

It's Business Story Time

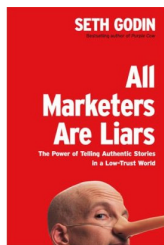
We live in a business age of communication overload. In our ever-increasingly networked world, we are inundated with data. Each day we face an avalanche of voicemail, email, presentation decks, instant messages, and documents.

It's a wonder anything breaks through to capture our attention long enough for us to react.

And that's the problem. Not enough communication is breaking through. Voicemails are not returned, emails go unanswered, and documents are left unread.

The current business trend to solve this issue is to do something we did as children -- tell a story.

Stories work because they serve as informational shortcuts since we are too overwhelmed to listen to all the details. Stories also work because they have the ability to emotionalize data.



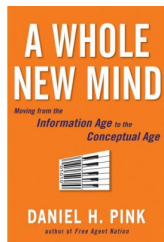
In **ALL MARKETERS ARE LIARS** (Portfolio, 2005), Seth Godin writes how the most successful businesses tell consistent, authentic, and remarkable stories to customers.

The crux of Seth's story is, "The organizations that succeed realize that offering a remarkable product with a great story is more important and more profitable than doing what everyone else is doing just a bit better."

Case in point – Apple. They're telling a great iPod story to consumers.

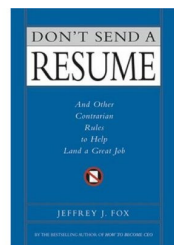
Storytelling is also becoming a leverageable asset in business today.

In **A WHOLE NEW MIND** (Riverside Books, 2005), Dan Pink explains how right-brain thinking (artistic, empathic, and contextual) is replacing left-brain thinking (functional, literal, and analytical) as we evolve from the Information Age into the Conceptual Age.



Pink compellingly argues the left-brain powered business engine of the Information Age has resulted in an abundance of everything. Resulting in an environment where automation gains have become so efficient and so prevalent that we can now outsource previously un-outsourcable white collar jobs to Asia and beyond.

One way to thrive in this emerging Conceptual Age is to develop our storytelling skills. Pink writes, "Story represents a pathway to understanding that doesn't run through the left-side of the brain."



Resumes are another way we tell stories in the business world.

In **DON'T SEND A RESUME** (Hyperion, 2001), Jeffrey Fox gives great, albeit contrarian, advice on how to tell your personal professional story to breakthrough the resume clutter. His unconventional advice will cause you to rethink how you tell your story to capture the attention of prospective employers.

Next time you need to break through the business communication clutter, consider *telling a story*. It's not only effective, it's fun too.

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