



Blog: The perfect place to tell a story

CONVERSATIONAL | TRUTHFUL | MAINTAINED

Erika Brame

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III

About me

“THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE” - M. MCLUHAN

- I love visual storytelling
- I love sharing people’s stories
- Missouri State is my home





Blog: What does it do?

- It supports your website's goals.
- It's a great format for time-sensitive information.
- It has strong search engine optimization benefits.
 - Update at least once per week.
- It tells your story with a conversational tone.
 - Rounds out your website's recruitment messages
 - Puts a familiar face on faculty, students and staff
 - Talks about what you offer in human terms



Writing for the digital world

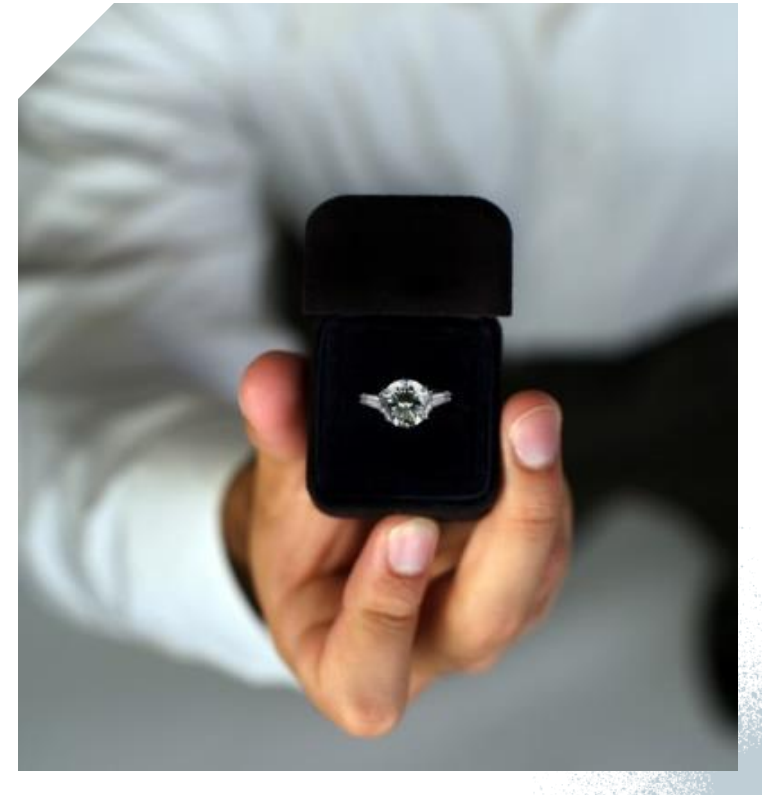
STORYTELLING TACTICS

- Tell a specific story with a specific point-of-view.
- Start in the middle of the action.
- Use details to convey meaning.
- If possible, subvert expectations.
- If possible, establish (and resolve) a conflict.
- If possible, set up a puzzle or mystery.

Exercise: the six word story

I hoped that this would happen.

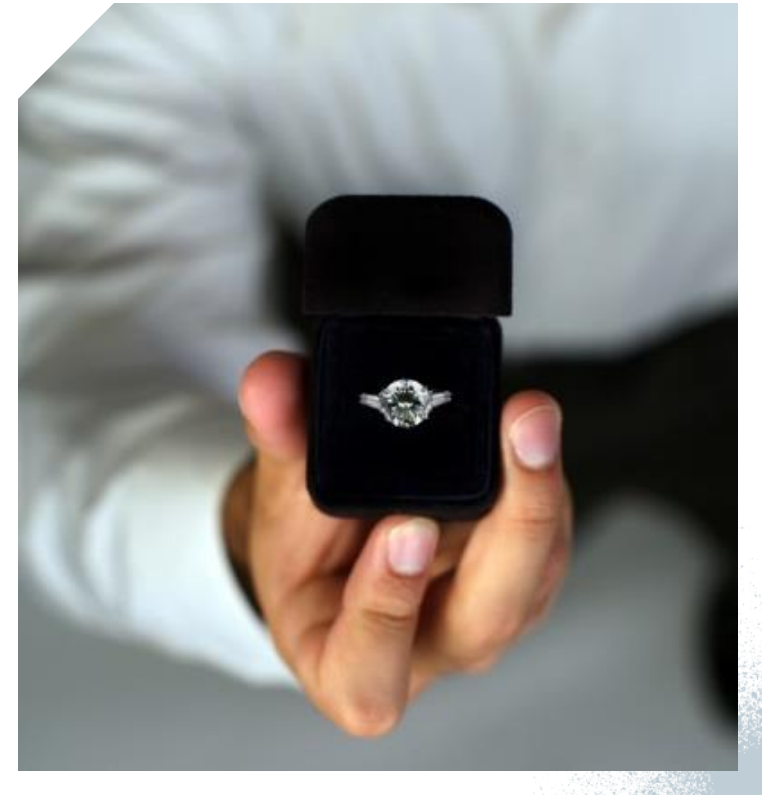
- Has a specific point-of-view
- Starts during the action
- Tells us about the speaker



Exercise: the six word story

I thought this would never happen.

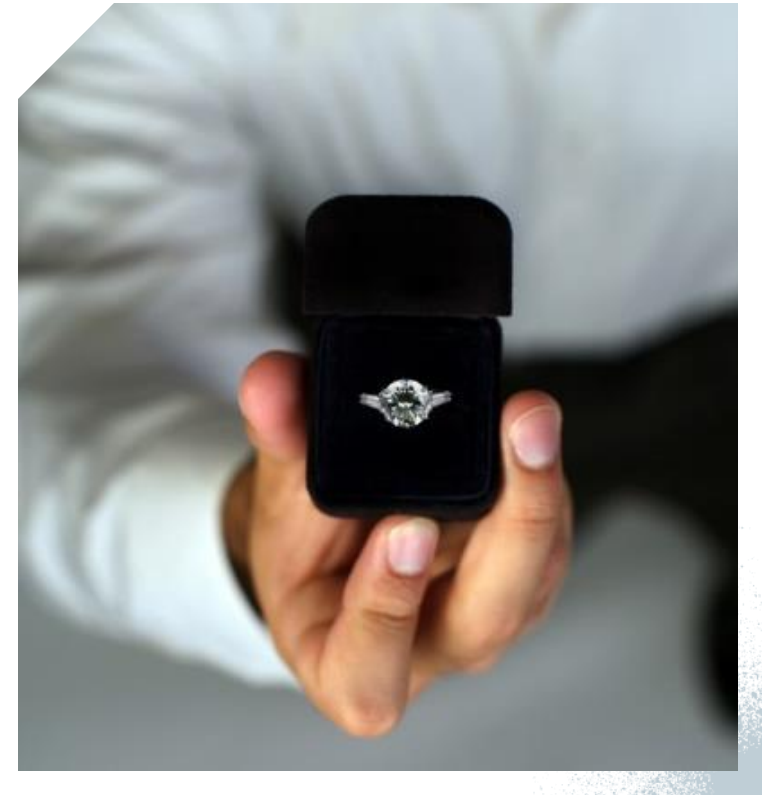
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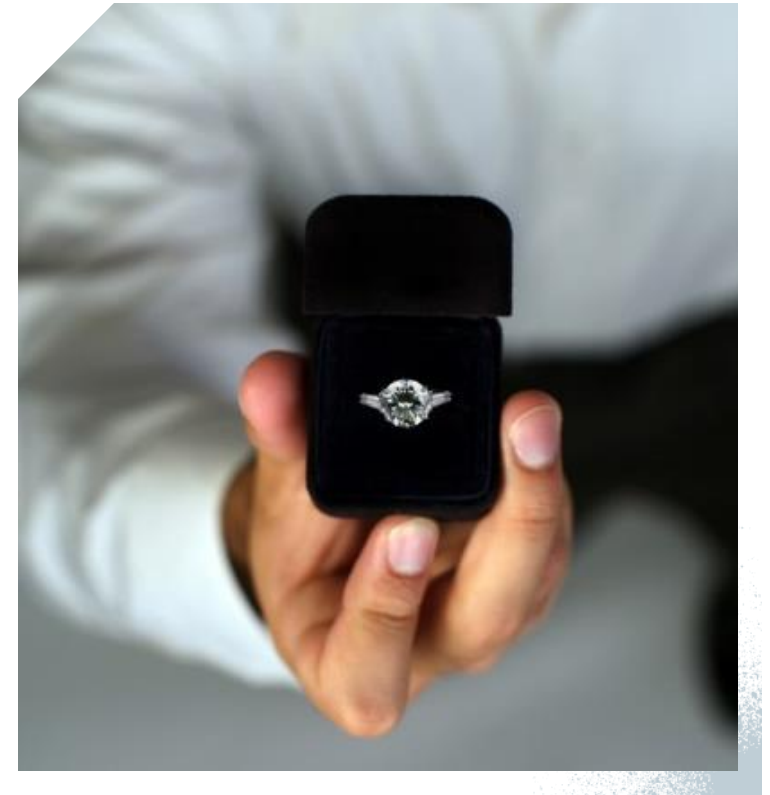
- Has a specific point-of-view
- Starts during the action
- Tells us about the speaker
- Sets up a mystery
- Subverts expectations



Exercise: the six word story

I've wanted but dreaded this moment.

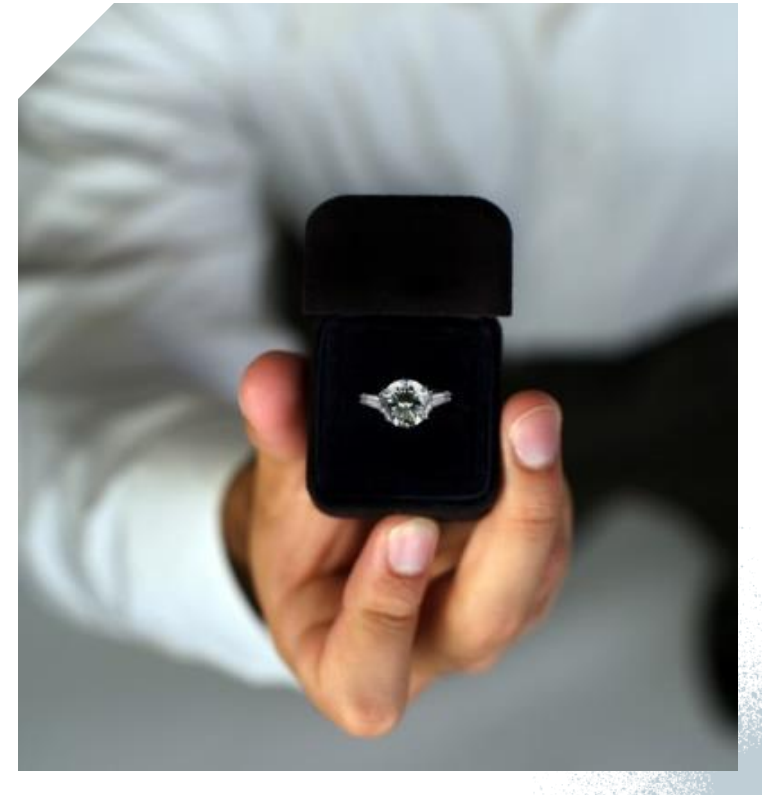
- Has a specific point-of-view
- Starts during the action
- Tells us about the speaker
- Sets up a mystery
- Subverts expectations
- Establishes a conflict



Exercise: the six word story

Well, I can't tell him now.

- Has a specific point-of-view
- Starts during the action
- Tells us about the speaker
- Subverts expectations
- Establishes a conflict
- Sets up a big mystery that takes us in a new direction



Exercise: the six word story

STORYTELLING TACTICS



- Tell a specific story with a specific point-of-view.
- Use details to convey meaning.
- Start during the action.
- Subvert expectations.
- Establish a conflict.
- Set up a puzzle or mystery.



Blog: example

Hi –

Dr. Presley did it again! Please see that news of the attached grant makes it onto our website.



Blog: example

The Association for Music in Prisons (AMP), the world's leading organization for the advancement of music composed or distributed in prisons, is pleased to bestow a grant of \$15,000 on Dr. Elvis Presley for his research on Jailhouse Rocking. His landmark paper "Everybody in the Whole Cell Block" convinced our board of the worthiness of his research, and AMP is proud to support Dr. Presley's continued study.

- Faculty accomplishment
- Specific to a certain time
- Supports the following goals:
sharing information, faculty recruitment, student recruitment
- **Perfect for the blog**



Blog: example

Challenges

- Scholarly tone
- Told from association's perspective
- Doesn't communicate the point of his research or why it matters
- **Need more information**

Storytelling tactics

- Tell specific story with specific point-of-view.
- Start during the action.
- Use details to convey something about the subject.
- Subvert expectations.
- Establish a conflict.
- Set up a puzzle or mystery.



Blog: example

REACH OUT TO DR. PRESLEY

- What is the purpose of this project?
- How will the funds be used?
- What have you learned by working on this project?
- What surprised you?
- What do you want others to understand about it?
- Do you have any photos or videos to share? **Really want this.**

Blog: example

Untapped talent in an unexpected place

It's easy to think of prison as the end of all opportunity, but Dr. Elvis Presley finds that it can also mark a beginning. He worked with inmates who discovered their musical talent only after being incarcerated.

"For many of them, it was their first chance to slow down and produce this beautiful music," Presley said. "I was just there to listen, but when I realized the quality, I started taping it on my phone! Then I brought in real equipment to record demos."

Presley used those recordings to help two past participants find jobs in the music industry once they were released.

Recognition from AMP

Presley feared he'd have to quit listening when his project ran out of funding. Thanks to a \$15,000 grant from the Association for Music in Prisons (AMP), his study will continue for at least two more years.

According to Presley, "AMP is making it possible for me to support people who are looking for a happier and more fulfilling way of life. This work fundamentally changes lives—including mine."



A recent participant in Dr. Presley's study, enjoying his new position as a session musician at Sun Records.

Specific point-of-view

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Start during the action

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Use details to convey meaning

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Subvert expectations

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Establish a conflict

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Blog: using formatting strategies

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Recognition from AMP

Internal sub-heading

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Hyperlink

Lead with strength

Photo



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One idea per paragraph



So what can I take away?

- Does your blog **tell a story**?
 - Who is speaking?
 - How are you conveying meaning?
 - Conflict? Subvert expectations?
- Define your audiences and goals.
 - Get input from stakeholders; write the goals down.
- Use the formatting strategies.
- **Update your blog**; set a goal of one post per week.
- Use the storytelling tactics to engage readers.
- Use the resources; share this information with others.