"Storytelling as a Leadership Skill" -- webinar

2:00 – 3:30 p.m. PT, Wednesday, September 14, 2011

Cal-ICMA Coaching Program

*** Advance registration required for this no-charge webinar:
https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/147701800

Storytelling – being able to convey information with compelling examples and illustrations that capture an audience’s attention – is a key leadership skill. This is valuable in whatever role you play in local government. Learn important steps to doing this effectively and resources to help you hone your abilities and enjoy success. You can use the webinar to explore ways to apply this skill in an immediate opportunity in your job.

Panel topics:
1. Why is storytelling effective in communicating issues for local government?
2. When is storytelling particularly useful and when isn't it?
3. What are the keys to using storytelling effectively?
4. What are the pitfalls to avoid?
5. How do you develop and present an effective story?
6. What are some resources to help develop this skill?

Panelists:
- Jean Fraser, Chief, San Mateo County Health System
- Felicia Logan, Director, Leadership Development, ICMA

Target audience: all employees and managers

1. Register in advance for the webinar:
There is no charge for participating in the webinars, but each requires advance registration.
*** Advance registration required for this no-charge webinar:
https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/147701800

2. Pick your audio option:
   a. dial (630) 300-6276 (Caller PIN: 876244#) to participate. You will pay whatever your regular telephone carrier charges are for this call.
   OR
   b. access live audio via the web [powered by Granicus]--As an alternative to the dial-in number, you can now listen to live audio at the "Live Audio and Archives" tab of www.cal-icma.org/coaching.
3. Ask questions:
You may submit questions anonymously via email to cal-icma@donmaruska.com either in advance or via the webinar during the panel discussion. As moderator for the session, Don Maruska will pose the questions.

After a webinar occurs, a digital recording along with the PowerPoint materials and results of the polling questions will be available within 24 hours at the "Live Audio & Archives" tab of www.cal-icma.org/coaching.

Post-Webinar Group Discussions

Many agencies are organizing groups to listen to the calls (live or recorded) and discuss the topics among themselves after the calls. Some are summarizing their discussions and distributing them to managers throughout their organizations. Use the Cal-ICMA Coaching Program as an effective way to enhance professional development in your agency. Here are some discussion starters for this session.

1. What key messages do we need to convey to important audiences?
2. What stories can we use to engage the audiences successfully?
3. How can we help one another develop, practice, and deliver stories?

MORE RESOURCES--See the "Coaching Corner" at www.cal-icma.org/coaching for valuable resources to boost your career. Sign up for the complimentary email list to keep informed of future sessions and resources at www.cal-icma.org/coachingList.

We appreciate the sponsors for the Cal-ICMA Coaching Program. They include:
Platinum Sponsor: CA Communities Joint Powers Authority
Gold Sponsors: CA City Mgmt. Foundation, Public Agency Retirement Services, County Administrative Officers Assn., Granicus
Silver Sponsors: California Redevelopment Assn., Common Sense California, Keenan and Associates, Municipal Management Assn. of Northern CA

Enjoy the resources and support to thrive in local government.

Don Maruska, Master Certified Coach
Director, Cal-ICMA Coaching Program
See "Coaching Corner" at www.cal-icma.org/coaching
Felicia Logan, Director, Leadership Development, ICMA

Felicia Logan is the director of leadership development at ICMA, providing management development activities for ICMA members such as the Gettysburg Leadership Institute and the Senior Executive Institute, Leadership ICMA, and the Emerging Leaders series. Passionate about leadership development and coaching, Felicia serves as adjunct faculty to the Weldon Cooper Center School of Public Service at the University of Virginia, is an executive coach, an Emergenetics Associate, and a Master of Leadership Development.

Jean Fraser, Chief, San Mateo County Health System

Jean S. Fraser is the Chief of the San Mateo County Health System. The System encompasses all health-related functions for the County, including the county hospital (San Mateo Medical Center), eleven clinics, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, Environmental Health, and all traditional public health functions, as well as Aging & Adult Services. Ms. Fraser has been the Chief since January 2009.

Prior to joining San Mateo County, Ms. Fraser was the Chief Executive Officer of San Francisco Health Plan (SFHP), a county-created health plan providing affordable health coverage to 53,000 low and moderate income families.

Prior to joining SFHP, Ms. Fraser was with the San Francisco City Attorney’s Office, where she was the managing attorney of the team advising the San Francisco Departments of Public Health and Human Services.

Ms. Fraser holds a law degree from Yale Law School, and a bachelor’s degree from Yale University.
Additional Storytelling Resources

If you’ve noticed, many business book bestsellers and compelling speakers use stories to convey their messages. A few years ago, I took a three-day workshop with Doug Stevenson, a master in storytelling.

Unfortunately, Doug has a conflict with this webinar and can’t participate live, in person. He did kindly offer to provide some materials for your review. Thanks, Doug!

~ Don Maruska


1. See attached guidelines for 9 Steps of Story Structure

2. Watch these steps in action:

   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ3BDkMN1LY
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCmAC23wKQQ&feature=related
The Nine Steps of Story Structure by Doug Stevenson

As you may or may not know, I dedicated over 20 years of my life to acting. It all started in 1969 in Chicago, after I dropped out of college. My first real play was *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare (Bill, to me and his close friends).

Over the next 20 years I acted in all kinds of plays and musicals. I was the first Danny Zuko in the original Chicago production of *Grease*, played Puck in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and did some wild and crazy avant-garde theater in Los Angeles.

Some of the plays were well written and some were average. What I learned from my theater experience was how important a good script is. When you spend night after night, performing the same lines over and over and witnessing how the audience responds, you learn something. Either the script works or it doesn’t.

You also learn that a great script is the foundation for a great performance. If the script and construction is well done, it’s easy for the actors to make the play work. Shakespeare is a master at this. With both *Merchant* and *Midsummer*, the construction is flawless. His narrative form is built upon storytelling structure that evolved for over a thousand years before he was even born.

The following Nine-Step Story Structure is a simplification of the same classical story structure that all great stories are built upon. The dramatic movies *Shakespeare in Love*, *Titanic* and *No Country for Old Men* all are built upon the same structure.

The first six steps of the following story structure follow classical form. Steps 7, 8 and 9 are what I call “Sticking the Landing.” Since we are telling our stories in a business context, to make a point, influence a decision or sell a product or service, we need to nail the ending. “Stick the Landing” refers to what gymnasts are hoping to do when they come flying off of the Pommel horse. For you and I, learning how to make one clear and concise point per story is essential.

After you read and study the following Nine Steps, click on this link, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ3BDkMN1LY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ3BDkMN1LY) and it will direct you to a You Tube video that will show you what the Nine Steps look and sound like when performed. The story in the video is from my keynote titled *Emotional Eloquence – The Lost Language of Leadership*. (Call Deborah for booking information)

1. Set the Scene -
   Create the context within which the story takes place. Think what, where and when. This is a “data dump” that helps your audience understand what they need to know about the time, place, atmosphere and circumstances for the story to make sense?

2. * Introduce the characters -
   Whenever there are other people in the story – the main characters other than you – describe them so that we can see them and relate to them. Use adjectives. Include anything pertinent
about your relationship with them. Describe a unique quirk that brings them to life. This is a great place to use the comedy technique called a Triple.

* Introduce characters where they occur naturally in the narrative, not necessarily in the second step of the nine steps.

3. Begin the journey -
   What is the goal or the task to be accomplished? Are you flying to Dallas for a meeting? Are you going on vacation to Greece? Are you preparing to give a speech? The journey eventually becomes a journey from safety to danger or from the known into the unknown?

   Note: The journey of your story doesn’t have to be profound. You don’t need to surmount some life threatening obstacle or face down cancer. Many of life’s lessons are learned from simple but profound events.

4. Encounter the obstacle -
   What happens that impedes your progress? What goes wrong? Is it an event or does someone get in your way? Is it an internal obstacle like fear or lack of self-confidence or an external obstacle like a flat tire or an obstinate teenager? Make sure the obstacle is clearly defined so that the audience “gets it”. If you don’t have a substantial obstacle, you don’t have a very powerful story. You may just have a vignette. Signature stories need an obstacle.

5. Overcome the obstacle -
   This is where Story Theater departs from traditional storytelling. We work very hard on HOW you overcame the obstacle. In some cases, we even re-write history a little to make the teaching point more powerful. This is where your script must be brilliant and your performance precise!

   Analyze HOW you overcame the obstacle. Analyze your thought process. What did you do? Break it down. Organize the progression of thoughts, decisions, reactions and actions in a linear fashion. This may be revealed in an IN moment. (An IN moment is where you step into a “present-tense acting moment” in the story.)

6. Resolve the story -
   Let us know how things worked out in the end. Clean up any loose ends.

7. Make the point -
   This step is about your experience. What is the point or the lesson learned? Be concise - one point for each story. Try to make your point using a Phrase That Pays. (See chapter 12 of Doug’s book.)

8. Ask the question -
Step 8 transfers the lesson or the point of your story to the audience. This step is about them. Even though the story was about your experience, your audience members relate to it as if it happened to them. It is a YOU question.

It may begin with “How about you? or “What about you? or Have you ever…? Other versions are “Where in your life..?” Has there ever been a situation in your life where…?”

The rest of the question refers directly back to your point. For instance, let’s say the point in Step 7 is, “What I learned from that experience was to listen to learn rather than listen to defend.” My Step 8 questions might be, “How about you? When you’re in a challenging conversation, do you listen to learn or listen to defend?”

9. Repeat the point -
Step 9 is also about them. In this step you repeat the point, as verbatim as possible from Step 7, as a challenge or suggestion – a call to action. This is where the repetition of the point serves to brand the point. Whereas in Step 7 I said, “What I learned from that experience was to listen to learn rather than listen to defend.” In Step 9 I will say, “My challenge for you is, the next time you’re in one of those difficult or challenging conversations, listen to learn.”

Here is a sample script for a Stick the Landing ending to your story:
“What I learned from that experience was to listen to learn rather than listen to defend. How about you? When you’re in a challenging conversation, do you listen to learn or listen to defend? My challenge for you is, the next time you’re in one of those difficult or challenging conversations, listen to learn.”

The Nine Steps of Story Structure in Application

Some time ago, I wanted to develop a story using the metaphor of pushing through pain as it relates to success in life. My philosophy is this: people who avoid pain and play it safe seldom succeed at accomplishing much. On the other hand, people who acknowledge and accept the fact that pain is just part of the process of personal growth, accomplish much more.

If you push through the pain, you win. If you avoid pain, you lose. Either way, you experience pain.

In the process of looking for my pain story, I came up with two possibilities. The first story revolved around turning fifty in the year 2000. I set a goal of running two miles without stopping by my 50th birthday. I accomplished my goal.

The second story revolved around a 5K race (3.1 miles) that I had run during the previous year. It was the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure - a fundraiser for breast cancer research. My goal in running this race was to finish the race without stopping. I accomplished my goal.
I chose to develop the Race for the Cure story for several reasons. More people can relate to contributing to a worthy cause than can relate to turning fifty. I can achieve more emotional buy-in from my audience by including myself in a fundraising effort that many people are aware of, rather than with a solitary effort.

Also, people of all ages and walks of life are affected, either directly or indirectly, by breast cancer. People of all ages, walks of life, and with varying association with cancer, run in the race. The story metaphor applies on two levels. The story was not just about me anymore. I now had a larger canvas to work with.

The next step was to build the story. Do I start at the race, before the race, after the race? Do I tell it in a flashback? Do I bring in a story of a breast cancer survivor or someone I know who lost the fight with breast cancer?

In considering my options, I decided to take my audience with me to the race and let them experience it. I wanted them to see what I saw, hear what I heard and feel what I felt. I began the process of building the story by creating the following outline, using the Nine Steps of Story Structure.

Outline of Race for the Cure Story

1. Set the Scene
   a. The carnival atmosphere at the site / Air Force Academy
   b. Tents with food / pamphlets / merchandise
   c. My thought process / inner monologue / warming up
   d. 7000 people / all ages / teams / pink survivor shirts
   e. Describe the “in honor of” signs on people’s backs

2. Introduce the Characters (when they appear in the story)
   a. From kids to grandmas / all shapes and sizes
   b. The pink shirt lady / a survivor / an encourager
   c. The old lady with a NO FEAR t-shirt

3. Begin the Journey
   a. Staggered start times based on your one-mile time
   b. I was in the third wave of three
   c. 8:30 AM / the gun goes off and the race begins

4. Encounter the Obstacle
   a. The heat / the altitude / the incline
   b. Pain / legs / lungs
   c. The battle in my brain

5. Overcome the Obstacle
   a. Push through the pain / No Pain - No Gain
   b. The mental game / one step at a time
   c. “In honor of Lynn Akers”

6. Resolve the Story
   a. Finished the race without stopping
   b. The pink shirt lady congratulated me

7. Make the Point
   a. My strength coach at the gym / “Push through the pain”
   b. Two kinds of pain
      i. Healthy pain that leads to strength
      ii. Unhealthy pain that leads to weakness
   c. Success in life is achieved by overcoming pain
   d. Push through the pain (Phrase That Pays)
8. Ask the Question  
   a. How about you…? Where in your life do you need to push through the pain? ....
9. Repeat the Point  
   a. “Success in life is achieved by overcoming pain. Push through the pain.”

For a more detailed explanation of The Nine Steps of Story Structure, the Phrase That Pays, the seven types of stories and much more, listen to the Story Theater Audio Six-Pack in cassette or CD. The Story Theater Method is also taught in Doug’s book, Doug Stevenson’s Story Theater Method (formerly titled: Never Be Boring Again – Make Your Business Presentations Capture Attention, Inspire Action, and Produce Results).

For more information or to order online, go to www.storytelling-in-business.com

Sign up for the free electronic Story Theater Newsletter at http://www.storytelling-in-business.com/newsletter

You will receive articles and tips on presentations skills with a special emphasis on strategic storytelling in business using The Story Theater Method. Topics covered include humor, acting techniques, story construction, writing, connecting with your audience, motivation and more.
Coaching Program: 8th year
Preparing the Next Generation Committee

Platinum Sponsor: CA Communities Joint Powers Authority

Gold Sponsors: Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS)

Silver Sponsors: California Redevelopment Association (CRA)

Bronze Sponsors: California Special Districts Association (CSDA), Carl Warren & Company, County Personnel Administrators Association (CPAAC), Liebert Cassidy Whitmore, Municipal Management Association of Southern California (MMASC)
Overview of Session

1. Why is storytelling effective in local government?
2. When is storytelling particularly useful and when isn't it?
3. What are the keys to using storytelling effectively?
4. What are the pitfalls to avoid?
5. How do you develop and present an effective story?
6. What are some resources to help develop this skill?

Felicia Logan, Dir. of Leadership Development, ICMA

Jean Fraser, Chief, San Mateo County Health System

Don Maruska, Director, Cal-ICMA Coaching Program

…and polls and questions along the way.
Story telling as a leadership skill

CAL-ICMA Coaching Program
September, 2011
Felicia C Logan
• Who you are and what you stand for is the key to authentic storytelling for individuals and organizations.
• Not only is the **who** and **what** core to successful storytelling, but when we look deep inside we also find the **why**
Leadership and Storytelling

• Storytelling lifts the who, what and why into something memorable and repeatable
• Leadership is about the
• WHO
• WHAT
• WHY
• HOW
• Once you clearly know who you are and what you stand for, telling your story is as
And remember that

• While stories may share many elements, your story is as unique as you are
Good storytelling shares the essence and the core

So if leadership is about the who, what and why, how do we translate that into good story telling?

How do we begin to build story telling skills?
UVA LEAD and SEI PROGRAM’s

Storytelling is key to leadership.

During the first session participants introduce themselves by answering the question:

“Tell us where you grew up and something interesting about that place or someone else from that place”
Day 2 begins with more story telling

Form groups of 3 or 4 and

“share a time when you felt really proud to work for local government—a time when you felt you really made a difference.”

This time the story telling talks about the individual but more importantly about public service and the shared value of making a difference.
SEI and LEAD storytelling

As the week continues the class creates small learning teams within the greater group.

As the learning team forms

“Tell us about a time when you were young that helps us understand who you are today”

Is the core of the first exercise
My story
Wanna play kick-ball?

Of course I wanna play kickball! Geez!
Teams were chosen
I wasn’t
What does this tell you about me today?

• CORE VALUES
  • Inclusion.
  • Everyone contributes and has star power!
  • PLAY is core to leadership.
  • Resilient and ready to be friends.
The second question asked in small groups is “Tell us about a time when you were young that courage was called for.” These questions and others begin to reveal who the individual is, what they believe in and why they do what they do.
More tools to develop skill in storytelling

- How would you describe your life in six words, asks Sam Leith
- Have Your say: Write your life in six words
- 'For sale: baby shoes. Never worn.' To remark on the spareness of Ernest Hemingway's prose style has become a sixth-form commonplace; but never was that style so spare as in this nugget, written to win a ten-dollar bet that he couldn't write a short story in just six words.
Tell Your Story
6 word challenge

• Inspired by Hemingway's example, the online literary magazine Smith (www.smithmag.net) invited its readers to submit their own six-word memoirs. The combination of brevity and self-advertisement proved irresistible, and the website has already received more than 11,000 responses.

Translate the 6 word challenge into individual and organizational story telling

Think about:
WHO you are
WHAT you believe in and do
WHY you do it
HOW you want to be seen as a leader
AND

Create your leadership story in 6 words!
Decatur GA
Six Word Story Challenge

• Take a stroll, feed your soul • Decatur – what Atlanta wants to be • Slow down and enjoy your town • Everyone wants to move back, Decatur • Decatur, Georgia’s peach of a city • Inside the perimeter, outside the box • Decatur: It just keeps getting better • We’re busy redefining small town America • Southern charm, northern taxes, comfortably conflicted
• Decatur: trendy brews, comfortable shoes, Subarus • Smaller than Atlanta, better for it • Expected a lot, but got more • Decatur: we can walk to that Waggy dogs, smiling people, welcoming city • Decatur, where your neighbors are your friends • Decatur: there’s a festival for that • Blue dot in a red state • Decatur: we’re Mother Goose’s left wing • Where the bicycles flow like wine • Four square miles of can do • It’s a “Wonderful Life,” all year ‘round • Yard sign wars, craft beer pours • Just like home without the relatives • Decatur, a squirrel in every attic
All entries will be judged weekly as entries are submitted based on the following judging criteria all with equal value (“Judging Panel Criteria”):
Creativity
Originality
Relevance
Emotiveness

The Judging Panel will select semifinalists (each a “semifinalist”) based on the Judging Panel Criteria. The semifinalists’ entries will be presented to a final judging panel made of individuals from local media, government, education, business and cultural leaders (“Final Judging Panel”). The Final Judging Panel will select six (6) winners from the semifinalists on or about October 10, 2011.
Grand Rapids City
Personal 6 word challenges

• Have some fun and start your own challenge!
• Here are some examples from my colleagues:
  • “I run on caffeine and laughter”.
  • “I am a bi-coastal half-marathon runner.”
  • “With kids who needs comic strips?”
  • “Elected Officials should drink decaf everything”
Remember to have fun!

Let your passion show and your stories inspire!
Storytelling
why and how to use stories

Jean S. Fraser
Health System Chief
San Mateo County, California
Walk + Bike + Bus = Exercise

Source: Journal of Physical Activity and Health; Bassett and Pucher; 2008
One year of car + elevator = 25 lbs
Walk + Bike + Bus = Exercise

Source: Journal of Physical Activity and Health; Bassett and Pucher; 2008
A good story
Pare it down to the essentials
Pace
+
Timing
Emotion
A message from your doctor
PRACTICE
TELL THE STORY
ANALYZE
TELL IT AGAIN BETTER
Resources

• This American Life for great stories: http://www.pri.org/this-american-life.html

• http://www.americanrhetoric.com/

• Recordings of great speeches by women: http://eloquentwoman.blogspot.com/
Upcoming session

Courage in Action – Doing What’s Needed Even When It’s Difficult

Cal-ICMA Coaching Program
2:00 – 3:30 p.m., PT, Wednesday, October 12
Resources and Feedback

Go to “Live Audio & Archives” tab at websites for recordings of this webinar and other professional development resources.

www.cal-icma.org/coaching

Please complete the follow up survey.
Contacts for Today’s Session

- **Felicia Logan**, Director, Leadership Development, ICMA, FLogan@ICMA.org

- **Don Maruska**, Director, Cal-ICMA Coaching, Cal-ICMA@DonMaruska.com
## Polling Results

### from “Storytelling as a Leadership Skill”

September 14, 2011

### Question 1

**How many people are listening on your line?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>66% 1... just myself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16% 2-5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11% 6-10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4% 11-20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% 21 or more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Question 2

**Which people are participating in this webinar at your location?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive management</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-level management</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-line supervision</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional staff</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other employees</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Question 3

**What’s your experience with storytelling? [check all that apply to your group]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m curious about stories, but haven’t tried them in work</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve tried stories, but I’d like to be much better</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m experienced in storytelling and want to hone skills</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m a pro, but I like to see how others do it</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Question 4

**What purposes are you looking for your stories to serve? [check all that apply]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To inspire or guide a team</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To explain a concept or change thinking</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep interest, put a human face or a topic, levity</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Question 5

**Which story topics are of interest to you? [check all that apply]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with tough budgets</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing personnel benefits</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing health care coverage and costs</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging diverse community interests</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling ethical dilemmas</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Question 6

**What would you like to do to use stories more effectively?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Think about my own experiences to build material and comfort</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick a topic and brainstorm story ideas with colleagues</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice a story with a helpful audience</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise and improve the story</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read and view resources in Agenda materials</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>