

# 10 Immutable Laws of Storytelling

Source: The Ten Immutable Laws of Storytelling, Free Range Thinking by Andy Goodman, June 2007

## 1. Stories are about people

- No matter what the topic, relate back to people (or animals)
- All about the individual, give them a name
- Eg./ Policy think tank – laws still effect people

## 2. The people in the story have to want something

- Gives them a reason to care and follow the story
- What does your “hero” want to do or need?

## 3. Stories need to be fixed in time and space

- Gives audience their bearings so they can paint the picture
- Today, last week, 5 years ago -- Austin, New York, California?
- Allows us to engage the “emotional” brain
- Bonus – tie the story into current headlines or community issue

## 4. Let characters speak for themselves

- Lends authenticity and connection
- Makes them part of the scene

## 5. Audiences bore easily

- Hook them right away, like an action movie
- Make them want to know “How is this going to turn out?”

## 10 Immutable Laws of Storytelling

Source: The Ten Immutable Laws of Storytelling, Free Range Thinking by Andy Goodman, June 2007

### 6. Stories speak the audiences language

- Use the words and tone that your audience will understand
- Slang can establish connection between teller and listener

### 7. Stories stir up emotions

- Remember, its emotion first -->> then rationality
- You need to get above the noise, emotion is the hook

### 8. Stories don't tell – They Show

- Paint a vivid picture, as if they are right there
- Share all 5 senses
- Use photos and video
- May need help with this one

### 9. Stories have at least one “moment of truth”

- We all want to see the insight, the truth, and how it applies to us

### 10. Stories have a clear meaning

- What was this story all about?
- If the audience can't answer that question then you did not do your job