# 5 Tips for Storytelling for Strong Communicators

What’s the best way to capture and keep an audience’s attention? Through story-telling, of course! In this presentation, I’ll be going over 5 tips for storytelling for strong communicators. Telling stories effectively takes quite a bit of practice, but as long as you keep these tips in mind, you should be able to keep your audience’s attention and maybe even inspire them to engage by asking questions. Let’s get started!

## Know Your Audience

Before telling your story, it’s important that you know your audience. Ask yourself these questions: Is the story you’re about to tell something this particular audience will relate to? Is this story relevant to their concerns? Will it evoke an emotional response? Most stories or personal anecdotes are interesting, depending on the way in which you tell them, but people will generally be most engaged by stories they can resonate with. Be aware of the pain points your audience might be dealing with, and make sure the stories you tell during your speech or presentation are relevant.

## Be Authentic

When telling stories during speeches or presentations, you should always be authentic. Don’t tell stories that don’t feel genuine to you or make up a bunch of details purely for shock value. Chances are, your audience will be able to tell when you’re not being genuine. If your audience senses that you’re not being authentic, they might begin to question your integrity as a leader and communicator. This might make them feel suspicious of you, like you’re lying to them, in which case they probably won’t feel inclined to listen to you.

## Have a Clear Message

Storytelling is great, but it’s also quite easy to get carried away while telling a story. This is why it’s a good idea to have a clear message in mind before you start crafting your story. The message you’re trying to deliver to your audience is the whole point of you telling the story in the first place, so, while you’re coming up with the story you want to tell, make sure that it connects with your overall message. Basically, the last thing you want to do is get lost in your story. It should have an obvious beginning, middle, and end, and your main message should get through to your audience without you having to explicitly state it (though, you certainly can if you wish to do so).

## Practice

It’s true what they say… practice makes perfect! Your comfort and confidence when it comes to telling stories should improve with time and *lots* of practice. If you’re new to storytelling, you might want to start by telling stories to your friends and family members. This way, you can gauge some reactions to your stories in a judgment-free zone. The wonderful thing about storytelling is that it fits naturally with how we communicate. As you give yourself the chance to practice regularly, you'll probably find that storytelling becomes something you do rather effortlessly and spontaneously.

## Use Emotions

It won’t always be necessary to make people cry, but if you’re making people *feel* something while giving a speech or presentation, you’re definitely doing something right. While telling a story that you’re really passionate about, you might find yourself getting genuinely emotional. This is something you should lean into, as people tend to respond quite strongly to emotional displays. You don’t have to make a big show out of it, but if something you’re talking about is making you laugh or cry, let it out! Keep yourself contained, of course, but don’t be afraid to show the genuine emotions you’re feeling.