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Storytelling: Sometimes a description tells more than facts and figures.

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Storytelling

Storytelling is used in organisations as a communication tool to share knowledge with inspiration. The language used is authentic (experience, not fact oriented); it is the narrative form that most people find interesting and attractive.

Storytelling has of course existed for thousands of years as a means of exchanging information and generating understanding. However, as a deliberate tool for sharing knowledge within organisations it is quite recent but growing very rapidly, to the extent that it is becoming a favoured technique among an increasing number of management consultants.

How to go about it (as a storyteller)?

1. Be clear about the key message you want to convey with a story.
2. Build your story on an own experience. Note key-words, from the beginning to the dramatic evolution, the turning point and the happy (sad) end. What is the lesson learned?
3. Tell your story starting from the beginning. Build an atmosphere of curiosity. Tell the surprising moment of your story with a dramatic voice. Observe your listeners.
4. If indicated, relate your story to the topic discussed.

How to go about it (as a listener / interviewer)?

1. Contribute to a good climate in the group. Show your interest. Give the storyteller an adequate reason to tell.
2. Be a great audience. Listen closely, be receptive and fully comprehending.
3. Don't resist the story. Hear it out and then come back with additional questions.
4. Observe an implicit contract of trust. Only break when you feel the teller is not telling the truth.

