A penalty they take out of your bank. Is that a problem for you as well?”

Pharmacy owner: “Yeah. For sure. Medicare has eaten up the little profit we made before...”

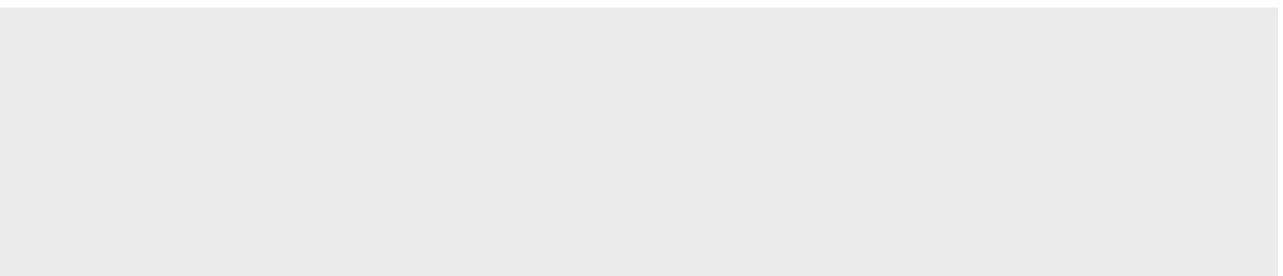
STORY PROMPTS

What's impacting or is about to impact your client's business? Here are a few prompts to get you started.

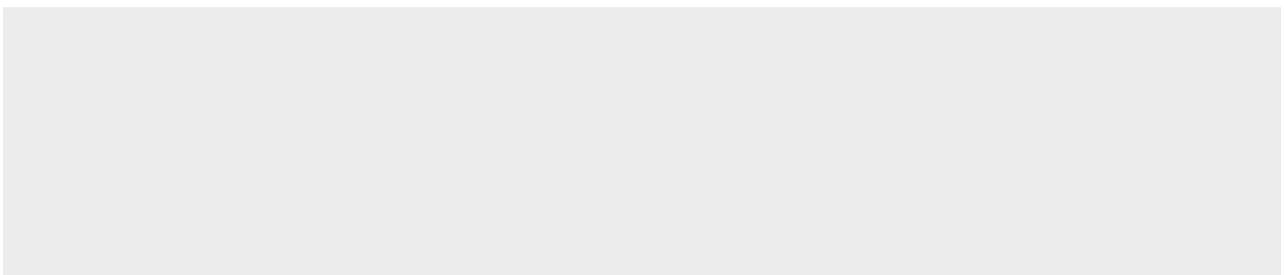
Prompt #1: What technology changes impact their business?



Prompt #2: What regulatory changes impact their business?

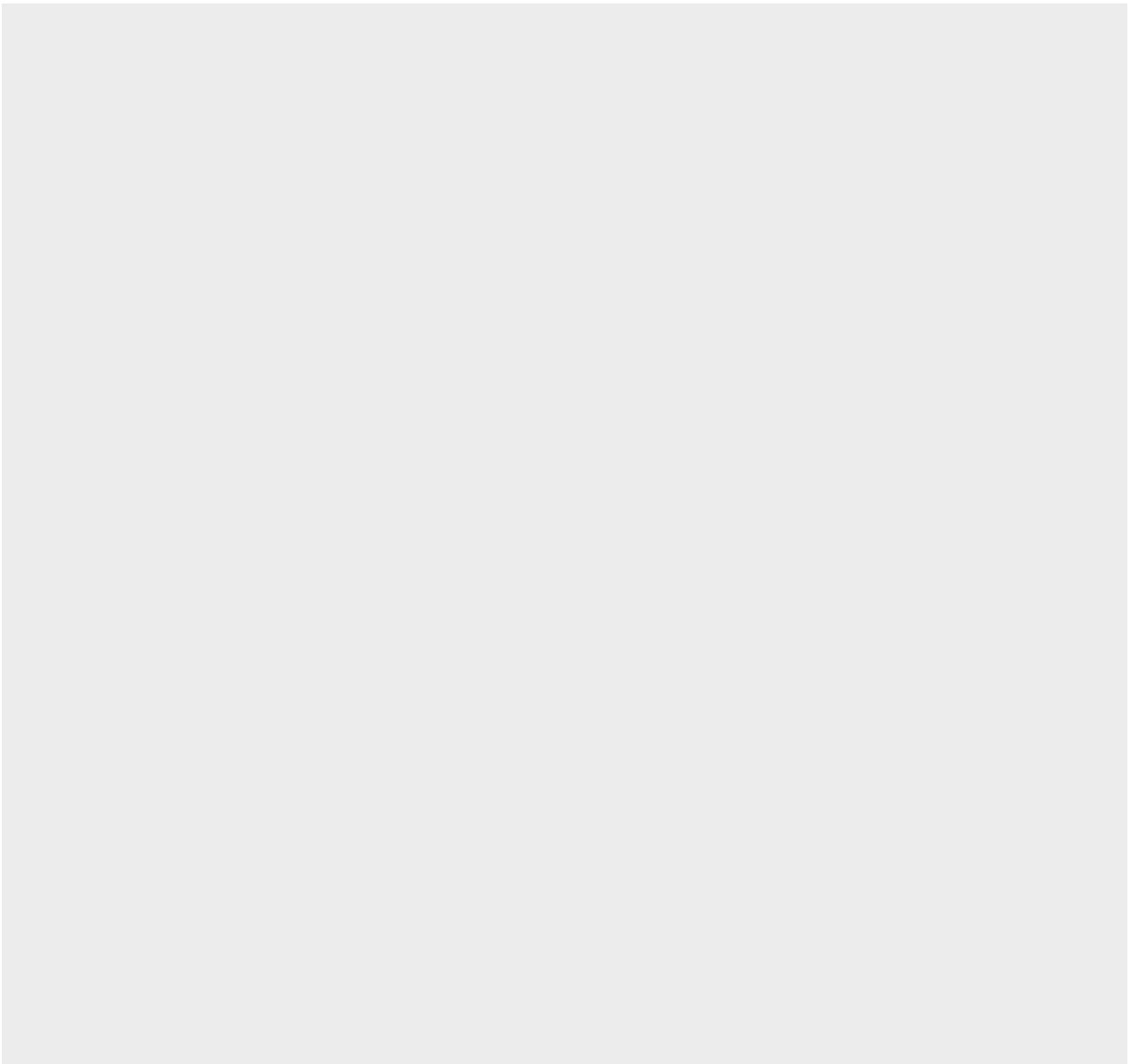


Prompt #3: How is customer behavior changing?



YOUR STORY

Pick one prompt from the previous page and craft a short story around it. Write down what the *old world* was like, what changed, and what the *new world* is like.



STORY TYPE #3

SUCCESS STORIES



OVERVIEW

PROBLEM

We're social animals. When you pitch your product or service, your buyer is likely thinking, “How would someone else (my boss, my co-worker, or a competitor) solve that problem? What would they do?”

By just talking about the product features or the impressive stats of your company, you miss a great opportunity to give social proof.

SOLUTION

Bring in a *success story* to pitch your offering.

Success stories are real-life examples of how a customer successfully used your product to solve a particular problem and achieve their desired outcomes.

TIPS

The customer is the hero: In most success stories, the customer is the hero, not you. You're the guide who helps the hero figure out what they need to do to be successful.

It's relevant: Be clear on the identity of the buyer you're trying to influence. What's their company size, industry, geography and pain points? Once you're clear, pick a story about a customer with a similar profile.

SAMPLE STORY



Colleen Stanley

President, SalesLeadership, Inc.

"In 2018, I was hired by a small pharma company in Los Angeles to run a referral training program for their sales teams.

In one of my first meetings, I sat down with one of the Account Managers, Derek, to understand what was going on.

In a not-very-empathetic way, I asked Derek, "Why are you not asking for referrals?" Clearly embarrassed, he looked down, cleared his throat, and said, "Ahh, look. In my family, you don't ask for help. It's a sign of weakness."

At that moment, I knew it wasn't the time to teach Derek any fancy referral tactics. Before anything, we needed to work on his belief system around asking for help. In my years of training and coaching, I learned that beliefs drive actions, both positive and negative. Over the next sessions, I collaborated with his team to first get them into the right mindset and then get them excited about asking for referrals.

When it came to Derek, after a 2-hour session with me, he felt more comfortable. The same day, he sat down with his first client and asked for a referral. Guess what? He got it. In fact, that client gave him 3 qualified introductions, and one led to a \$250,000 deal."

STORY PROMPTS

Review the deals you've closed and identify the customers that were happy working with you.

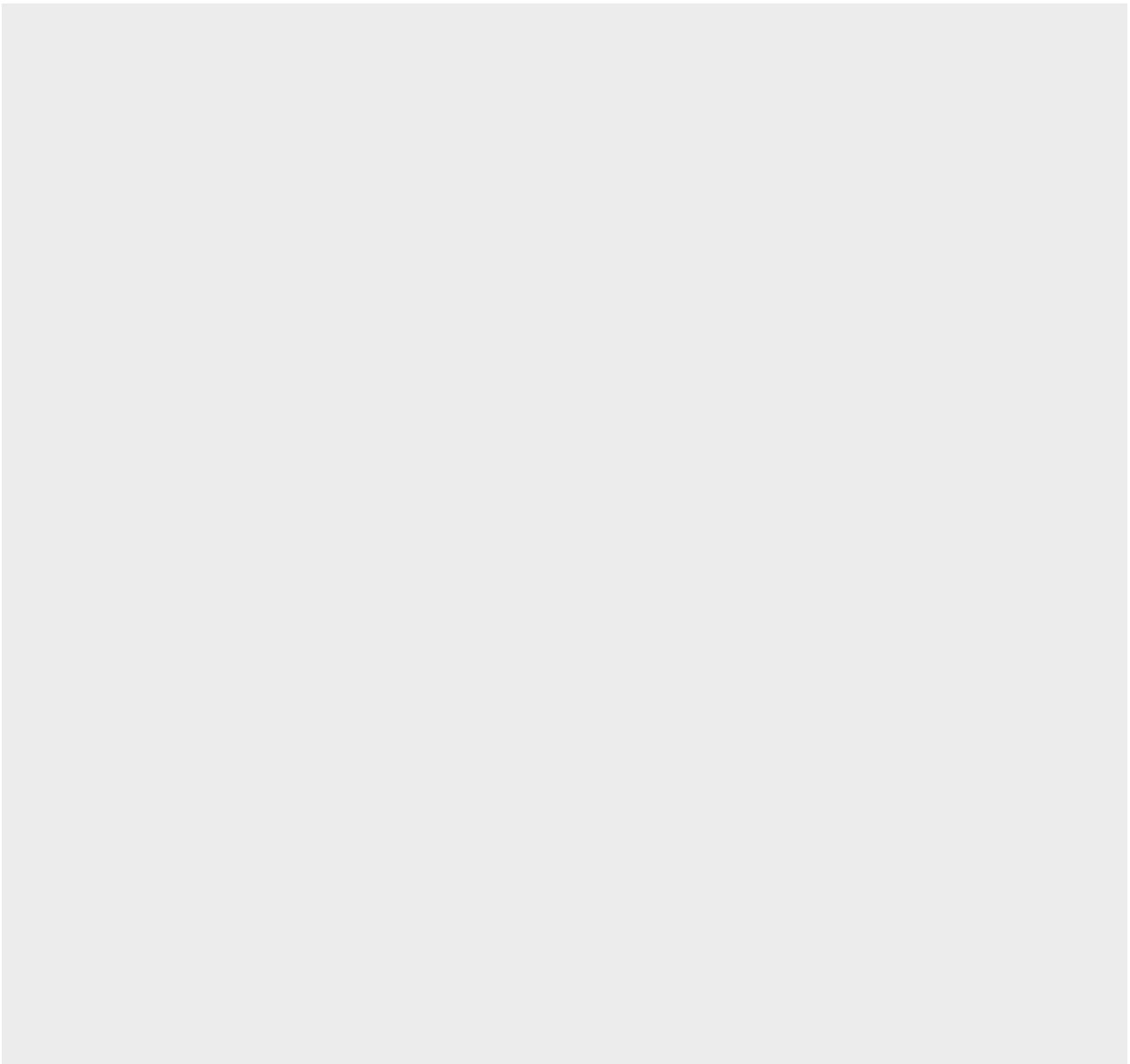
Prompt #1: Who was the customer and what did they love about working with you?

Prompt #2: Who was the customer and what did they love about working with you?

Prompt #3: Who was the customer and what did they love about working with you?

YOUR STORY

Pick one customer from the previous page and craft a short story around it. Write down what problem(s) the client had, how you helped, and what the impact was.



STORY TYPE #4

DIFFERENTIATION STORIES



OVERVIEW

PROBLEM

Your buyer will want to know: *why you?*

Inexperienced salespeople say, "We're the market leader in XYZ, we operate in 30 countries,..."

While these are important facts, they are not enough to truly differentiate yourself. Anyone can say them.

SOLUTION

If you truly want to stand out, share a story that shows how you're different.

Differentiation stories are narratives that set you apart from your competitors, highlighting your unique value proposition and the benefits of doing business with you.

TIPS

Be different: If all of your competitors say "We put the customer first", this isn't going to help you differentiate yourself. Find something that not everyone is claiming.

Be humble: Out of all the stories, this is where you toot your own horn the most. Be mindful not to brag too much and let the examples you chose speak for you.

SAMPLE STORY



Mike Weinberg

Principle, The New Business Sales Coach

"In 2018, the CEO of a mid-sized company in the US hired us to train their sales teams to bring in more business. The CEO was a brilliant engineer. Extremely intelligent. He just didn't understand why nobody was selling.

Two weeks into our partnership, I had the chance to participate in a quarterly meeting with the full company. Even though the company wasn't bringing in any new business, profits were at a record high.

At the end of the meeting, the CEO said, 'Thank you, guys. Because of you, we've achieved the highest profits in the company's history.'

Then he stood up, went around the room, and thanked each department individually. He thanked Product, then Engineering, then Manufacturing, then Operations. He even thanked Facilities for the meals they were preparing every day. Do you know which department he didn't thank?

Sales.

After participating in a few more meetings, I realized that the CEO didn't appreciate the salespeople. As an engineer, he wanted to give all credit to Product and Engineering. Not to Sales. He had created an anti-sales culture. I told him about my observation, but he blamed the sales vice president instead. I tried a few things to make him aware, but that wasn't too successful.

Six weeks into our partnership, I told the CEO: 'Look, if you're not willing to look in the mirror, I can't work with you. If you want this training to amount to any long-term transformation, you need to change.' That day, I terminated our contract. I care about results. When you work with me, I'll be very honest with you. There will be some things that you may not like. But if you truly want to transform your team's sales success, that's something you need to be ok with."

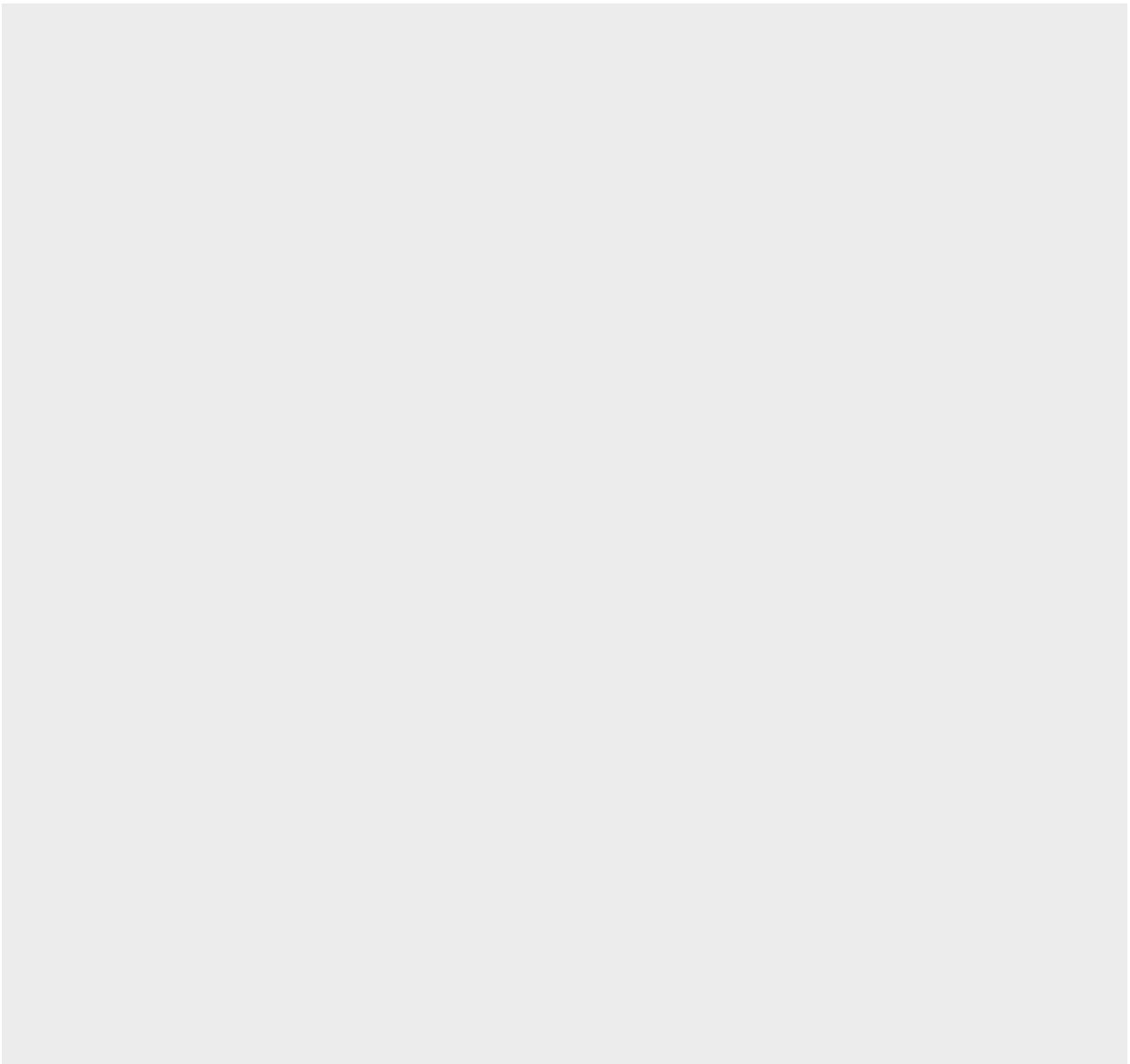
STORY PROMPTS

Identify what makes it unique to work with you and think about evidence from your past that supports this claim.

	CLAIM	EVIDENCE
Sample	"I put the customer first"	June '18, when I delivered the product to the door of my customer myself

YOUR STORY

Pick one of the claims from the previous page and craft a short story around the supporting evidence. Feel free to use *context*, *challenge*, *response*, and *result* to structure your story.



STORY TYPE #5

RESISTANCE STORIES



OVERVIEW

PROBLEM

Objections will inevitably come up. Inexperienced sellers try to respond to objections with logic, saying something like, "This will help you a lot" or "You'll miss out on a massive opportunity." But this not very effective as it's tough to overcome any entrenched beliefs using logic.

SOLUTION

Try to appeal to their emotions by using a *resistance story*.

Resistance stories are successful examples of customers who initially had doubts about working with you but ultimately decided to move forward and are now glad they did.

TIPS

Understand the objection: Do not jump into the story the moment the objection comes up. First, try to truly understand what's going on with your customer. Clarify what they mean by "your price is too high" or "let me think it over."

SAMPLE STORY



Mike Dutter

VP of Sales, Oracle

Objection: No budget at the moment to buy the solution

Mike: “In June 2020, I met with the Chief Marketing Officer for a large industrial manufacturing company. He was looking for a solution to help them segment their customers more effectively. Right when I thought it was a done deal, the CMO said, ‘I like your solution, but to be honest, I don’t see how we can justify that at the moment. Just last week, our CEO announced a “zero expense” policy until the end of the fiscal year.’ Similar constraints as you’re seeing, right?”

Buyer: “Yes.”

Mike: “Well, what we did is extended our meeting with the CMO by an hour and started brainstorming how we could make that happen. At the end of the meeting, we agreed that they could start using our technology already and pay the invoice six months later, in the new fiscal year. No interest, cost of funds, or similar. Is that something that could work for you?”

Buyer: “I guess this is something we could explore.”

Mike: “Actually, by the time the customer made their first payment in the new fiscal year, the client had increased the revenue of the segmented customers by 300%. The additional revenue was \$200k more than what they paid for the technology. How do you feel about such an arrangement? How far would that help you reach your goals?”

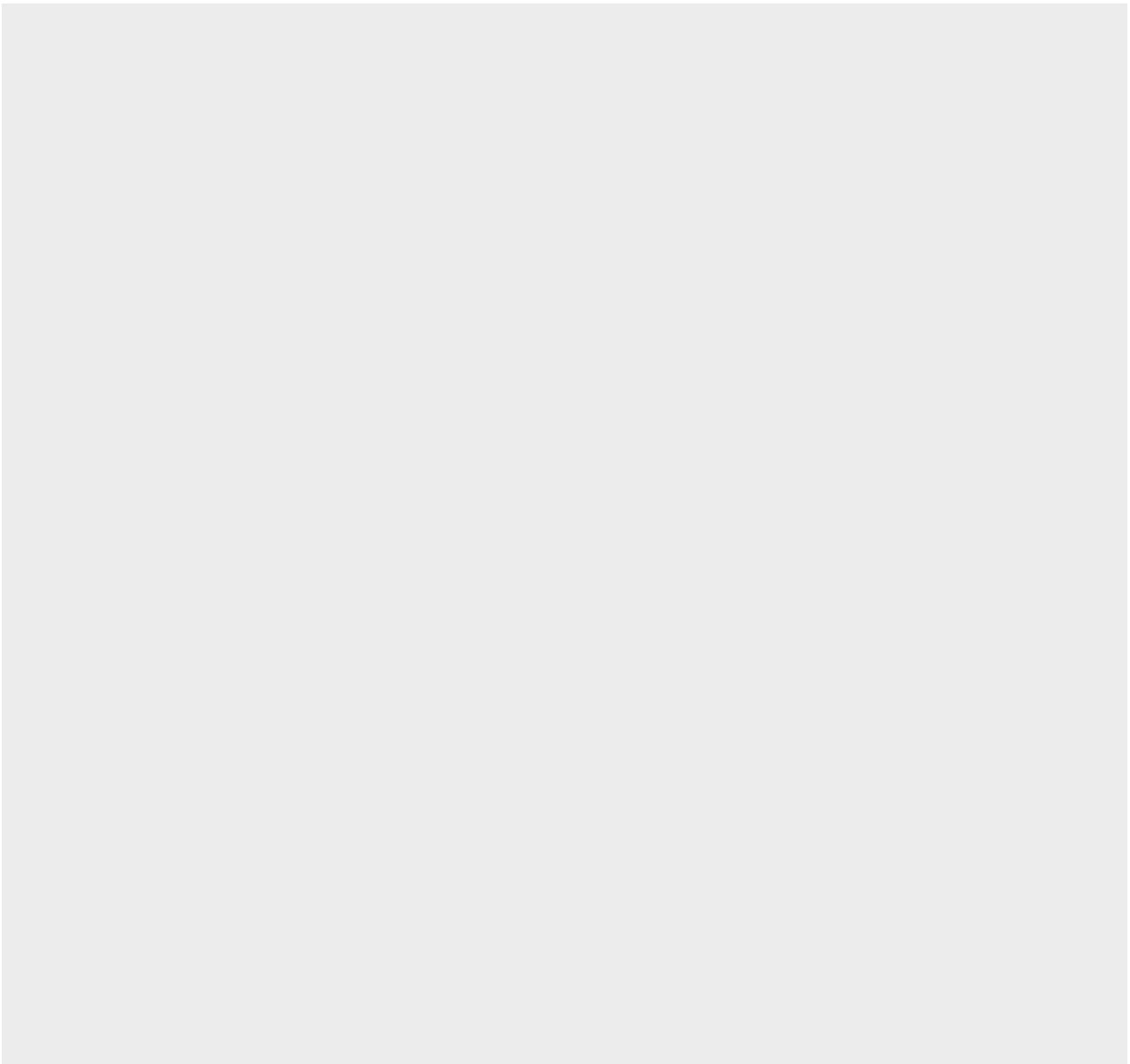
STORY PROMPTS

Identify the most common objections you get.
Reflect on whether any of your satisfied clients had a comparable objection initially.

	OBJECTION	COMPARABLE OBJ.
Sample	"We don't have the budget!"	Sam from Walmart was worried about budget, but recovered investment within 1 month

YOUR STORY

Pick a customer from the previous page who initially had a concern, but who was happy that they moved forward. Craft a short story around it. Feel free to use *context, challenge, response, and result* to structure your story.





DO YOU WANT MORE TIPS TO HELP YOU IMPROVE YOUR STORYTELLING SKILLS?

I'm happy to have a chat and help you make a plan to transform your storytelling skills.

You can send an email to philipp@power-of-storytelling.com or book a 15min slot in my calendar:

PHILIPP'S CALENDAR

“

Great stories happen to those
who can tell them.

– Ira Glas

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