



Storytelling

The Life Blood of Effective Communication

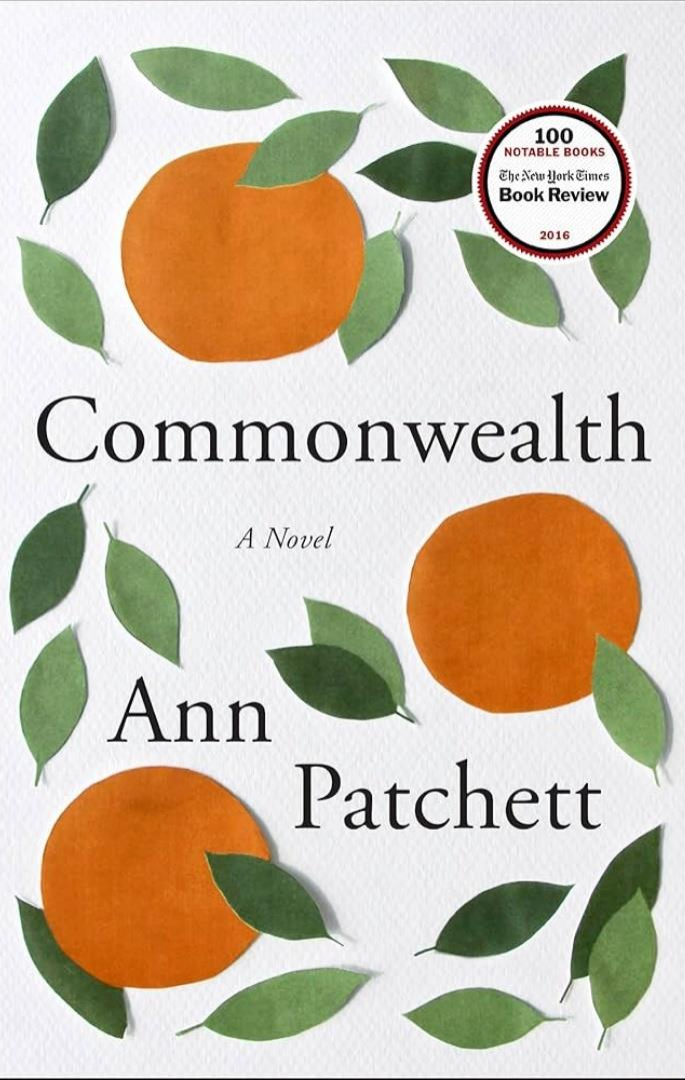
Joe Buccino

Attention is a scarce resource. Stories are the only way to win it.

WHEN **EVERY** WORD COUNTS

~~~~~  
**How to Earn Trust, Command  
Attention, and Communicate  
Clearly in Any Situation**

~~~~~  
JOE BUCCINO



How to be a great communicator

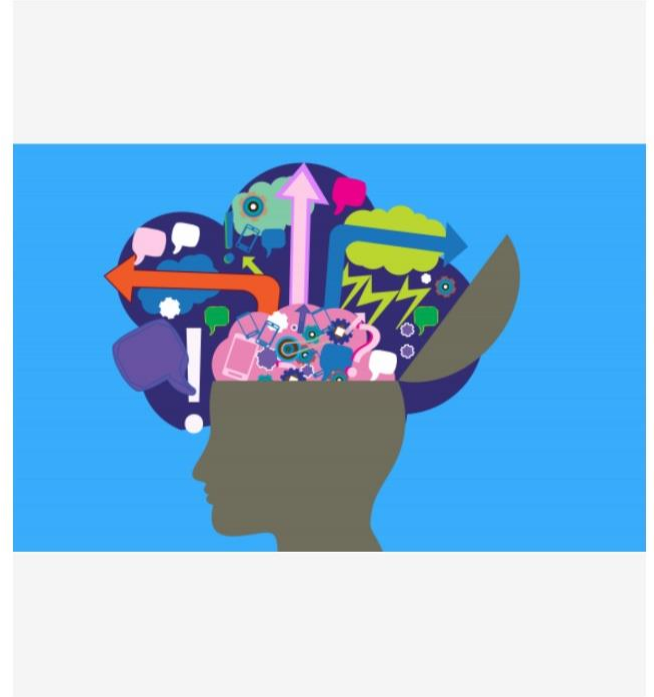
- ✓ **Put good stuff in your head**
- ✓ **Be kind to everyone you meet**
Kindness ---> Humility ---> Intellectual curiosity
- ✓ **Write Your Title First**
- ✓ **Sharpen Your Tools**
- ✓ **Stay Away From AI**
- ✓ **Tell a Story.**

The Value of Storytelling



Your Story Competes With

- Competitor Organizations
- Reporters' Attention
- Web Space
- Email (116 / day)
- Long-term Coverage
- Breaking News



THE MIND RECEIVES A STORY

NOT JUST INFORMATION.
A STORY.

Your brain is built to process
information through story.

— CREATED BY —

Joe Buccino

1 AUDITORY CORTEX
You hear the words. Sound is decoded.



2 WERNICKE'S AREA
Language is understood. Meaning is extracted.



3 TEMPORAL LOBE
Context, people, places, and events are recognized.



4 MEDIAL PREFRONTAL CORTEX
You relate it to yourself. It creates meaning.



5 LIMBIC SYSTEM (AMYGDALA & HIPPOCAMPUS)
Emotions are felt. Memories are formed.



6 PARIETAL LOBE
You visualize and embody the story.



7 MOTOR SYSTEM
You're inspired to respond. You act.



THE STORY PATHWAY



YOU HEAR
A STORY



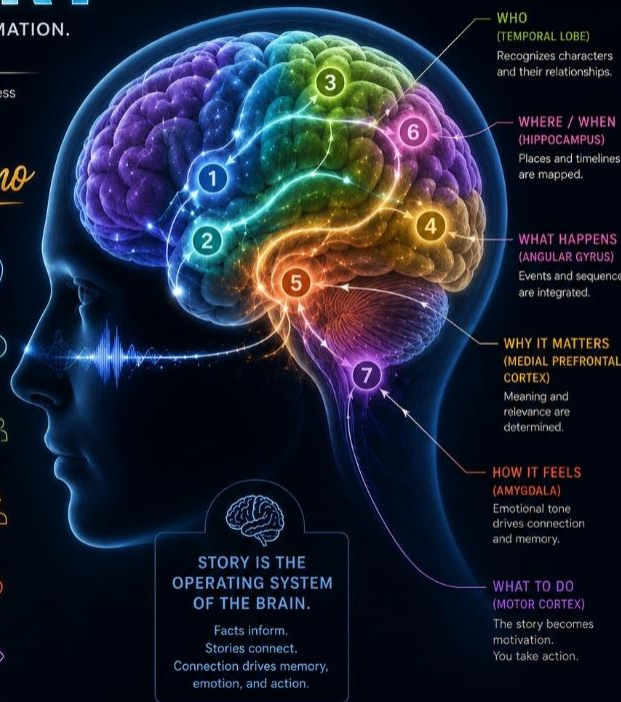
YOUR BRAIN
RECEIVES IT



IT ACTIVATES A
STORY NETWORK



YOU UNDERSTAND,
FEEL, REMEMBER,
AND ACT



**WHO
(TEMPORAL LOBE)**
Recognizes characters
and their relationships.

**WHERE / WHEN
(HIPPOCAMPUS)**
Places and timelines
are mapped.

**WHAT HAPPENS
(ANGULAR GYRUS)**
Events and sequence
are integrated.

**WHY IT MATTERS
(MEDIAL PREFRONTAL
CORTEX)**
Meaning and
relevance are
determined.

**HOW IT FEELS
(AMYGDALA)**
Emotional tone
drives connection
and memory.

**WHAT TO DO
(MOTOR CORTEX)**
The story becomes
motivation.
You take action.

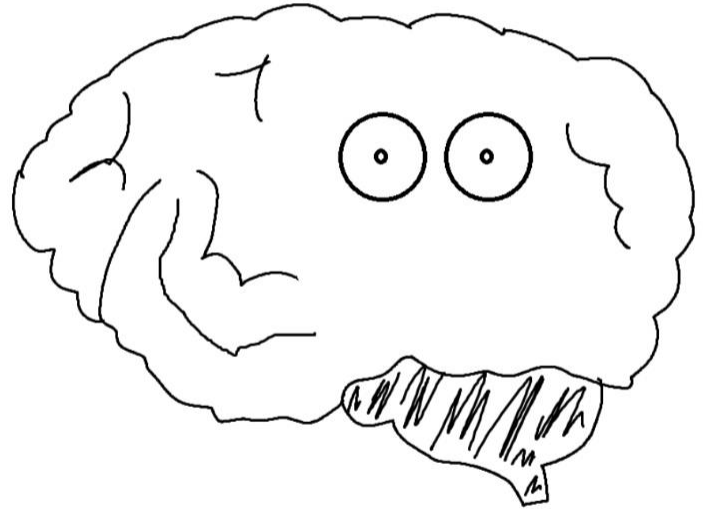
STORY IS THE
OPERATING SYSTEM
OF THE BRAIN.

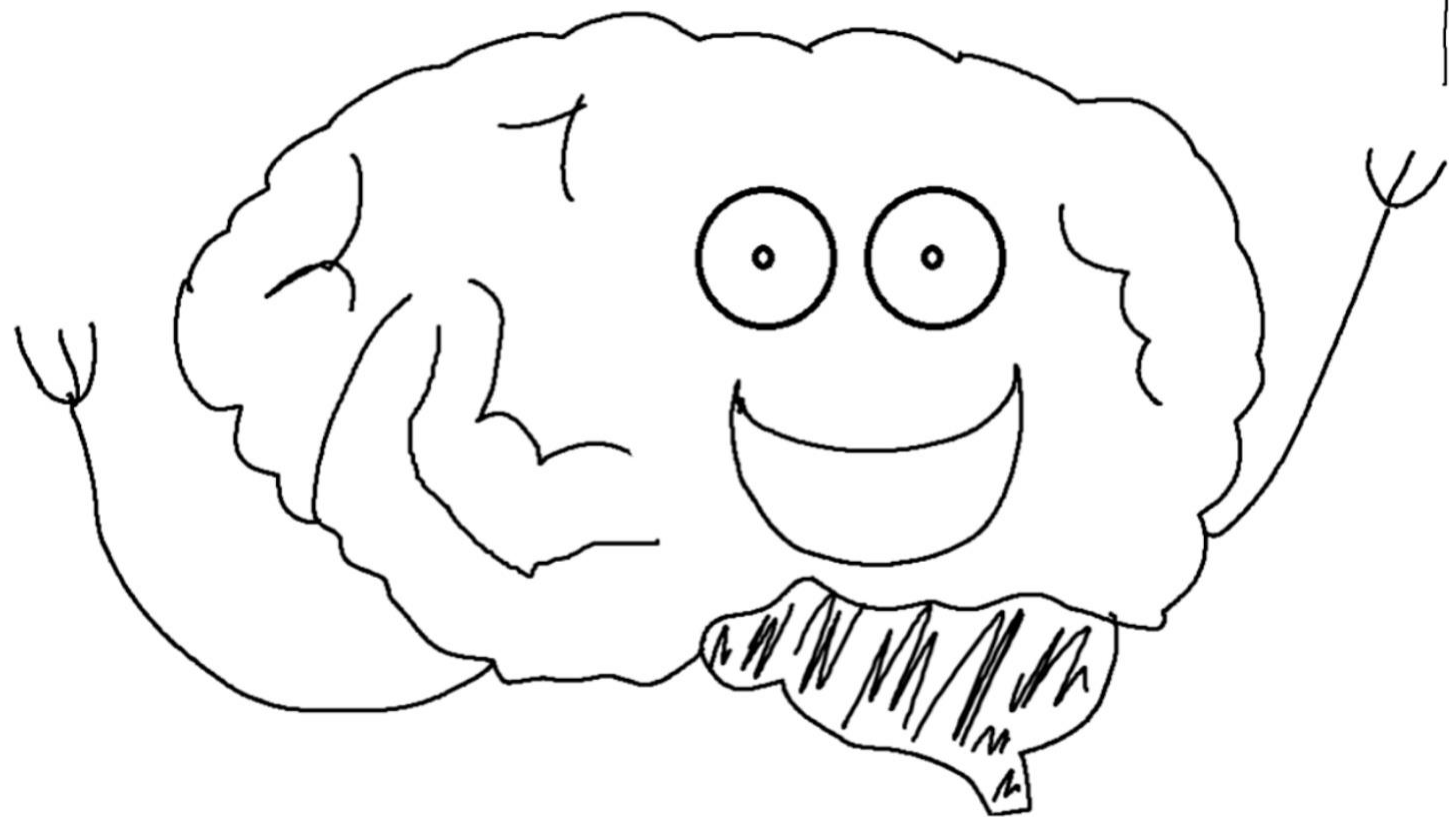
Facts inform.
Stories connect.
Connection drives memory,
emotion, and action.

GIVE THE BRAIN A STORY, AND IT WILL REMEMBER, FEEL, AND FOLLOW.

JOE BUCCINO

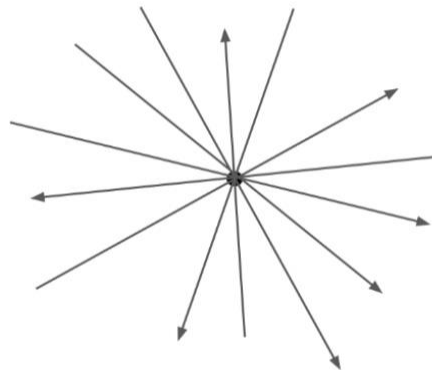
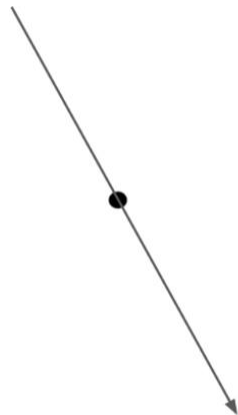
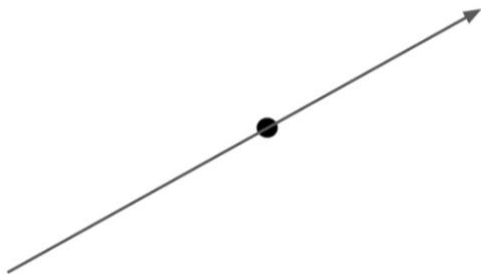
Hijacking Attention

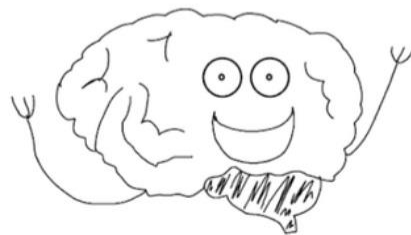
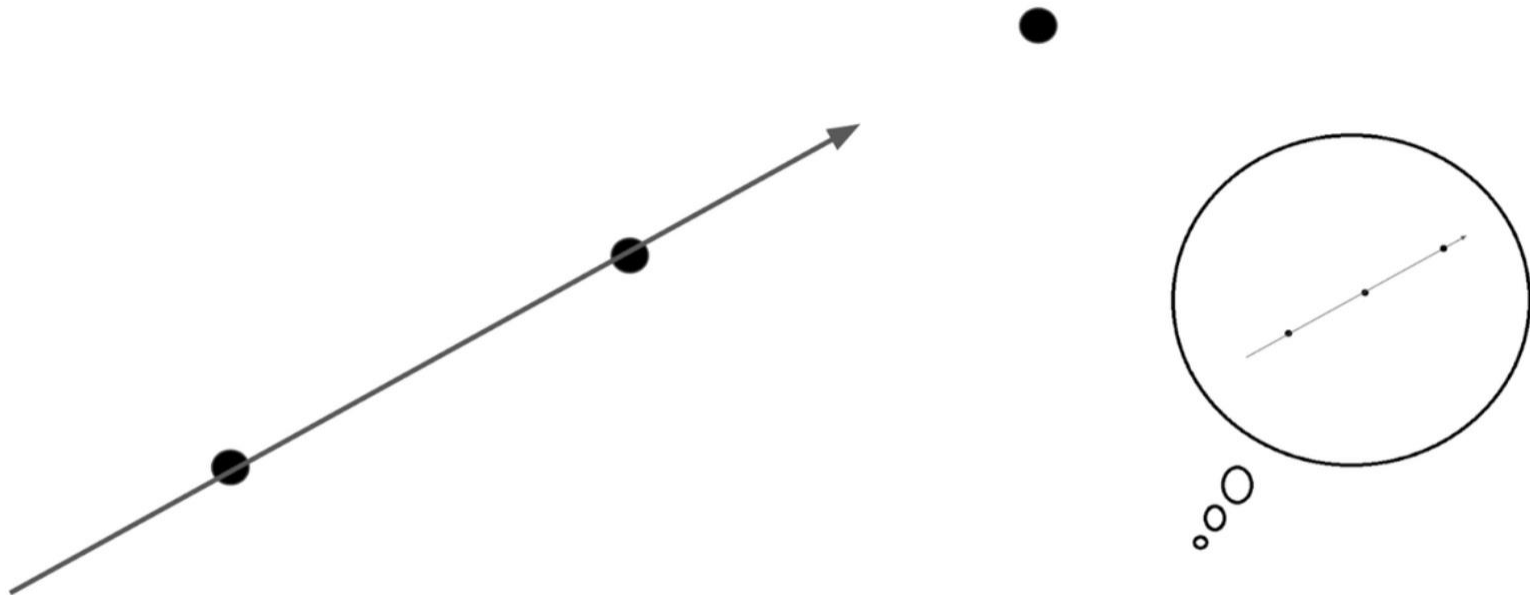




1, 2, 3







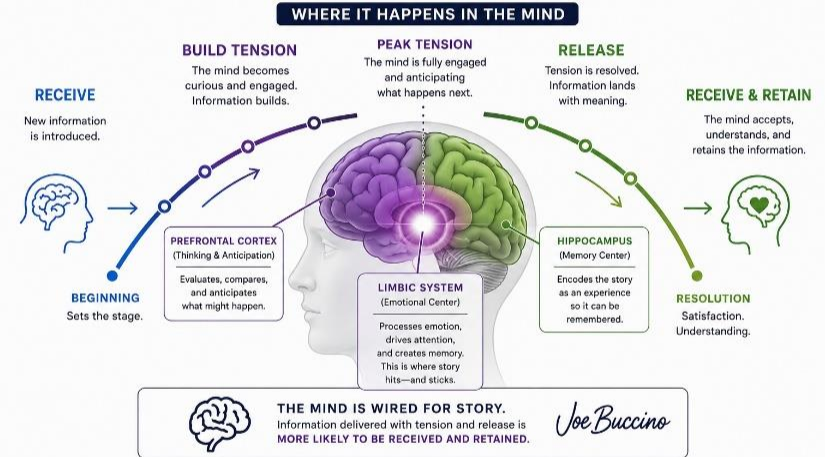
- **Statement 1**

Empower will institute a new CRM system.

- **Statement 2**

Right now, our sales team spends 40 percent of their time on data entry instead of selling. They are using three different systems that don't talk to each other. Last month, we lost a \$2 million deal because the account executive didn't know that customer service had logged five complaints from that same client.

THE MIND RECEIVES INFORMATION THROUGH STORY



**“We’re launching an enhanced
inspection and maintenance program
across our engine fleet.”**

Last quarter, an engineer identified a subtle wear pattern that wasn't causing failures—yet. Left alone, it would have stayed invisible for years. If it failed, it wouldn't fail on the ground. So we chose to act early—accepting disruption and cost—to prevent a headline we never want to see.



Last quarter, an engineer identified a subtle wear pattern that wasn't causing failures—yet. Left alone, it would have stayed invisible for years. If it failed, it wouldn't fail on the ground. So we chose to act early—accepting disruption and cost—to prevent a headline we never want to see.

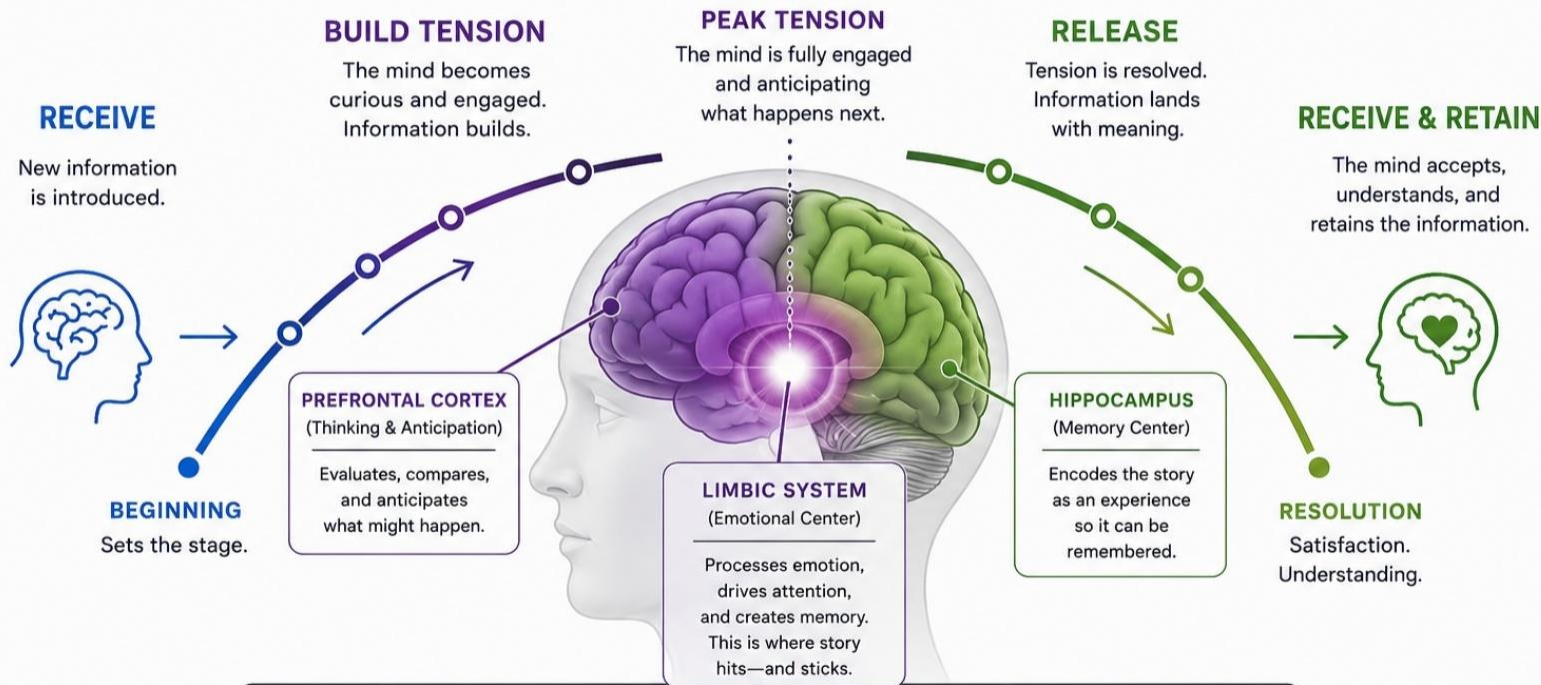
Tell A Story

Humanize the Issue



THE MIND RECEIVES INFORMATION THROUGH STORY

WHERE IT HAPPENS IN THE MIND



THE MIND IS WIRED FOR STORY.

Information delivered with tension and release is
MORE LIKELY TO BE RECEIVED AND RETAINED.

Joe Buccino

Immediately in the Conflict

Mickey Reeve stood up one morning last week and did something the young Army sergeant never thought he would do: He told the four-star general in charge of U.S. Central Command how to fix an issue facing the American military.

Gen. Michael Erik Kurilla sat in the center of a secure conference room and took a sip from his Centcom mug as he listened to Sgt. Reeve discuss the deadly threat of enemy drones. He was flanked by senior military officials and tech executives, but Gen. Kurilla's attention was focused on this nervous soldier with a fraction of his authority who had flown over from the Middle East for this moment. He wanted to hear more.

"This is a significant problem," he said. "You've come up with an idea to help us solve that problem."

FULL STORY ARC

Problem

Mickey Reeve stood up one morning last week and **did something the young Army sergeant never thought he would do**: He told the four-star general in charge of U.S. Central Command how to fix an issue facing the American military.

Pressure

Gen. Michael Erik Kurilla sat in the center of a secure conference room and took a sip from his Centcom mug as he listened to Sgt. Reeve discuss the deadly threat of enemy drones. He was flanked by senior military officials and tech executives, but Gen. Kurilla's attention was focused on this nervous soldier with a **fraction of his authority** who had ***flown over from the Middle East*** for this moment. **He wanted to hear more.**

Proof

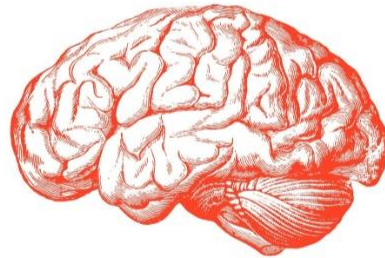
Mickey developed an AI-based program to identify Iranian missiles coming into the Red Sea. He'd already tested the program against hundreds of simulations.

Relief

"This is a significant problem," he said. "You've come up with an idea to help us solve that problem."



IDEAS UNLOCKED
**A NOVEL ABOUT WHAT
HAPPENED WHEN ONE
MILITARY COMMAND SOUGHT
INNOVATION FROM WITHIN**



JOE **BUCCINO**

WHEN **EVERY** WORD COUNTS

~~~~~  
**How to Earn Trust, Command  
Attention, and Communicate  
Clearly in Any Situation**

~~~~~  
JOE BUCCINO



SCIENCE OF SUCCESS

What Happened When the U.S. Military Played 'Shark Tank'

Central Command went searching for good ideas. It had to flatten the chain of command to find them.



Inside **Out**: A Story-Centric PR Approach

1 **Lean** on the Homeric elements

The story of this incident starts in Renton, Washington and ends in DC

2 Apply storytelling principles that **crackle**

Take me to the shop floor

Connect me to a **beating heart**

3 Craft internal messages for **editors**

Some audiences matter more than others



A large-scale photograph of a Boeing aircraft manufacturing facility. In the background, several Boeing 737 MAX aircraft are in various stages of assembly, their fuselages painted a bright teal color. They are lined up on the factory floor, with various mechanical components and wiring visible. In the foreground, a closer view of one aircraft shows its cockpit and front fuselage. A worker in a blue shirt is visible near the front of the aircraft, and another worker in a red shirt is further back. The factory floor is cluttered with tools, equipment, and structural elements. A sign in the background reads "to UV you and counting".

Under Pressure

The Dark Toll of Boeing's Relentless Pursuit to Cut Costs and Squeeze Production

Key Takeaways

Attention is a scarce resource. Stories are the only way to earn it.

WHEN **EVERY** WORD COUNTS

How to Earn Trust, Command
Attention, and Communicate
Clearly in Any Situation

JOE BUCCINO

Tell a Story

Find the
humanity in your
missive.

Break the Pattern

Establish a
pattern and then
create surprise
Hijack any
audience's
attention

Treat Attention as a Scarce Resource

Teams, emails,
social media

Sharpen Your Tools

1 Parallelism

Douglas MacArthur to USMA, 1962: "I do not know the dignity of your birth, but I do know the glory of their death."

2 Repetition

Goldwater Convention: "Freedom made orderly for this nation is by our constitutional government. Freedom under a government limited by laws of nature and of nature's God. Freedom balanced so that liberty lacking order will not become the slavery of the prison cell."

3 Symbolism

Adlai Stevenson, '52 *Convention*: "Yet, as I have said before, we must take care not to burn down the barn or kill the rats."

4 Anaphora

Learned Hand, '45: "The spirit of liberty is the spirit which is not too sure that it is right; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which seeks to understand the minds of other men and women; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which weighs their interests alongside its own without bias."

5 Triplets

Everett Dirksen, 1967: "The American flag is not a mere assembly of colors, stripes, and stars but, in fact, truly symbolizes our origin, development, and growth."

6 Imagery

"I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain..."

Tools in Action

- 1 That war was a microcosm of human conflict: loud, violent, heavy, unfair. Those who survived its ravages would come home to tell of its horrors.
- 2 Naming streets, schools and military bases after historic figures is an endeavor soaked in risk: No figure in American history can be classified as purely "good." Not MLK, JFK, Lincoln, Washington. Not Eisenhower, Grant, Pershing.
- 3 We are inward-seeking, complicated creatures; legacies are messy, particularly when past actions are weighed against present social mores.
- 4 Our veterans deserve our contemplation of the nature of war. We must think about what we ask our Soldiers to do. And here some universal truths reveal themselves: War is brutal. It is dark. It is vile.
- 5 AI is too voracious a beast to be left uncaged.

Discussion

