

STORYTELLING MADE EASY

Persuade and Transform
Your Audiences, Buyers and
Clients—Simply, Quickly,
and Profitably

MICHAEL HAUGE



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PRAISE FOR *STORYTELLING MADE EASY*

No one is better than Michael Hauge at finding what is most authentic in every moment of a story.

—**Will Smith, star of *Men in Black*, *I Am Legend*, *Ali*, *The Pursuit of Happyness*, *Suicide Squad*, *Bright***

Michael Hauge has a masterful ability to help speakers, writers and marketers uncover the emotional potential of any story. He speaks and writes with the authority of a seasoned Hollywood screenwriting expert, and with his natural humor and likeability, helps us all apply those same powerful principles to our own speeches and storytelling.

—**Patricia Fripp, past president, National Speakers Association, Hall of Fame keynote speaker, presentation skills expert**

When I first met Michael and heard his six-step approach to story, I thought it was amazing. We incorporated his principles into our ClickFunnels software, which now has more than 30,000 active customers and creates millions of dollars a month in sales. Don't miss out on this terrific book!

—**Russell Brunson, owner of *DotComSecrets.com* and *ClickFunnels*, Internet expert and super affiliate, author of *Expert Secrets* and *DotCom Secrets: The Underground Playbook for Growing Your Company Online***

I've seen firsthand with my mastermind group how Michael helps C-level executives formulate and transform their stories quickly and easily. Now you can as well with this simple but powerful book.

—Ron Karr, creator of the **IMPACT! Formula**, author of *Lead, Sell or Get Out of the Way: The Seven Traits of Great Sellers*

Storytelling Made Easy is brilliant! I've never met anyone that gets more excited about story than Michael Hauge. He understands, on a deep, visceral level, how to elicit that emotional impact your story must have. I can think of no better person to help you make magic happen.

—Andre Chaperon, **Internet marketing legend. Writer. Author.**
Entrepreneur: tinylittlebusinesses.com

Keep this book within arm's reach at all times. Michael Hauge is a master at crafting stories that will increase your impact, your influence, your income, and your ability to promote your company, product, service or event.

—Mark LeBlanc, **past president, National Speakers Association**, author of *Never Be the Same* and *Growing Your Business*

Michael injects his Hollywood magic into your stories with just six simple steps. If you're looking to make your message more compelling and desirable, and to evoke a positive response from your prospects, then get your hands on this book!

—Matt Bacak, **The Profit Coalition, 2010 Internet Marketer of the Year**, author of *Secrets of the Internet Millionaire Mind*, *Marketing Sidekick*, and *Everyday Heroes*

This book is dedicated, with deepest gratitude, to those of you who, through the power of story, have transformed my life:

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INTRODUCTION

Why Success Stories?

Are you a business executive? Salesperson? Consultant? Internet marketer?

Are you a public speaker, or do you give presentations in the corporate arena?

Do you write nonfiction books that guide people toward greater business or personal success, or greater happiness and fulfillment?

Do you use the media to establish yourself as an expert in your field, and to draw potential clients or customers?

Whatever your career or commercial endeavor, your job is always the same: you're a *problem solver*.

Every dollar (or peso or euro or yen or farthing or clam shell) ever spent, in every transaction ever made, was because someone had a problem they wanted solved. Something was broken and needed fixing, someone was sick and needed healing, someone was bored and needed entertaining, or someone didn't feel safe enough or wealthy enough or smart enough or sexy enough.

And the recipients of all that money were the sellers of the products or services or experiences that buyers thought could solve their problems.

Why did those buyers want their problems (or their perceived problems) solved—or at least lessened?

Just one reason: they believed doing so would make them *feel* better.

They thought that if they—or their loved ones—had more money, or success, or possessions, or education, or fame, or approval, or excitement, or tranquility, or redemption, or laughter, then they would feel happier, or healthier, or safer, or more content or more fulfilled.

And they believed that the person or product or service they chose was the best one to provide that feeling.

In other words, any time someone pays you—or your company—they're making an emotional decision.

So, imagine if every time you gave a speech, or wrote a marketing e-mail, or published a book, or made a sales pitch, or tried to inspire an employee, you gave your audiences or readers or potential buyers the emotional experience of solving their problems?

What if you could give them an actual taste of the relief or the satisfaction or the happiness or the success that you're promising?

You can—by simply taking the steps that follow.

Stories That Sell

When added to speeches and marketing campaigns, stories increase e-mail response rates, client enrollments, product sales and revenue.

Why? Because well-told stories accomplish a multitude of benefits:

- They entertain
- They educate
- They inspire
- They hold the interest of listeners and readers
- They create a stronger connection between audiences and storytellers
- They deliver information in a simpler, more involving way than facts, figures, and diagrams
- And they move people to *action*

But they also achieve one more powerful goal: they give listeners and readers the emotional experience of success.

Almost anyone involved in sales or marketing or public speaking of any kind is already telling lots of success stories. But often these anecdotes and case studies are either overly brief, focusing only on the buyer's results ("Lily Rosebottom bought our new FatBeGone pill and lost fifty pounds!"), or they go on and on, meandering repetitively without clearly defined goals, conflicts, or outcomes for their characters.

Such stories can still entice buyers, but seldom will they sustain the interest of potential customers and clients, add real credibility to the product or service being offered, or overcome all the obstacles that stand between you and financial success.

A truly effective story must possess certain key elements, and must be presented in such a way that your potential buyer, client, or subscriber identifies with the hero of that story, and experiences the emotion of the story through that character.

When you tell a story about someone whose life was improved or transformed by your product, process or principles, your potential buyers must feel the way your hero felt when he succeeded.

With such a properly told success story, your target market has already experienced—on a subconscious level—the positive feelings that you are promising. And those feelings will move these

potential customers closer to paying for your service or your product or your process.

In the pages that follow, this is the kind of story you will learn to create—simply, powerfully and profitably.

The Hollywood Lesson

My background is in Hollywood. I've written two books, created about a dozen audio and video products, and spoken to more than 80,000 people around the world about the process of writing and selling stories and screenplays.

And for more than thirty-five years I have worked with screenwriters, producers, studios, and movie stars, helping them create film and television scripts that will touch people deeply and powerfully.

When my clients incorporate the principles that follow into their scripts and films, they create a shift in the emotional state of audiences around the world, offering them the opportunity to connect with their own humanity, and transform their own lives.

So, what does this have to do with marketing stories?

Simply this: in 2016 Hollywood generated more than \$11,000,000,000 in box office revenue. (That's 11 billion, if you lost count of all the zeroes.)

And that's just in the United States and Canada.

If you add worldwide box office, plus US revenue from all forms of video as well—DVD, online, and television—that number more than quadruples.

How does Hollywood do this?

By knowing how to tell stories, and by giving audiences the opportunity to feel something deeply. Because film and television makers understand that the primary objective of any storyteller must be to *elicit emotion*.

Movies are magic—they have the power to change people's thoughts and feelings, and to raise consciousness throughout the world.

In the pages that follow, I want to share with you a bottled version of this magic, so that you can change the hearts and minds of your prospects, and ultimately help them make buying decisions that can transform their lives.

The storytelling principles and methods Hollywood uses aren't limited to movies and TV. They are universal. They will elicit emotion and move audiences and readers to take action regardless of how they're packaged.

This means that when you follow the process I reveal in this book, you'll be using the same magic formula that Hollywood has been using so successfully for more than a century.

What to Expect From This Book

My goal is to remove the fear, frustration, and overwhelmed feeling that can accompany the thought of writing or telling stories—especially if you're not a professional storyteller.

Using the Six Step Success Story process will give you a powerful tool that you can use easily, repeatedly, and profitably. It will empower you to:

- Select the type of story best suited to your product or service
- Develop that story to skillfully target your prospective buyers, your potential clients, your audiences, or your associates
- Identify the most effective hero for each story you tell
- Apply the most effective overall structure to each story
- Employ the six steps of every successful success story
- Easily master a simple, entertaining, and persuasive writing style that is uniquely your own—even if you got Ds in English, and you don't think you can write a decent grocery list, let alone a compelling story

- Apply the principles of great storytelling within a variety of arenas: e-mails, speeches, instructional stories, videos, podcasts, and testimonials
- Apply the principles of wound, fear, identity, essence, and courage to move your readers and audiences toward more connected and fulfilling lives

That's a tall order, I know, but after witnessing the power of storytelling on readers, audiences, and writers for almost four decades, I truly believe all these rewards are within your grasp.

Storyphobia

I'm guessing that by now you're thinking:

"Of course, storytelling is essential to being successful. I've been hearing that since I started working. But I'm not a storyteller! I don't have a gift for it. I get confused or overwhelmed when I try to learn it, and terrified at the thought of doing it. What do you expect me to do?"

I know that the thought of anyone reading a story you wrote—or even worse, hearing you try to tell one on stage or in a meeting—can be terrifying.

But it doesn't have to be. The Six Step Success Story process isn't advanced calculus, and it definitely

doesn't require high-level writing skills (which can actually diminish the power of your story). It only requires your willingness to give it a try.

Once you do, creating success stories will actually be fun. And you'll be able to transform the lives of a lot more people.

How to Use This Book

Here is how I recommend you make the best use of the principles and tools that follow:

1. Download your free Success Story Mind Map by going to www.StoryMastery.com/mindmap.
2. Read through chapter 1, just to get an overall sense of where we're headed.
3. Starting with chapter 2, select a single success story or case study about someone who has benefitted from the product or service or process you are marketing, or that you believe will change people's lives. (The chapter will give you a lot more guidance in how to do this.)
4. Develop this one story as you go through and learn the essential tools for writing about this person's (or this company's) journey to success. In other words, write the first draft of

this story as you progress through chapters 2 through 7.

5. Using the techniques in chapter 8, rewrite the story to sharpen its style, structure, and power.
6. When the story is as good as you can get it (which doesn't mean perfect—you're still in learning mode), ask some friends, colleagues, mentors, or satisfied clients to take a look and give you honest feedback.
7. While you're awaiting their responses, read the rest of this book.
8. Use the feedback you get to do a final polish of your story.
9. Send the story into the world—in an e-mail, a speech, a company presentation, or a blog. (This will probably be a scary step, so first read chapter 12: Your Own Hero's Journey.)
10. Begin the process again with your next story—this time an autobiographical story about a past success of your own.
11. From there on, just keep applying the principles to new success stories, and to the

other forms of storytelling that will grow your business to even greater levels of success and fulfillment.

12. As you continue increasing your expertise (and success!) at creating and employing stories, keep visiting www.StoryMastery.com to gain additional tools and insights, and to learn about opportunities to work with me directly.

That's it. Time to start your journey into powerful—and profitable—storytelling.

CHAPTER 1

The Six Steps

Every story ever told, ever written, or ever shown on a stage or a screen, is built on a foundation of three essential elements:

Character

Desire

Conflict

In every movie and TV episode, every novel and short story, every play, opera, epic poem, and fairy tale, a character (or characters) wants to achieve some compelling goal, and must overcome difficult obstacles to do so.

This character—the hero of the story—is our vehicle through which we experience the story. His or her desire propels the story to its resolution, and the conflict creates the emotion.

Whether it's Romeo wanting Juliet, Winnie the Pooh wanting some honey, a stranded astronaut wanting to survive on Mars, or a chemistry teacher wanting to provide for his family by selling crystal

meth, when we read or see these stories, we subconsciously become these characters as they pursue their desires. And we feel for them because of the obstacles they must overcome.

Therein lies the power of stories: they give us emotional experiences outside the bounds of our everyday lives. We laugh, or cry, or get scared, or fall in love, or tap our hidden powers because we inhabit the stories we hear. *We* are the ones having those adventures, and facing those obstacles, just as those characters do.

And so it is with stories used for marketing, or persuading, or inspiring. They get readers and audiences not just to think, but also to feel.

Whether or not a prospective customer or client or crowd takes action—whether they hire you or buy your product or follow your advice—is ultimately an emotional decision. So, the more emotionally involving your stories, the more successful you will be.

The ways you accomplish this goal—the methods for making your stories powerful and persuasive—are basically the same for you as they are for successful novelists and screenwriters and filmmakers. Because your stories, like theirs, are built on those same elements of character, desire,

and conflict. And your stories, like theirs, will always follow the same basic *structure*.

Plot Structure

Story structure—or plot structure—determines the sequence of events in any story.

Your goal as a storyteller is to maximize the positive emotional experience for your readers or audiences. By skillfully addressing the questions, “*What Happens?*” and “*When Does It Happen?*” you ensure that your potential buyers will connect with your hero, root for that character through the entire story, and celebrate his or her victory. And then they will want to replicate that hero’s success in their own lives.

I’ve been teaching and coaching writers and filmmakers about structure since I began working in Hollywood. And while the basic formula for movie structure is fairly easy to explain, mastering all the variations and layers and principles involved takes a good amount of practice.

So, for our purposes, I’ve made it a lot simpler: success story structure consists of just six simple steps.

Six Step Success Stories™ are built on the six “stops” your hero must make on her journey to victory—the

six story beats that will also ensure your own success as a storyteller.

When I use the term hero I simply mean the protagonist or main character of your story. This is the man or woman (or in some instances, the couple) whose desire will drive the story forward. It's the person we're rooting for.

I use the terms "customer," "client," "subject," and "case study" interchangeably, because every one of these refers to the main character or protagonist of the story you're telling. These are the people whose success was the result of the product or process or coaching that you're marketing.

Similarly, you'll see me use the words "potential buyer," "potential client," "reader," "listener," and "audience" to refer to the people reading your success story (if you're presenting it in a book, blog, or marketing e-mail) or hearing it (in your speech or webinar or recording or face-to-face meeting). Just substitute whichever of these terms applies to your own situation.

Because a hero can be either gender, I will sometimes refer to the hero as "he" and sometimes "she." That way you won't have to keep reading the cumbersome phrases "he or she" or "his or her." Trust me, you'll thank me for this.

The six simple steps will form the spine of every story you tell. And whether your goal is making a sale, landing a new client or inspiring an audience, these six steps are essential to achieving your desired outcome.

A Glimpse of the Six Steps

To give you an overview of where we're headed, what you will learn, and the process you will master, here are all six steps in sequence, with a very brief description of what you will accomplish with each one.

► STEP ONE: The Setup

You will begin your story by revealing the everyday life your hero was living before he heard about—or began using—your product or service. This “before picture” will create empathy for your hero, so your readers and audiences can experience his success on an emotional level.

► STEP TWO: The Crisis

Once you've painted a picture of your hero's former everyday life, you will reveal the single event that forced him to solve his problem—the moment where things got so desperate, or the prospect of change became so appealing, that he had to do something.

But before he could move forward, your hero had

to formulate a specific goal, and then figure out how he was going to solve his problem and achieve that outcome. So, you'll reveal how he researched, and hesitated, and asked a lot of questions, and considered other alternatives, until he finally chose you or your company or your product or your process to achieve it.

► **STEP THREE: Pursuit**

Here you present the actual steps your hero took to accomplish his goal. This will give your potential buyer a clear (and emotionally involving) picture of what using your product or service, or what following your advice, entails.

► **STEP FOUR: Conflict**

Along with your hero's forward progress, you must also reveal the external and internal obstacles he faced as he followed your program or used your product. It's the conflict in the story that elicits emotion in your audience. And by including the hurdles and setbacks that your hero encountered—and overcame—you will give your buyers the emotional experience of solving problems they are already anticipating (and worrying about).

► **STEP FIVE: The Climax**

This will be the peak moment of your story—the victory your hero was striving for, and that your

readers and listeners have been rooting for: when your hero overcomes that final obstacle, crosses the finish line—and wins!

► **STEP SIX: The Aftermath**

This is simply the “after picture” of your hero’s story—the new life he is living as a result of achieving his goal. It will show your readers and audiences the future that can be theirs if they only follow in your hero’s footsteps.

That’s it. These are the six simple steps of a great story.

Now let’s explore each of these elements in detail as I guide you through the Six Step Success Story process.