

# How storytelling enhances the sales process

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From a very early age on I was fascinated by fairy tales and stories. Storytelling is essential in a consultative sales environment. It helps you connect with your prospects and it is a great way to add value rather than pushing a feature.

In a consultative B2B environment we are often faced with a situation where we are selling the invisible. There is no physical product we can showcase when we are prospecting on the phone and we are challenged to connect with a prospect in a short period of time.

Telling stories and sharing best practices gives us an opportunity to communicate a business objective in a fashion where people can relate.

## Remember 1001 nights?

When I was a kid I loved the idea of people gathering in a tent or square and listening to stories. Still to this day I remember the dinner parties best where people were telling stories, sharing, laughing, showing compassion or just simply cracking a joke. It's fairy tales and stories that shape our thinking, they trigger our imagination and fuel our creativity. As adults it's not that different, we are always drawn to stories that we can relate to.

When I started out in sales, I had come from a public relations/marketing background with no credentials in sales so I decided to do what I liked best - listening to stories. I researched case studies and told my prospects about the success that other companies had when using our service. It worked!

## Why?

Because people like to listen to stories, they can relate to them. Product features are boring to people unless they can use them to their advantage. Nobody wants to listen to you bragging about your company, your service, how good you are, etc. What people are interested in is what your service can do for them and how it will help their business.

## If you don't have something to show, share a story

In a B2B environment, you often don't have a product to show and you need to rely on anecdotes to get people interested, especially when you first engage with a prospect. The key question is "What do the clients do with the service you provide?"

What better way to explain than sharing success stories.

## Why is it easier to sell a story than a product or service?

Rather than selling a service, focus on the value it brings to the client and the human experience. Instead of selling a service that is "better", offer a solution that helps increase efficiencies. Especially in a consultative sales environment, once we are able to tap into somebody's emotion, it's a lot easier to connect. Never forget that it is human beings you are targeting. Although you are trying to sell them something, you are also an advisor, a consultant in the true sense, a resource to help them make the right decision.

When telling stories, it is important that you own them and make them yours. Be personal, just like a dinner conversation. First, listen to your prospects, then choose a case study/story that you think will resonate with their needs and I can assure you that your prospects will listen. Everybody likes stories...

## ABOUT MONIKA D'AGOSTINO

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