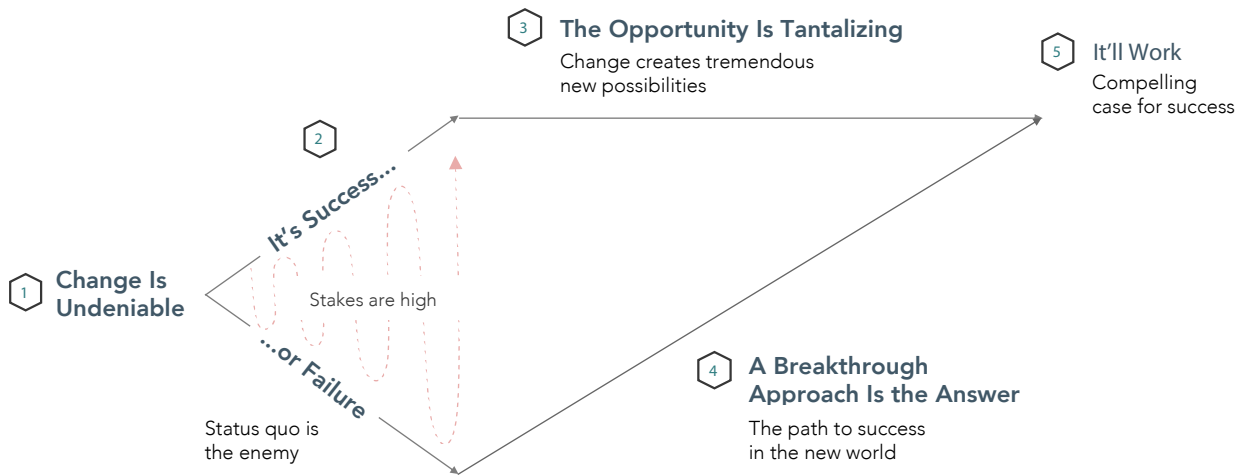


How to Tell a Convincing Story

Sellers who do insight selling well follow the same story format to bring new possibilities alive for buyers. We call this a Convincing Story.



1. Why Act?

2. Why Now?

3. Why Us?

4. Why Trust?

1. CHANGE IS UNDENIABLE

Build rapport and establish credibility by demonstrating keen insight into the buyer's world.

2. SUCCESS VS. FAILURE

Establish the current state and why it's not good enough. The heart of every action and change—and a key component of insight selling—is the desire to be in a new and different place. At the same time, remind the buyer of the possibilities that seem out of their reach. Do this effectively and you build their desire to achieve success.

3. TANTALIZING OPPORTUNITY

Communicate results and create excitement around the new possibilities. Many sellers know how to tell a return on investment (ROI) story, but few do everything they should to communicate the full power of the impact.

4. BREAKTHROUGH! INTRODUCE A NEW HOPE

Just when the buyer feels resigned to a life in the Pit of Despair—where many (like them) are stuck—you show them a different path. A path others have taken to successfully climb out of the pit. A new hope! When buyers see what others achieved when they made a change, they'll want to achieve the same. An outcome of insight selling is helping buyers see that your knowledge, collaboration, and partnership in the journey is essential for their success.

5. IT'LL WORK

Collaborate for action. Most sellers recommend action, specifically a next step. Few, however, build in collaboration. When buyers feel like sellers collaborate with them, they're much more likely to buy, and to buy from that particular seller. At this point, your call to action is to invite discussion and collaboration.

Many sellers try to move too quickly to make a sale. Jumping from here to a sale is a big leap. By asking only for a commitment to collaborate, you shorten that leap with a steppingstone that moves you closer to the sale and increases its likelihood of happening. Collaboration builds trust, which is essential when building confidence and selling an idea.

Prepare Your Convincing Story

The difference between success and failure when you're trying to inspire buyers with a Convincing Story often lies in preparation. You must actively prepare the Convincing Story—which means actively preparing your delivery.

Do your homework to address frequently overlooked elements of delivery by asking yourself:

- Is it early in the process, when a more general discussion is more appropriate? Or is it late stage, when a more specific and customized presentation, like a proposal for business, would be better?
- Have I attended to the basics?
 - Answered what do I want them to learn?
 - Answered what do I want them to feel?
 - Answered what do want them to do?
 - Prepared to show previous similar results that'll build confidence the buyer can achieve them too?
 - Coupled a focus on ROI—the potential gain—with fear of loss to help buyers see the risk of inaction?
 - Built a custom ROI case?
- How much background on the buyer's strategy do I have for a) relevance, and b) impressiveness?
- Do I know key items on the agenda of the specific executives who will attend the meeting?
- Do I have insights into stakeholders and how to succeed communicating with them?
- Am I prepared to interact?
 - Do I know how and where?
 - Do I have questions planned?
- Am I ready to lead an effective collaborative discussion using the [4 Stages of Structured Problem Solving](#) if that becomes important?
- Does my marketing group have slides, visuals, or layouts of anything I can use so I don't re-invent or re-create materials?
- Where and how do I need to make something visually appealing?
- Will I present with:
 - Slides?
 - White board?
 - Virtually, with either slides or white board or something else?
 - Only verbally?
 - Something else, like video or a special visual element?
- Have I practiced? Do I need to?
- Am I going alone or is there a compelling reason to bring someone else?
- Am I prepared for common reactions and questions?
- Am I prepared for specific reactions and questions based on my knowledge of the audience and their thinking or styles?

Preparation builds your confidence, which translates into building confidence for the buyer that they'll achieve the results you've shown are possible by working with you.

The 3 Outcomes of a *Convincing Story*

The **Convincing Story** framework will help you achieve the three outcomes you need to sell an idea: learn, feel, and do. Here we outline the specific things you should be thinking about to achieve these three outcomes in your sales conversations.

1. LEARN

- Current state is not good enough.
- There is a compelling reason to change the status quo.
- Possible New Reality is much more desirable.
- The rational impact (the ROI) is clear.
- The path to the New Reality requires different thinking and action.
- They've seen that results are achievable if the solution is delivered and implemented well.
- They understand the urgency of the issue.
- They understand your solution and your company.
- You have their attention.
- You've piqued their curiosity.
- The solution you've presented is unique and cannot be replicated by another provider.

2. FEEL

- They feel the frustrations, problems, and difficulties of the current state.
- They desire the possible New Reality and everything that comes with it (e.g., money, success, attention, relief, happiness).
- They envy those who have what they don't.
- They have confidence that you, your offering, and your company can help them get the results.
- They have confidence that the result is achievable and, at the same time, worth the risk.
- They're excited about the unique and creative approach you've presented.
- They're happy with what the future state will look like after working with you.

3. DO

- The call to action is crystal clear.
- They're collaborating with you to bring the New Reality to life.
- You have an anecdote prepared that builds on the emotional case of your solution.
- You have hard examples that demonstrate the impact and feasibility of your idea.
- You have an example impact analysis to start the discussion on details.
- You've thought about potential objections, and addressed them beforehand.
- You've substantiated your idea with case studies, research, analysis, and testimonials.