



# Get Clients Now podcast

## Episode #351 Transcript

### Annette Simmons – Author of “The Story Factor”

Okay. Everybody, Ken Newhouse here, and I've got a net Simmons on the call with us today on the show on a net has written just a fabulous, fabulous book as I covered in the bio and that actually you, you're working on a third book, but you've already written, you wrote a book before the story factor for my bad.

I apologize. But on behalf of myself and the members, they get clients donation, I'm going to death. Definitely welcome you to the show because like I said just a few minutes ago, I have been really, really looking forward to having you on the show. Thank you so much. Glad to be here. It's really, I mean, I love having all my guests on, but this, your book really is a, is really, really that good.

So anyway, I covered your backstory. Um, your bio in the introduction. So if you could, let's do this. Let's cover the first two questions that I like to ask all my guests. So if you could take a minute or two, give us your backstory. I know when we first talked, you talked about. Being from Louisiana, then going to Australia, but kind of give us an idea of what that's about and how you became a bestselling author.

Well, I was born and raised in Shreveport, Louisiana. Now that's his own experience. Um, the, the Southern patriarchy was strong with my family, although we did have, uh, my grandmother was, was the matriarch, but they're all, all sorts of storytellers. Now. Daddy really wanted me to be as successful as I could, so he did things that.

Would approach his definition of success, which is, you know, increase my economic value. Um, I did things like when I was 14, uh, I was already typing up a resume to go find my summer jobs. You know, I wanted to take art. And he's like, Oh, no, you can't do that. You, you need to take mechanical drafting, you know?

Um, and so at the time I felt like I was a little constrained. Daddy had told me I should go to law school. And I was like, okay, that's what I'll do. And. But it came to him after I wanted to study psychology. Cause you know, my dad introduced me to psychology when I was 13 years old. He's a social worker.



He would give me books. I mean, I would have been a strange teenager anyway, you know, I studied the transactional analysis, rational motive therapy, but I wanted to study psychology in school. And he was like, Oh no, no, no, no. You can't do that. That's just listen to people's problems on the phone. So what I did was I studied marketing.

Because that's psychology. And unlike the other kind of psychology, if you're not good at it, you don't get to keep doing it. That's true. But when it came time for me to go to law school, I, I totally, I didn't even take, um, the Elm at. I didn't, I didn't want to go to law school, but I didn't want to tell my daddy to go, I didn't want to go law school.

So I moved to Australia instead. And that was what an experience the cultures inside Australia and outside Australia, because it's anybody in Australia, if they're going to travel, they're going to go across the globe. Well, no matter where they go and the, the increased diversity of cultures. Really shook my certainties that I knew what I was talking about and the certainties.

One of them I came from America with, which was, um, you know, the squeaky wheel gets the grace metaphors teach us what our cultural values are. Um, and I was all about, you know, I was making my own resumes when I was 14. I was all about telling people how wonderful I was, and you know, that didn't work over there.

Uh, they have more the collective as opposed to the individual. Uh, they have what they call the tall poppy syndrome. So you can look at other cultures and you can find their metaphors. And the top poppy syndrome means that those that rise above the risk. So it was a baptism by fire and a collective, you know, uh, narratives as opposed to individual narrative.

Of course, I didn't know that at Tom. I just knew that they were making fun of me every time I turned around and then went back to the United States. Uh. Really returning to, if you will, psychology. But social psychology, I'm fascinated by why groups do what they do. And if you've ever sat in a meeting where you thought, these people are idiots, you know, it's, it's, it's so deep.

You know, everybody really wonders why groups do what they do. They come up with different theories. But I went back to school to study the actual theories that. Amazingly don't change. This is stuff they discovered in the 30s hasn't changed that much. And so the name of my company was group process consulting and everything I've done is a function of trying to get, figure out how people interact with each other in groups and how you create collective decision.

So those are the two points that I just want to make based on your response. Number one, that's why I don't work with corporate clients because their group think and the way they do things just doesn't fit well with me. And number two, that's why I still, that's why I study. Uh, when I go to bookstores, I only go to used bookstores and look for old books.



Talk about marketing. I loved your comment on people who, you know, if you're a marketer, you don't continue as a marketer. If you don't do a good job, and you could be a pathetic excuse. For a psychologist or a psychiatrist or a social worker and still continue because unfortunately, I think a lot of people in that, that career field have a lot of personal problems of their own.

They have never figured out. I can guarantee you I had lots of personal problems when it came to group, when I was in high school. So, you know, you study what you need to learn. Hopefully I do a better job than, than the ones you're talking about the, well, based on your book and just based on, as I told you before we got started, this is, um.

You know, I'm real careful about who I have on the show. And I do read all the books that I have on. I'd had some really exceptional guests, but I have the right yearbook up there within the top five of the best books that I've ever read. And I'm putting that up there with breakthrough advertising, obviously by Eugene Schwartz.

Um, not to diminish the work that the other guests had done, but your book, uh, for me personally, it just that good. And I'm not saying that to 'em. I'm not trying to to, to build your ego or fluff up your ego. I'm just telling you the work is just really that good. It's a, it's a very, very in depth, excellent book and I learned a lot from it.

If you could take just a minute or so, I know we talked about your mentor, but is there anybody else who's really influenced you and kind of set you off in the direction you, you've gone. You know, this is not a story I usually tell to that kind of question, but, but it was a pivotal point for me. Um, uh, the guy who invented the term process consulting is named ed Schein.

He's at, uh, MIT. And, um. He in 1961 did research because the Chinese communist prisoners that, that will the American prisoners of the Chinese communists if I don't know who, um, if you're up on your history, they actually, um, made confessions and gave a sincere, uh, rebuttal against American culture and capitalism.

Yeah. And so is is the book that he wrote is called coercive persuasion. And, um, I was just interested, you know, I would study in persuasion just like how I've studied cults. Um, you know, how is it that they do that and how can we use it for good and not for evil? Right. Well, one of the things that I've found really interesting is the Chinese in this wouldn't necessarily have come with positive intentions to, you know, make people feel more comfortable.

But that's the way you persuade somebody. The, it's not the torture and the suffering that, you know, cartoons tell us it's about putting people into a group and causing them to feel like they belong in that group. Now they were using it for, you know, purposes. I don't support. But it was the first time when I realized, Oh, you know what?



A lot of people have theories about how to persuade that are not based in what actually works. And his research was really pivotal for me. And understanding number one, that, that, you know, inclusion and, and group. Uh, interaction is, is one of the best ways to get people to, to move to a different point of view.

But the other thing is that he taught me how to do my own research. And so I've always gone straight to the source and ask people, tell me stories about things that really happened. And if it didn't really happen, I don't write about wakes except for the folk tales. You know, those are, but that's a big teacher.

Um, those things are, are the, the big teachers are true before you and I were born and they made sure that long afterwards. We're not. Yeah. They're ingrained in our DNA there. They're there. The way we respond. I think dr, I think dr Bob Cialdini talked about that and hit one of his books about how the Chinese would take American soldiers and not as, you know, they couldn't, they would never go for an outright confession.

They would just get them to. Say something small, they would give them something in exchange for something very small that was innocuous. W they weren't attacking the U S government, and then slowly but surely because of the principle of consistency, they couldn't go back against what they said, and so eventually they would work them into the point of giving a full blown, I would, yeah, I would say the principle of group peer pressure too.

Um, that use group process specifically to allow people, that's, uh, my second book, a safe place for dangerous truth. One of the things that you're saying, you don't work with corporate. I go into a corporate situation when they're at an impasse and, and, and they're ready to do just, you know, throw up their hands and give up and I facilitate a dialogue and there's always some dangerous truth.

That that most of the people in the room know that the leader is pretending like isn't true. And, and that they even talk about after they, after their meetings, their staff meetings, they go in the bathroom, they check for feet. So when we bring a group to a level of trust, you end up finding out things that maybe are going to.

Cause you problems, but they're absolutely necessary for moving forward and helping people tell their story, even though they might be a little afraid to do that is one way to build trust. Okay, so let's do this. I'm going to jump ahead. In your book, you added two new chapters. This is the third revision of your book.

The last two chapters are completely, I mean, there's a lot of new content in the book, but there's the last two chapters are brand new. Like everything about them is new. So my first question comes [Visit the show's page for episode #351 here](#) [NEW Video Training: \(100% NO SELLING\) "Selling With Storymonials"](#)



from chapter 11. You mentioned your mentor, his definition of story, but I really preferred, I felt much more comfortable, um, working with your definition of stories.

So if you could, let's talk about, and I do have a lot of questions. I've got like 15 questions. So keeping that in mind with, with, um, with this, I want to get to as many as I can. I'll shorten my answers. No, actually I was, that was me saying, uh, the Chinese gave little, they gave little things they get, you know, they got little concessions.

I wasn't telling you to shorten up. I was saying the Chinese gave little concessions cause I thought that's the reference. That's the research you were going to reference. I didn't know about that particular research you were referencing. But yeah, you guys, you can't see we're on video here. So I'm giving hand signals.

Um, normally I'll just do a pattern interrupt if somebody is going along and I'll just use their name or something. And I try not to be rude, especially if they're onto something. I'm just gonna let them go. But, um, no, I just have, I have. Like 14 questions. So I want to try to roll those advocate. But if we don't, you know, whatever you give us is whatever you give us.

I'm just thankful that you're here. So what is the story and what is, it's not what it's not. And then here's my, my trailer on that. Why stories in the art of storytelling are so critically important. And this is a business podcast in the business setting to being able to influence people. And obviously we're talking about ethical influence and ethical persuasion.

This is not about how to manipulate anyone. Um, it's one of the things I really loved about your book. You mean you go out of your way to point that out. And that's why so many people are failing today is because it's very, one side of you talked about push pull, and we'll get into that in a little bit, but what a story is, what it's not.

Story for me is a significant emotional experience. So, so, uh, experience is the best teacher. Right? I mean, you put somebody in a situation, they learn patients the hard way, and that's the best teacher. Well, patients is one of the things that's hard, hard to, to teach, particularly when you have a client that's inpatient for you to produce, you know, turn it around, all that sort of stuff.

And so in a way, we're actually in and helping our clients become more satisfied where we're giving them some, uh, teaching on patients. So patients is something that, that experience is the best teacher. The second best teacher. His story. Because it's a SIG, it's a simulated experience and it's, it's from a point of view where I'm not telling you what to think.

I am with your cooperation, you bring up in your imagination. Uh, for instance, the conversation I had with my father after I told him I was going to Australia, which, you know, it's amazing that you



can actually, when you bring in these sensory experiences, people will add all the other ones in and they get more and more engaged and more and more connected.

And so what we do is we. Give people a chance to have a real, a simulated experience where as opposed to just telling them our opinions, we take them through a, B, C, D, and then they come to the same opinion we came to. That to me is just fascinating, and I know you talk, I think it's chapter or maybe 12 chapter 11 you talk about our responsibility and storytelling because to be able to wield that power, and really if you're a master storyteller, you're wielding some heavy duty, influential power over.

Other people that there's, you know, well, it depends on, it depends on how you approach storytelling. If you, uh, approach storytelling is power over, then what you're going to do is you're going to take your narrative. These are the people that use the term, controlled the narrative. They're not concerned about anybody else's narrative.

They just want to control everybody else's. What I know about storytelling, and this is based on all of the traditional forms of storytelling, is that it is co-created. And that without your listeners cooperation, then there's no story really getting the set up here. And what we do is like we each have used the Rumi metaphor about the five blind men describing an elephant.

And, and with my clients and with people I want to influence very often what I do is I actually validate their part of the elephant first. Like, you know, they may think it's wide platen and leathery. I'll talk about, you know, I've been on situations where it was wild plat and leathery. And then you earn the right to get them to walk through a little field trip of what you have seen.

And that's what I call the, um, uh, I know what you're thinking story. So it's a balance of, of going back and forth. So are you telling us never. Just the telling, at least not the way I teach it. Right. So my point, and you're exactly, I mean, I couldn't have said it, but obviously there's no way I could have said it better.

But my point was in saying that, is that some people. Look to learn the art of storytelling so that they can just bowl through people and get what they want without considering what's really the fact they're dealing with another human being on the other end of this. So, and I think you kind of pointed that out, that we have a responsibility if you learn how to do this, don't take advantage of people with this cause again, if, if the listener is not engaged and they're not participating, you're really just talking at them versus actually sharing a story with them.

And to me, it's just fascinating that you could literally. Through story, through this communication method. Pull someone into a F. To a world that's not entirely a hundred percent fantasy, but it's just



not physical, tangible, but you can still, it's imagined, right? And you can bring them there along with you.

Even though their interpretation, their environment of that story may look completely different than yours. You're able to bring them out of this state they're in and move them to another place in order to communicate with them. And I just think that is just when you stop and think about that, it isn't just incredible to be able to do that versus trying to be persuasive.

You know, I write a lot of copy. Um. This is going to make my copy a lot more effective in so many ways, and it's going to lead my people that are reading my copy feeling a lot better about the fact that they just read my copy if I can get this right. So why is storytelling so important in business, you think today, and I know there's a lot of answers to that, and then we've got technology.

People are more connected, yet more distant, more they feel lonelier than ever. Why is story if you're going to be successful in business. So important today to your success? Well, I think right now, well, it's statistically proven that trust is, is, is, is going down precipitously, was going down precipitously before this pandemic and, and, um, certainly as it improving right now.

So what people are craving more than anything, they don't want your information. They don't want your so-called solutions. What they want is faith. They want faith that you're a good person. They want faith that if they spend their money with you, that they'll be glad they did. And um, when you are the kind of person that that's your end goal as well, then they had to decide whether you're a trustworthy person or not.

And you cannot in any circumstance, come out and say, hi, my name is Annette and I'm trustworthy. Because they're going to want to make that decision for themselves. And so this is where I always start people off with or who I am, why I'm here. Story. Because that story we tend to go into, you know, our product and the benefits and all that sort of stuff, but until we've established a relationship where they've decided that they trust us, then there's no bandwidth.

Across which our information can flow. Um, and there's nothing that will create trust other than an experience, a firsthand experience or some story of an experience where you have actually come through. Um, and so when you tell a story about a time when you screwed up and then you fixed it, or when you tell the story about a time when, when, uh, you lost money making, making it right for a customer, um, or you and you tell the story about a mentor who taught you about respect, uh, then what happens is that the listener decides, okay.

I'm going to give this guy a chance. And that's what builds the bridge across which your new information can flow. Okay. And so speaking of the six different types of stories, let's go through this



in like a rapid fire succession just because, guys, let me just, let me just do my own commercial for you and that right now.

Uh, I do it from time to time. I did it with a couple of books over the last couple of weeks, which normally I don't do that often, but I'm going to guarantee her book guys, buy this book on. Audible, the audio version, listen to the book. You will be able to, you will say that this is one of the best books you've ever bought.

She does a fabulous job of narration. You're going to get so much out of this book. And if you can't say that, if you can't email me and say, can you just nailed it? This is absolutely phenomenal, and that is a genius. You were right. Again, if you can't say that, email me customer service@kennewhouse.com I will pay you for the book.

And obviously it's an audible book, so you can't send me the book. Um, but I'm gonna, I'm gonna guarantee your book. It's that good. But having said that, because I want people to read this book, obviously, because at the time constraints of a podcast, we can't go into depth with a lot of these questions, although I would.

We could talk all day. Literally, we could, um. I could wear you down. I could take it out. I could take you, that'd be for the interview. But let's run through these stories and just like rapid fire succession. So I'll just name the first one and then you talk about it for like a minute or so when we would use it.

Well, I can, I can do, I can do that. Um, the, the who I am story is, is the story that I was just talking about where you want someone to have faith in you. You want somebody to lean in to be curious about what you have to say. Perhaps you've done something that they've. You know, uh, that is meaningful to them.

When you can tell a little story like that, what happens is that you establish faith. The second part, and this all comes from my understanding of group process and how people decide to work together or not, is why are you here? Because if you were there just to exploit your customers, then they're not interested.

And frankly, as far as I'm concerned, you don't deserve their attention. If you're there to really make their lives better. Then, um, be honest about that. What is it that calls you to go into the business you're in? It's certainly not just that you wanted to sit there with headphones in front of a whiteboard and a microphone.

No, that's not what you're about. What you're about is you're about helping people reach their potential. Tell a story that illustrates that, and then they understand why you're here. Now at that point, if you're going to continue, they need to understand what your vision is and. When we go into



business situations, very often the frustrations of actually getting something done, the daily grind, people aren't paying attention to the end goal, and so a vision story builds in their imagination.

That end goal, and that. Juxtaposes and shrinks the daily frustrations in comparison with the vision. So that's your vision story. Then their value and action stories. And people want to know what your values are. Um, they're going to assume that, that you, it's just natural, particularly now for people to be cautionary, they're going to say, maybe your a value is just, um, uh, make as much money as you can or, uh.

When would you tell a story about your values, for instance? Uh, what we've been talking about. In terms of, uh, creating some sort of moral social responsibility, which is really important right now. It's not like business is gonna survive. If we have a failure in our society, morals, I mean, it's businesses interest to invest.

Um, and by morals I'm talking about simply kindness and generosity. Each one of those things, I can say the word generosity or, um, I can talk about trust. But when I tell you the story about being an India and actually prepaying for a carpet two weeks before I came back through Mumbai to get it. Um, and finding that this guy went above and beyond.

Um, and people will sometimes think, well, that was stupid. You, you don't pay for, you know, something before you actually get it. I demonstrated trust so that I was, I always run experiments about trust. And so that's, that's a value in echo story. And then, um, there's the teaching story. There are things, for instance, when I teach storytelling, I know what the problems are going to be from the very beginning.

People are like, I want to convince someone to believe in this. And so they're, they're outside of the story. Well, when you can, uh, and I use this example of Jesus, uh, being cornered by saying, the Pharisees saying, isn't it against the law to heal on the Sabbath? He said, well, if you're. Ox fell into a well, which was already covered by Jewish law, you'd get them out.

And so what, what, what for me that teaching story does is it teaches you that you need to actually get inside the problem. You can't find a good story if you're going to be from the outside looking in. And the last one would, does I know what you're thinking. Story, we know what objections people are going to have.

Uh, and if we can give voice to those objections in a story that illustrates that, that they are, that we validate that, that makes a lot of sense to us. And that in this case, you know, you don't have to worry about me. It's voiding you. Um. None of those words in their technical veracity hold. But when



you tell a story, um, I do a lot of diversity work and one of my jobs is to tell a story that demonstrates that I have been in the trenches.

I understand, um, what white privilege is. And when I do that, then the people are willing to listen to what I have to say next. So that's the six stories, who I am, why I'm here, vision, value in action. Teaching stories and I know what you're thinking stories, and let me just add something to that. You know, you talked about that last one, the, you know, I know what you're thinking.

Stories you mentioned, if I understood it correctly, if I'm remembering this correctly, until you get, until you develop a certain level of skill with this, you probably should rely more on. Stories that you've actually lived and experienced versus trying to create your own story out of thin air to, you know, to meet this criteria.

I know what you're thinking. Stories or any of the stories. Actually, I, um, I am 100% against creating stories that didn't happen. Okay. So then I misunderstood then. So, so you don't want them to us to do that at all? Obviously. I don't know how you could do that. Yeah. I don't know how you could do that, even if it wasn't true, even if you weren't trying to manipulate someone because how do you see something?

I don't know how to do it. How would you ever be able to see in your own mind's eye something that never happened? Well, people do that all the time. They see themselves as being the smartest person in the world, in the room, and that never happened. They're delusional. Well, desire can impact what you, you know, people will make up stories and the, the term that that triggers is, well, it could have happened.

My point is it didn't. Um, and that was something you wish had happened. That would then great. Create a Pat example of a story that you want to then tell someone. The deal is that you are then misleading them because you're talking about something that's unrealistic. Um, it may sound like a good story to you, but if it didn't happen, it's not true.

And if you force yourself, and it's a little, it's a small discipline, you force yourself always to think of a find a true tool story. What happens is that your stories are deeper. Um, they're more relatable. Uh, you end up with little surprises in there that are delightful to people and it's just a good idea because they're better stories.

And then in addition to that, something else that I don't think was directly connected, but something I picked up from the book is that you mentioned that, you know, if you enter into a storytelling situation with a prospective client or whoever you're talking to and you're feeling depressed or down or uncertain, that's going to make your story much less impactful.



And so, at least in my opinion, if you're telling a story that you fabricated out of thin air to try to sell something to someone or persuade someone. I think there's a real good chance that that disingenuousness is going to come through in on a subconscious level in your story as opposed to actually telling something that really happened.

Like, yeah, I was really hit head on by a dump truck and almost died. I mean, that's 100% I mean, there's no embellishment. Everything about that story. I mean, meanwhile, Dan told me to embellish the story a million different ways, which I don't need to because it's just a remarkable, the fact that I'm even alive is just by the grace of God and just even when I stop and think about it, I should, I should be.

I shouldn't be here. I shouldn't be here, let alone in the shape that I'm in. And so it's a story I can tell with it. I get excited when I tell it because. I have children. I had a son then, but I would've never had my two daughters. I would never handle the joy and the, you know, the life experiences with my wife and just all the other things.

And so, um, yeah, so it would seem that, so let's do this, and if you don't mind, I wrote some quotes down from the book, so I'm going to read the quote and then I just want you to give me. Okay. Got visceral response on it and take a couple of two or three minutes. This is fun. Thanks. Okay, so here's the first quote.

It says, a good story helps you influence the interpretation. People give to facts. Facts aren't influential until they mean something to someone. Well, we can take all the facts that you can look at covert 19 right now and people are taking facts, cherry picking them and making it mean, uh, whatever it is that they, they want to want it to me.

For instance, there's a lot of talk about female versus male narratives right now when you have a particular narrative. Um, and so the female leaders. Uh, I'll just say have less of a war narrative. What happens is that their, they have the same facts, but your story brings some facts to the foreground and pushes some facts to the background.

If you have a war narrative, that's all you see is you're, you're looking at oppositional, adversarial, whatever. But if you have a collective survival narrative, then all of a sudden you, you take these information, you put it into different slots and it means different things. Okay. And so here's the next one.

Facts are neutral, unlike human beings. Wait a minute. Let me, let me read that again so I can sound correct. When I said facts are neutral, unlike human beings, I know I wrote this word for it. Facts are neutral. Unlike human beings add their own meanings to those facts. Something doesn't sound right, but anyway, I'm going to read this way.



People make decisions based on what those facts mean according to their story. Not on the facts themselves. I know I wrote that down, right. But something just about the inflection of the way I'm reading. It doesn't sound right, but are you following the question? Um, so what happens when facts are neutral, unlike human beings?

Uh, something, I messed that up, but essentially you talked about how facts. Really don't have meaning to them. The, the, the meaning that people will say, I'm telling you a bunch of facts. Well, I mean that my perception of the facts, but you're going to put a different spin on those facts based on the story you're telling yourself or your own story.

Well, you were, were looking at, uh, um, you know, divisions and, uh, the fact is that, um, I walk into a room and I'm wearing a mask. Right? And so there's people who are going to say, well, that means that, um, you're a panic monger and you're trying to get other people to be scared when really there's no need to be scared or, um, uh, wow.

She really is doing the right thing and trying to model for other people what the right thing is. The, the fact that I was wearing a mask is neutral. Um, but the story that people are telling themselves about each other right now are, uh, all over the place. Can I tell you that? Just, I'm thinking Annette's going deep here.

She's going really deep here. I'm thinking she's got some sort of, she's from new Orleans, she's not from, she's from Louisiana. So maybe this is like a Mardi Gras mask. And then it dawns on me almost at the end here. You're talking about. Yes. You know, my sister's an ER doctor, so I'm sitting here, I'm not even thinking about, this is a Copal 19 story and yes, that's exactly what it is.

So I feel like a dummy. Hang on just a second. That's hilarious because hang on. I actually do happen to have a Mardi Gras mask right here, and I've got a Clovis mask right here, so it's funny. Right? And so that was an example of what we were trying to share with your listeners, which is that, that, you know, you have the, the mask was a neutral fact.

Um, and, and we interpret and sharpen it based on whatever narrative we're running at the time. Yeah. My narrative was, Hey, this is a deep thing from the book, and you're thinking just superficial, easy to understand, easy to follow the story from Covey. All right, so here's the next one I want to cover, and this one really stuck out to me, and this is not something you said, but you put it in the book and it's, it struck me so much that I'm going to put it on my wall.

I'm going to have it made into a nice poster and frame it and stick it right in front of my monitor is this big gigantic monitor. So my camera has to be off to the side, my video camera, but I want to put it on the wall where I can see it. It's the quote from Cicero and Cicero's quote was, if you wish to persuade me.



You must speak my words, think my thoughts and feel my feelings. So not to oversimplify that, but what are some of the steps we can take to better understand, you know, people say this is what you need to do, but oftentimes we're unsure how to do it. So it was an example of talking to Lisa Cron last week.

She, she said something similar. I'm like, well okay, how do you do that? And then she asked me, okay, well Ken, how would you do it? Cause I'm working on this new project and I want to get your feedback and your input cause I need to do, I need to better understand my target market so I can bring them in.

And some were my books, so I worked through some stuff with her on that. But how would you suggest that we can come to a better understanding? What are some steps we can take? I mean, that's real. That's your, you're a marketer, you understand this, but what are some concrete things we can do. The, for me. Um, the most valuable thing that, that I, I use when I'm teaching storytelling is that I draw people's attention to the fact that there are a finite number of universal experiences we all have as a human.

Um, every single one of us, uh, has, has, has been betrayed. Every single one of us has betrayed someone else. Every single one of us has been forgiven when we didn't deserve it. And so if I tell you a story about the time when I was forgiven and I didn't deserve it. You'll recognize that universal experience.

It's part of the human experience. And then I go on to say, everybody's falling in love and everybody has been dumped. And if you haven't, we're not interested. But these universal human experiences are a great way to get inside the head of any human being. Um, and when I use storytelling, uh, when I teach storytelling that I guide people to make sure they're telling a story that's universal.

Because what happens is that that Tolstoy's definition of art is, is when you take a feeling, an emotion that you've had before. Remember, my definition is significant emotional experiences, and and through either dance or paints or storytelling, you recreate that emotion in someone else. And so we tend to, in business think that emotion means that we're making bad decisions.

But emotion means that we're tuning in to the same desires and fears. And when we do that, I think we have a much better chance of helping this person experience us as knowing something that they know is true. So when you tell and when I, and that's a different level of truth that big teachers, um, that, you know.

Absolutely. Yeah. Um, so does that answer your question? Yes, it does. So, let me look at my next question here, and I'm trying to look at the clock as well to manage this as best I can. Um, here's the



next quote you said. Okay. Um, first my little blurb ahead of it. Then your quote, when you consciously tell people a story about who you are, and then here's your quote.

The people who, whose attention you seek, filter your story through their interpretations of what they see and hear as you speak. So why is that important for us as people who are looking to persuade through story? Why is that important for us to understand that? Well, so often we think we know what should influence people and, and if it's not working, we just do it harder and more often.

And, and the, the, the truth is that, that we have to pay attention to what's working. And if you are in tune with where someone is at and and interpreting their story, you're gonna see in their eyes, um, or hear in the tone of their voice that they're coming to a slightly different conclusion. My goal with storytelling is to pay attention to that and at that point, they're co coming to a different conclusion than what I'm coming to.

I asked them to tell me a story. And that's how I learn about my customers. That's really good. I mean, that's, that's so simple and straight forward that I didn't even consider that, but that's excellent. That's really good. That's wow. And it's so much fun and they're delighted, you know, to have a chance to speak.

So you would say something like, tell me a story about. Thanks for telling me a story about a time when I usually don't use the word story because that can cause people to panic. Um, I'll say, um, tell me more about that. Or who was it that taught you that, or, um, is there an example in your past where that was really brought home for you?

Yeah. Because we naturally communicate in story. I mean it's that you're going to, they're going to do that. So, okay, so here's another quote. Let me just say this, cause I forgot to do it at the beginning. I ask every one of my guests and I'm going to ask your permission at the end. Can I get your feedback on like Bisho like for a minute or two?

It's like a two minute process cause I want, I want to be better at what I do. Okay. And then I'll ask you like a hard question. What's the one thing I need to do better? I can improve on. So, and don't pull your punches at the end. I mean, don't eviscerate me, but just tell me straight forward whatever you think I could do better.

Because I do want to, I want to make this a great experience, not only for the listeners, but for the guests I have on. Okay, here's number 11. My next question. It says, the goal of an inf, the goal of an influential story is to connect your prospects momentum to your goals. So assuming we've invested in that was your quote.



Now here's what I wrote. So in , assuming we've invested the time to truly understand our prospect's desires, which again, I think most people don't, um. Because they haven't peeled enough layers of the onion back. You talked about that in the book, and that's kind of a marketing thing. You know, I want, I want the million dollar deal, right?

Well, why do you want the million dollars? And so if we peel that onion back deeper, we'd understand what the motivation is. It's not the million they want, it's all the things they get from the million. But what does it mean to you? Here's your quote, connect your prospects momentum to your goals. What does that mean and how do we do that?

When. Well, let me just make it real simple. The less everybody has shares the same momentum of wanting to have more faith right now. Um, you can say, you know, having, having more faith that you're going to perform, having more faith, that you're dealing with someone who's ethical, having more faith, but in order to make it simple, um.

What, what I have to do is I have to figure out what it is that causes you to lean forward and want to engage. That's my job and I do that by asking you to share stories with me. I do that by doing my research. Before I even get on the phone with you, um, if I can possibly find out any articles you've written.

That I can, I can then connect with and say, wow, so, um, your theory about such and such, um, is, uh, sort of the same as what I'm working on. Can you help me figure this out? What we do is, is we have to, uh, do our homework. Um, and, and sometimes if you're just, you know, you only have that seven seconds. First impression.

What are you doing with the first seven seconds? Are you asking somebody to tell you a story? Are you demonstrating that you're interested in their wellbeing as a human being? A lot of people in these zoom calls, man, we cannot stop the process of checking in and making sure everybody else is okay. Nor should we.

I think there's some business strategists are like, you know, that's wasted time. That's part of the human process. And so when I demonstrate that, I understand that this, this, uh, checking in process is just as important as the business stuff. Then the person who is observing me and deciding whether they want to interact with me or not, he gets a chance to say whether, okay, this is the sort of thing I care about too.

And that's their momentum, their momentum, everybody's momentum is, is to feel more alive and more connected. I mean, that's, that's, you know, we're, we're pretty safe on that one. And you actually go, you go into the book, you talk about that in great depth in the book, which, um, those



are some of the questions we just, we're not going to have time to get to, but really I was just really fascinated, not to interrupt you, but I just wanted to throw that in guys.

Just a tremendous, a lot of content on that particular subject. And that's one of the things that really spoke to me in the book. So I'm sorry. Please finish. I did. Okay. Sometimes I, uh, I'll just blurt out. I apologize. But I honestly, I think that's for my head injuries. There are times when I will literally forget what I'm talking about.

I take it as a compliment. It means you're engaged with the, with the information, and it keeps me engaged too. I appreciate that. Okay. Um, just I'll ask you one more question. You doing okay on time? You got like five or six more minutes? Yes. Okay. Um, let me see here. Which one do I want to ask you? Okay. I think I'll ask this one.

Here's your quote. Before you influence, you must establish some connection. Story builds connections between you and the person you're trying to influence. And then here's my followup question. Give an example of the types of stories we can tell to help us establish more and deeper connections with our prospects.

And I know that would probably be. Okay. But is there anything else that might come to mind? Actually, I'm going to, I'm going to come from left field for this. Uh, is the story about when I was working with PricewaterhouseCoopers and we were teaching storytelling. This is like 15, 20 years ago. And, um, the, the thing with teaching storytelling is that nobody wants to go first.

Because when I teach storytelling, I actually have to have them telling their stories so that, that I'm not bringing, you know, I'm not messing it up with my perspective. They need to see. And it's always hard for the first person to get up and tell. There's this long silence. I'm like, so who's going to volunteer?

And, um, uh, the CEO at the time jumped up and, and said, I'll, I'll tell the story. And so he told this story about, uh, being in a hotel room and the day was over and he was going to watch this football game and he ordered a cheeseburger, two beers, and he was so excited. And so. Uh, he's, he's, he's finished with his hamburger.

It's halftime. So he goes to put the tray outside and one of the beer bottles falls over, so I reaches to get it, and then he hears the click and he's in his underwear. He's in his tidy whities and so he's like, well, you know, he finds a a plant to get behind, and then he thinks, well, I'm just going to make a run for it.

So he goes in the elevator, there's nobody there. He understands when the doors open that he timed, you know, it was not his friend here. So the click was the door. If the door shut on him, he got



locked up. Yes. So he runs across the lobby and they see him come in and they say what number? And Eddie tells him the number and they have the card key and he gets a candy.

He goes back up the elevator and he gets into his hotel room finally, and he's huffing and pop in and the phone rings and it's the front desk and she says, next time. You know, there are phones on every floor and you can call us and we'll bring you a key. So that's an example of all of us have, have locked ourselves out of something and we're like, Oh no, here we go.

So that's a shared universal experience. And what he did was he took an embarrassing experience, which he illustrates vulnerability first. And trust is a dance whereby we show trust and, and, and we have to go first. And so when we take these stories and we can, we can share something that's a universal experience.

And like I said, being embarrassed, um, uh, being proud of yourself, being disappointed in yourself. All of these things, uh, when told from an authentic place are something that other people recognize and they connect. That was a really good story. Okay. So I told you, that was my last question, but this is genuinely my last question.

Then I'll get your feedback. If I may. What's the one question today that I should have asked, but I didn't? Maybe, uh, where do we find stories? Uh, cause I have the four buckets, um, where you find stories. I think it's, it's the, it's the shortcut, uh, that, that it's a tiny shine. It's, it's a time you blew it.

It's a mentor, or you can actually lift a story from a book or a movie. Um, by an artist, someone who really captures big T truth fiction is a, is a wonderful way to lift. Have some, have the Scorsese, pay for your special effects. And then remember, um, uh, one of the stories that that has now become its own PowerPoint slide from the matrix is you want the blue pill or the red pill.

It's my favorite movie of all time. Isn't that awesome? Yes, it is. And so, um, and of course now we're aging out. The, the young people were like, Whoa, what's that movie? What, who's that? Who's that? He described Neo standing there, you know, and he could go down the rabbit hole or whatever. So that would be it.

Like where to find stories. So that's my little shortcut. Yeah. Well, thank you so much. Um, let's do this. I can't tell you how much I appreciate it. This was a fabulous interview. I really enjoyed it. How can we find out more about you? I mean, obviously we can go to. Audible and buy your book. Tell me the title of your book in full.

It's not just the story factor, there's more to it. Tell us the whole title of your book. Um, the story fire, uh, the story factor, influence, inspiration and persuasion. And then there's also whoever tells



the best story wins, which is a book. I wrote this under the Harper Collins. Uh, uh, and that is more of a workbook that is, I don't know if you've seen it yet, but that takes.

Okay. So that takes you through the six kinds of stories for each of these four buckets. Um, and there's something about having stories that causes you to come up with your own stories. Um, and, uh, hearing a story. So I put my own stories in there and the stories that I got from other people. And it's just one of those things that triggers, cause like if I was to ask you where you were on September 11, um, or if I was to tell you about the time that I got hit by a truck, um, uh, we immediately have to share each other's stories.

You know, that's just a human need. Um, and so, uh, so that's, that's, that's, that's the last thing I have to say. Okay. And so guys, I'll do this. If you buy her book on audible and then you buy the previous book, tell us the name of that title again. Whoever tells the best story wins. I've read that book. I actually read that book before I wear this one.

That's obviously because it came out first, but I'll guarantee that book as well. But you got to buy the audible version first. Um, or with it for that to work. So what about your website? What's your website? dot com. S I, M M O N s.com and right now I'm working on a new set of stories in terms of what are, what are female narratives about power and what are male narratives about power and how we can better balance those.

Okay. And so that'll be coming out approximately next year. And who knows what, whether you know, it will ever come out with everything up in the air. We'll see. I'll look forward to that book. So again, thank you so much for being on the show and I know it's going to be very well received. It was just a really good interview.

Do you do a really good job? I really appreciate your time. I did, and I'm really a fabulous book. It's just really, really a great book. And obviously. I'm going to have to reread this book like a bazillion more times to really get the most out of it. It's really deep. It is really good stuff. I really appreciate it.

That, that really cheers me up for today. You did so you've, you've done a wonderful walk, but anyway, listen, I'm going to wrap it up and then I'll email you links and things like that and we'll, we'll go from there. All right, well you take care and thank you. Have a good day. You too. Stay safe.

Thanks. All right.

Bye. Bye. Bye.