

Employee Brand

Employee brand had its inception in the 1990s which basically referred to the reputation of an organization as an employer towards its employees. The global management community has since then adopted this terminology. The image of the organization has been challenged by the introduction of branding. Ideally, the intents and purposes held there in is to make the workplace a better place for both the key stakeholders and the employee at large (Denning, 2007, pp. 5-25). This is indeed an art and science that is concerned with maintaining, attracting, engaging and retaining initiatives which the organization targets to promote the welfare of the employee brand. In a similar way through which a product is defined from the customer brand proposition, the employee brand proposition which could be regarded as employee value proposition is the key definition of the offer of employment in an organization. Various methods have been employed in branding employees by different organizations. One of these major methods is storytelling.

Storytelling and Branding

According to Boje (1991, pp.106-126), storytelling has been an effectual process in promoting organizations' branding of employees. Storytelling has been a decisive foothold in the deliberations that have been made concerning how future brands are being shaped. All the same, there is still a conspicuous absence of critical understanding as to the way and the reason why storytelling could promote a difference in organizations and companies. For quite a number of companies, storytelling has been an abstract concept; many think it is purely reserved for Public Relations and executives in advertisement department and at worst, taken as wishy-washy rubbish having no tangible value. Many have not seen the sense in telling stories and what exactly contributes to a good story that will be of significance in any organization to assist in management. Among the many disciplines of marketing linked to branding together with the management of branding which have found a lot of application in human resources and management of talent to attract, retain and engage talented candidates as well as employees is storytelling. Storytelling has been very instrumental in directing the flow of goods and services from the company or organization to the customer.

However, management in organizations and companies has always been faced with the challenge of establishing how to go about storytelling as explained by Sole and Wilson (n.d, pp. 10-33). The approach of branding through storytelling is an ever growing field which triggers a challenging environment to all who are committed to realize success in the organization. The storytelling process is not just an aimless activity but rather is meant to support the brand of the Company. This is how the reality of storytelling is felt in branding the employees. Therefore, storytelling is an integral part of what differentiates human beings from other creatures. Sociologists together with social scientists have proved that there is an increased fragmentation level in modern society. The systems of value that have in the past served as directives for us are undone, in part. There is therefore the absence of dominating authority like science or religion to direct on the values that members of the organization should adhere to.

Human beings navigate the world in which they exist through the use of symbols together with visual expressions that have a great role in signaling their personality and the values they uphold. Strong brands is therefore one of the ways through which this can be realized and especially in an organization. Strong brands consequently are realized through such ways as those of storytelling. The goal of storytelling in an organization therefore is to create a difference in the performance of the organization. The West is a world which has realized success in

materials. In the world of business, we are moved from one point to another with choices, while companies are ever manufacturing goods and offer services that are basically similar. These manufacturers have failed to comprehend that what is needed is not more products and that demand is going to the direction of goods that offer customers with unique experiences; goods and products appealing to the dreams and emotions we possess while giving meaning to what we pursue; good life.

While employee brand defines what individuals presently associate with a company, employee branding has been described as the total efforts of the company to make known to the existing and probable staff what things make the company an appropriate workplace and the active role of management of an organization's image as clearly seen through the eyes of the associates and the prospective hires. The realization of such a move has been through such activities as those of storytelling; the secret language of leadership. Therefore, storytelling has come to offer another alternative other than what organizations and companies have been putting to use like the habitual thinking together with business as visual methodology according to Fog et al. (2003, pp. 11-23). This has been particularly with the organizations which are wholly driven by their products frantically seeking rational arguments as to why people must prefer buying their products to others. In the end, this has been regarded as folly.

A quality good at a price that can be afforded is never a decisive factor or benefit that will guarantee success. The implementation of storytelling in any organization would take into account four elements: the message; conflict; characters and; the plot. The message is what the company or organization wants to communicate to the employees and the stakeholders. Conflict is a very imperative element that acts as the driving force of a good story. In the case of organizations, conflict highlights the views and opinions of all bringing them into a useful conclusion after consideration. The reason for this is that, human beings instinctively search for harmony and balance in life. The organization having its employees will not like getting out of tune. It is very important that the storytelling process has some conflict which will assist in containing all in the environments in which they are found.

The moment harmony is disrupted; people could do all that is in their capacity to restore the situation in order to do away with undesirable conditions, stress or nervousness. If there is an unresolved issue in the organization and more in particular with the employees, it bothers the company till the air is cleared to a harmony state. Therefore, storytelling has all through played a significant role in promoting a collaborative atmosphere of employees in an organization. When a problem is realized in the organization, the managers will commit themselves in finding a solution and therefore causes all to act. Being part of storytelling, conflict has triggered minds to deep thoughts concerning what best could be done to the success of the organization. Speaking generally from this, a successful conflict requires a hero together with a villain with agendas which oppose one another. Managers have realized the usefulness of conflicts in organizations and used them in promoting the welfare of the organization. As a theory, storytelling has won a decisive foothold.

Employee Brand Management

The management of employee brand is also achievable through storytelling as supported by Boje (1991, pp.106-126). Management of employee brand in the end expands the range of brand intervention far much beyond communication to include all aspects of experience in employment, and the people processes of management and practices. These are in most cases referred to as touch-points which usually shape the evaluations of both current and potential employees. Therefore, employee brand management has been used to address the authenticity of

the experience of employment and not just its presentation. In the end, external recruitment is supported by enabling the selection of the right talent being sought out by the company to attain its goals, and eventual desire for effective engagement of the employee. This is the much storytelling has contributed in promoting effectiveness in management and the maintenance of the company's good image and retention of employees.

Storytelling according to Boje (1991, pp.106-126) might be thought to present the image of a passive sitting paying attention to the storyteller with persuasive power in entrancing them. Story telling has a well thought-out story which has been developed to carry the organization to someplace and change the thinking of all while they are at the place where the story has taken them. To quite a number of managers, storytelling apparently is a dream which has come true. All the same, to many people it has taken time to make sense. Storytelling unfolds matters which promote strong bonds through interactions. In a company, charismatic persuasion together with the ability to direct the thinking of a person smacks more of propaganda and cults in contemporary-day practices in the workplace. The thought that these cults are ineffective and typically blind and not resilient has been proved wrong.

The actual power as well as opportunity for employing stories in companies is in the keenness to listen to stories, assisting others come up with their own real stories and coming up with something sensible in the stories which have been told according to Boje (1991, pp.106-126). Research as well as honing of practice, good departments of communication is skilled in delivering vivid messages, clear copy and direct values or mission statements (Boje, 1991, pp.106-126). Having a well defined direction, good data together with evidence of what is to be done is not enough. Neuroscience has proved that people seldom come up with decisions founded on rational data analysis in most cases. When people are stressed or being measured against a particular target, or being asked to change their way of living, rational argument together with values have nothing to do in persuading them.

Having other thoughts is making an attempt of leveraging the behavior of human beings and the organizational culture into a process that can be analyzed, arranged and redone. People come up with decisions according to the patterns of cognition they have put in their minds. Definitely, people don't even come up with decisions according to the most suitable pattern, but rather to the initial pattern that the apparent condition conforms to. These same patterns can be seen as internal, individual stories and comprehending these stories will take us a long way in the direction of comprehending behavior patterns in the organization. By sharing different stories, and assisting people view the world through the standpoint of a diverse story, the possibility for others to shift their worldview is opened up and consequently their behavior.

Engagement

The anticipation by many managers to see participation as a one-sided communication where employees are entirely engaged is an empirical evidence of an outdated mindset Power, the making of decisions together with control has been found high up in a given company according to Ambler and Barrow (1996, pp. 185-206). The people who come lower in the hierarchy ladder are only expected to obey. Storytelling has been very useful in doing away with this kind of misconception which has cost many companies and organizations a lot. The kind of engagement that has been realized in the past is that of merely presenting a method of persuading individuals whilst offering an illusion that the choice belongs to them. The view as held in the past is being faced out and replaced by a strong branding concept in modern organizations through storytelling. Over a decade now, people found in organizations have gone through transformation and change. The historical days of a compliant, willing workforce were just but

an illusion. The fact was ever clear that companies have no control over the individuals, only levers through which influence comes. No more ready to embrace the value of the things told to them in the organization, employees have a deeper access to information than in the past, and many more methods of expressing their views.

As supported by Ambler and Barrow (1996, pp. 185-206), employees in the workplace have more experience in deconstructing any communications of the organization. These have made them masters of skepticism when it comes to the normal parade of internal communications messages and tools. In the 1980s and 1990s, much of what was the intention of internal communication was to give an inspiration of loyalty within the organization. Questions of why employees were not loyal to the organizations were a talk of every day. All the same, the idea of loyalty inspiration was basically flawed; it is a two-process thing. The moment the organization could prove that it was not loyal to a specific employee as many did over and over again through re-engineering and downsizing, it became as though loyalty to the company was not a long-term prospect of security.

These kinds of engagement had completely abandoned organizational loyalty concept and have been through internal branding and currently on to engagement. Now, the main challenge that has remained to the management has been coming up with methodologies of engaging the employees. Engagement in the organization is a two-way contract. Therefore, managers are seeking to ensure that the employees are engaged and determining the level of engagement in the organization. Engaging the employees has been made effective through storytelling. Until a company becomes engaged and more concerned on the welfare of its employees, engagement will forever remain a limited concept. To increase the benefits of absolute engagement, storytelling has recognized the importance and usefulness of employees. While loyalty has failed in the past, managers should make sure that engagement does not fail. This will be made possible through storytelling; otherwise, it will be doomed to fail.

Storytelling supports knowledge held in management that engagement can only be through volunteering and not really conscripted. Storytelling helps achieve this by creating a level of honesty and trust. This is because storytelling builds trust through a sense of being heard and seen. Many have said that storytelling is magic buckshot that inspires engagement amongst employees and promotes change for the better. Different approaches have been employed in applying making use of stories. A good story within the organization is founded on involvement, discovery as well as a continued adaptation and participation instead of authoritarian, top-down arrangements. Such an approach saves on time, budget and energy, but it could feel uncomfortable to such people who are used to procedures of management, hierarchies as well as six sigma-kinds of programs.

Working with Stories

Initially, the use of stories in organizations and companies was about crafting some stories to help in communicating messages. However, this role has been absolutely dispensed with as the practice and use of stories is advancing as highlighted by Boje (1991, pp.106-126). Storytelling starts with the general sense of the chance that is present although what would be considered as the first move is gathering material needed to map the present evaluations and culture; gathering authentic, real stories which are told naturally or telling them in the very initial stages. A single story cannot be relied upon to give the precise image of the organization; instead, the patterns of the organization will be seen emerging from various stories, the shapes of beliefs and events, the archetypical characters that come from them are what offer the most powerful chances to see the world as other people would.

In a similar manner, not many single stories will engage with the people in the organization. It will be helpful to support them with various viewpoints and evaluations on a situation, and eventually facilitate them comprehending their individual roles and stories in advance. Moreover and most importantly, diagnostic events or even listening generates a lot of expectations among the people listening. Each and every diagnostic is indeed an intervention. Having this material therefore, there is indeed the need for having exercises which make sense for the chief members of the entire organization. The pattern that emerges may be indicative of a gap in the material which could amount to more story collection. The pattern could also have implications for initial force for whatever the project which could later require re-scoping or even reshaping.

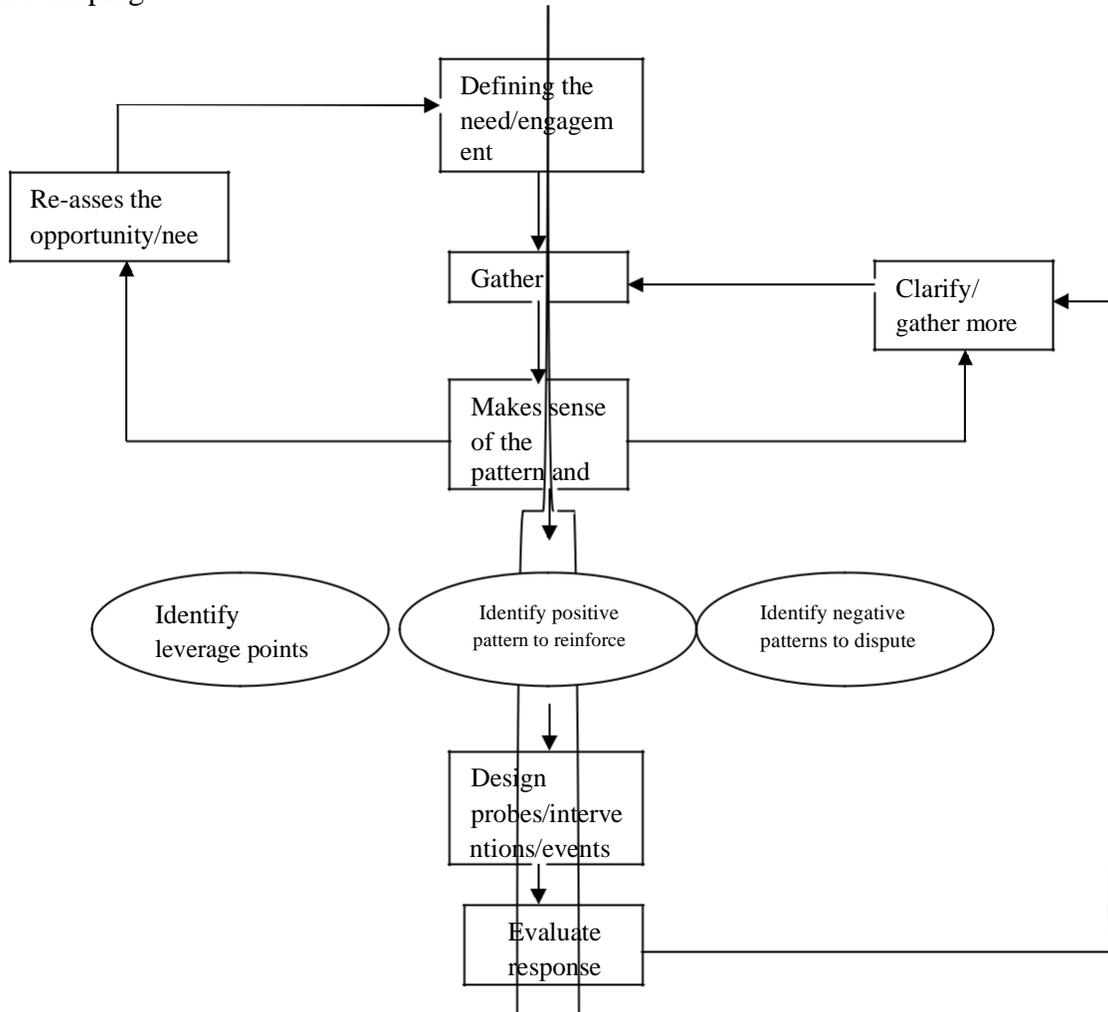


Figure 1. Narrative Engagement Process.

Having a greater knowledge of the culture as well as the opportunity or the need for engagement, it becomes possible to point out the leverage points in the organization or company where the relatively small actions will in a great way produce huge results. Still during the process, patterns will have come up that are good or even bad and these could be reinforced or done away with respectively. From this point, all the scope of human resources, change together with tools of communication can be brought to stand on the matter with narrative vividly having a contribution with that.

Cognitive Patterns

Among the biggest communications assumptions is the one where if people provide clear data and instructions, they will certainly change. Human beings process information to come up with decisions. However, modern advances as found in neuroscience, this is not right. Instead, human beings now process patterns and not actually information. This has crucial connotations for the typical internal communications model and the engagement of the employee. It nullifies the conservative practice of vivid messages which are well-written copies; far less the recurrent approach and methodology of data quantities to ascertain hypothesis. If a belief concerning how the universe works is already held in the organization, a significant qualitative and quantitative data will be required to shift that.

The inclination of human beings is to re-arrange the data and information we have been offered to fit in our pre-conceived notions. It is not till there is a measurable difference between the data compared to our model that the members of the organization begin to open up to the possibility of the model being used to be wrong. Therefore in communicating efficiently while engaging with the employees within the organization, managers must look out for ways and methodologies of bringing the cognitive patterns to the awareness of all. This is not meant to change them but permit the possibility of greater comprehension and same negotiation of a common viewpoint. These patterns of cognition are from one perspective, just stories or even scripts that predict the outcomes and inform behavior as well as decisions. Perspective filters are determinant of the manner in which we see the universe.

Another core reason for using stories in the organization is the lack of traditional value lists together with mission statements as tools of communication. Corporate values, beliefs or principles that have been enslaved over for a long time and encapsulates the ethos of the organization. The management in the organization need to establish the chances of remembering the stories and the opportunities that are there of actually acting upon them. Stories are memorable, comprehensible and actionable owing to the fact that they are in line with the manner in which our brains and patterns of behavior work. However on the surface, stories are merely not as intellectually impressive as they may be found in other contexts.

Stories in addition provide a context together with causality permitting audiences to establish the time and the reason why actions were taken, something that clean principles are not in a position to do, therefore allowing for the assumption that they apply all the time and in all situations. The reality of the matter is that stories do not apply in a universal way and that many people adopt workarounds the moment the principles are not fruitful. Managers have found difficult in determining the moment to ignore the principles of organization and when not to.

Stories and the Organization

People have a lot of stories in their place of work so often although the object in the discussion is in most cases not an actual example of a significant, appealing story. In most cases, it is a disparate series of purportedly essential events that took place to a faceless group of individuals. For the sake of the people taking part in the discussion, it normally conforms to the

standard company process of planning. In school, it is always said that a story must have a start, the middle and the end.

A Sympathetic Lead Character

First, engaging stories are about individuals. Preferably, one person is the chief character in any form of story; an individual having enough which is common with the audience to assist them sympathize with the character. Stories in the organizations are often having the subject of divisions or groups or worse still, the general organizations in particular (Boje, 1991, pp.106-126). The reason why it becomes hard to engage with the same stories is that the members cannot sympathize with the way it feels to be a group or a corporation. The place where stories are concerned, there is needed single individual protagonists. A group of individuals could be less interesting than an individual. An individual for instance could be more interesting than another and therefore, when listening to a story concerning change, the levels of engagement will depend on the terms with what the change is aiming at, what it could mean daily, what opportunities are of being superfluous, how threatened the employees are at an individual level by the change, rather than a story concerning satisfying the expectations of the stakeholders, principles and returns for the future.

A Clear Problem

A story which does not have a problem could be a mere portrait and not engaging according to Boje (1991, pp.106-126). In an organization therefore, it could mean a takeover threat, a very important change in the market, but not really “efficiencies”. This inciting incidence in the story within the context of the organization should matter to the people listening or at least be of concern to the lead character. Without the momentum of the good incident that is inciting, there is no force in the story and therefore the audience may be reluctant in following it up. Research on organizational storytelling which sometimes is referred to as narrative knowledge tries to recount events and scenarios taking the form of a story in the organizational context. It has been very rampant in the fields of strategic planning, organization studies and management. Storytelling has in the past been a feature of the societies of human beings, organizations and groups. Stories are concise narratives having plots, characters together with twists that have with them a lot of meaning. Although some stories could be pure fiction, there are some others which have their inspiration by real occasions.

The relation of such stories to events however is tenuous; in all stories, accuracy is almost ever sacrificed for effect. Stories inform, entertain, warn, advise and educate. They often provide moral judgments on occasions and events, putting their characters like the fool, villain, hero and the victim. They are capable of arousing strong emotions of empathy, anxiety, fear and anger among others. Regardless of whether inside or outside the organization, people in most cases recount experiences taking the form of stories and listen to different stories from others. By placing themselves at their stories, employees seek to create sense of the experiences which are narrated, despite at times being, trying, painful or happy. Theorists of organization have now got knowledge that a lot of learning in organizations occurs through the telling of stories; this is what is called narrative knowledge (Boje 1991, pp.106-126).

Theorists of organization in addition have realized that there is indeed a lot that can be learnt through studying stories that individuals speak about each other together with matters pertinent to the organization in general. Stories can pave way into political, cultural and emotional lives within the organizations, permitting individuals to express intense and sometimes conflicting or hidden emotions (Boje, 1991, pp.106-126). In modern times, many consultants have gotten the way of storytelling as vehicles promoting organizational performance,

communication and learning together with the management of change. While the usefulness of these approaches is qualified, there can be some doubt that, in the hands of leaders, gurus, prophets and educators who are imaginative, stories are instrumental devices for managing meaning.

The theory of organization has been late in embracing the approach of storytelling in and concerning organizations according to Denning (2007, pp. 6-13). The role of stories for team cohesion or for relieving tension and tedium have been pointed out, although it is only in the near past that the significance of stories in the research of organization has began and has been realized. Initially, there was recognition that companies and organizations are never story-free spaces of bureaucracy; storytelling is an imperative phenomenon of organization in its own right, meriting the attention of research. It is now all over acceptable to speak about organizational lore which could be studied in methods similar to the folklore study. As the language study, discourse together with text have taken assumption on centre-place in their particular discipline, theorists of organization have moved towards stories, myths and jokes, the stock in ethnographers trade and folklorist, as important constituents of organizations.

Organizational storytelling study however has gone past a folklore analysis, interesting as this could be in its own right (Boje, 1991, pp.106-126). By gathering stories in a certain organization, through listening and making comparison on various accounts, through the investigation of the way narratives are developed around particular events, through the examination which the historical events in a company or organization lead to story generation and the ones which fail, we acquire access to an intense reality of organization, which are linked closely to the experiences of the members. Through this, stories enable us to research on politics, change and culture of organization in distinct ways that are illuminating, exhibiting the way wider issues of organization are seen, commented upon and acted upon by their members.

While telling stories, the need for accuracy together with veracity is relaxed in the interest of creating a symbolic point. Poetic license is the privilege that is found in storytelling. At the same time, by the shrouding of a point as in symbolic terms, these stories are in a position to evade censors, both external and internal and in addition express opinions together with feelings which may not be acceptable in straight talk. Criticism towards an individual's superior could be frowned upon in many organizations; however, a joke at the employees' expense is less so. A tale or a story is a method of "measuring the water" to see whether individuals feel like what a different story teller would, having the same meaning into the events which unfold. Well, it is funny tricky how the story teller could fall back on the defense; "it was only a story!"

Stories within an organization are described in various ways. Some definitions go beyond, expanding stories in various directions, seeking to include many kinds of meaningful discourse or text under the category of a story. An organization logo, a shining car surface, a graffiti piece together with an academic textbook could then all be regarded as stories. Such like definitions do not justify the particular characteristics inherent in the stories being comprehended in a narrower way.

Stories have therefore been defined as narratives having characters and plots, generating conflicts, emotion in both the storyteller and the audience. This is specifically through a elaboration of poetry of symbolic material. This material could be a fantasy product or experience, incorporating an earlier narrative experience. The plot of the story includes predicaments, conflict, crises and trials which call for options, decisions, interactions and actions, whose real results are frequently at odds with the intentions and purposes of the character. Therefore, stories are regarded as symbolically and emotionally charged narratives;

they do not offer facts or information concerning events, but are used to enrich, infuse and enhance facts with meaning. This is both the strengths and the weaknesses of stories.

Since stories will have a compromise on information accuracy in order to make interest in putting a point forward or generate an emotion, they could focus on the incidental details, being left stubbornly silent concerning what the person carrying out a research could refer to as important clue; there may be inconsistencies, lacunae, lack of precision, non-sequiturs, ambiguities and illogicalities (Boje, 1991, pp.106-126). Eventually, the truth in the story is not actually in its accuracy but in the meaning that is realized. Researchers who want to employ storytelling as an instrument of research should be ready to make sacrifices at least momentarily some of the main values of their trade and instead adopt a rather peculiar attitude in the direction of their respondent and their particular texts.

Moreover, researchers ought to liberate themselves from the assumption that quality information are reliable, objective, accurate and more other attributes and should be ready to engage with emotions and the meanings which dwell in the text (Boje, 1991, pp.106-126). The very realization that a story incorporates or is tending towards becoming a narrative instead of being an account of facts relies on such an engagement of emotions. Characteristic of ambiguities and distortions, researchers should resist the temptation of making the record straight. Rather, they should learn to relish the text, yearning to determine the needs of the narrative, and through them, organizational and psychological needs, which inaccuracies, distortions and ambiguities serve.

Through this, researchers in organization field are now fellow-travelers on the story, engaging with it emotionally, showing interest, pleasure and empathy in the process of storytelling. They do not intent to risk alienating the teller of the story by apparently having doubt on the narrative or through placing the narrator under a close-examination, but instead conspire to detach the story from the narrowness of the facts discourse, directing it rather towards free-association, fantasy and reverie. Ambiguities and contradictions in the narrative are wholly accepted without embarrassment. Ambiguity is in the heart of quite a number of stories, showing a person's ambivalent feelings or some knowledge or may be understanding. Even though the person conducting the study may look for clarification of certain aspects of the narrative, the teller of the story should feel that a clarification of that kind is inquired in the interest of enhanced empathy and pleasure instead of in the kind of a pedantic inquiry. Since storytelling is an emerging concept, it is contested ground; a number of practitioners have been very much interested in explaining it as a robust tool to be applied by all business people managers and leaders.

Boje (1991, pp.106-126) argues that various academics are cynical concerning the attempts of turning storytelling into a tool of communication at the disposal of the people who actually have power. The argument is that contrived or constructed stories have a tendency of generating anti-stories, mistrust, ridicule and provoking cynicism. Generally, when storytelling becomes skillful and real, it can be utilized to lead upwards, downwards and sideways in a number of hierarchical environments. These environments include those of schools, politics, families and most importantly organizations and companies. It can be taken as a way of attaining a number of intentions like sparking action, employees communicating who they are, sharing information, transmitting employee brand, transmitting values, getting collaboration or even guiding people into the coming future.

Having the scarcity of rhetorical devices which can be used as alternatives to attain these aforementioned objectives and aims, the option is not so much about whether or not to utilize

storytelling concept, but instead whether to or fail to apply it knowledgeably and realistically. These stories of organization get hold of the attention of people, sparking excitement and imagination, and whilst being not worth neutral, they may tend to pass-judgment and moralize. Organizational storytelling has therefore become increasingly common as an approach of inquiry since it permits researchers to get some sense of the culture of a company or an organization and to record tacit knowledge.

Storytelling Challenges in Organizations

One of the biggest flaws in many stories of organization according to Boje (1991, pp.106-126) is the sense of being sanitized. A good flow in storytelling goes from the matter of interest through challenges together with obstacles while making and giving a solution to mistakes emerging on the way. Many corporate stories directly move from problem to problem resolution taking the form of a straight line. The absence of mistakes together with actual obstacles is what brands the aforementioned propaganda. In many engaging stories, the barriers increase in complexity as the story advances increasing tension as well as risk. Somehow interesting, the engagement of company stories apparently spins on the “bet-the-organization” decisions. Along the story flow, there should be chosen times that illuminate something which is deeper concerning the culture. More specifically, a story exhibits character in those chosen times through the options made through the lead character. This is more especially when they are found in stressful conditions. In the end, a good storytelling approach features an option made in a pressure moment and this is the point at which the reader of the story learns concerning the actual values of the character in the particular story.

From all this, it is clear that employee branding is an innovative twist on the regulation of identity. Storytelling as a concept of branding employees shapes the workforce so that the brand identity of the products of the organization is projected through their daily behavior of work. The branding of employee is intended to encourage employee-brand identification, which is a psychological connection existing between the worker and the brand, to offer an unobtrusive, apparently trouble-free engine for “on brand behavior.”

In any organization, there must be a more than financial reward offered to employees in the attempts of motivating them. This has promoted the emergence of such like methods of storytelling which have been thought to yield lasting solutions. Approaches that have produced long-term effects have been the best in promoting employee branding. The branding of any organization’s employee cannot be realized through short-term effects. Storytelling stands out as one of those approaches that have helped in branding employees because of the nature of the effect it causes. Storytelling provides significant degrees of employee satisfaction while ensuring that this is realized through little cost incurred. For instance, saying thank you to employees goes a long way in producing long lasting results. Involving all employees in telling their stories also adds up to an attractive picture of the organization.

Organizations and companies yearning for reward performance while promoting an effective work ethics amongst their workers are said to gradually embrace non-financial initiatives in promoting the well-being of the organization as highlighted by Lloyd (2002, pp. 64-66). Storytelling has a tendency of laying focus mostly on the individual needs of many people because people have a chance of being heard in their stories. Monetary rewards may not be that much but recognition that an employee gets through storytelling have a bigger and strong influence. Many organizations have struggled so much because it was thought that money would suffice in branding their employees. All that is needed is to recognize employees through such like approaches in storytelling.

Storytelling according to Boje (1991, pp.106-126) invites healthy reactions which may even tend to be conflicts but working for the welfare of the organization. The needs of the staff in management are purely power, affiliation and achievement. The need for achievement is described as the need for having competitive success determined against an individual excellence standard. These could form different versions of stories which present various patterns from where conclusions can be made on what best could be done to promote employee branding. Eventually, storytelling will lead to a proper job design, performance management, job enrichment and contributory competency or skill. All these amount to an increased achievement through the motivation that comes along to the individuals.

The benefits of storytelling unfold so many things. High achievement motivation can result to behavior like accomplishing a very challenging task, having control of conditions, creating and also seizing opportunities while generally causing things to happen. Employees through storytelling will tend to make good responses the moment they realize those in management exhibit trust in the fact that they are experts in their area of operation and are given a chance to speak out their experiences. This highlights their capability to deal with the increasing pressures and complexities of work. Storytelling develops and supports achievement motivation by helping create self confidence, sound job design and self esteem in the organization and therefore can be termed as a constructive methodology to performance management.

Storytelling and Recognition

Denning (2007, pp. 5-25) asserts that recognition is a very powerful motivator that can come through storytelling. If the achievement of employees is recognized, it could promote their willingness to repeat the same deeds in the future. This comes along with encouraging the workers in their individual and professional life. A sense of belonging is highly promoted. While most employers would not love the idea of being close friends with their employees, storytelling is one way in which concern and interest is shown in the employees' welfare. While the managers interact with the subordinates in the stories, they seek advice concerning the operations of the companies working together to improve and develop their opportunities for development in the company or organization. Moreover, storytelling helps in building up the strength of the employees and developing what could be their weaknesses and eventually have a significant result on the behavior of working. Storytelling could include such topics of balance work life and as a result assist the organization in gaining their employees more engagement and commitment and hence promote the branding of the organization according to Snowden (2000, pp. 215-226).

Storytelling in the organization is a way of communication. The employees are not only concerned with pay but could be well motivated by meeting their social needs while at the workplace. Focus has in the recent past laid on those in management taking a keen interest in the employees, treating all workers as people having crucial opinions and recognizing that employees love it when they work together; a spirit that is enhanced by the storytelling. Better means of communication existing between the managers and those in the subordinate staff can be a good motivator in branding the employees. A research conducted by Denning (2000, pp. 7-31) shows that storytelling is one of the most important ways through which employees are recognized and motivated. Storytelling promotes honesty and openness which are crucial in maintaining the workforce more interested in the achievement of success in the company. Success is realized both internally and externally.

A good brand picture of the organization makes the entire workforce to remain focused and associate with the organization since all the good or positive messages delivered in the

process of storytelling has impact to the organization by improving its performance. The high quality performance has an upper hand in promoting the welfare of the goods or services being offered. Storytelling has been very instrumental in preventing misconceptions which go unresolved concerning the goals of organization. Everyone ultimately comes to the knowledge of how best they can work towards attaining the intended goals. Feedback must be offered on the way these said goals can be attained in the organization.

Influence

Boje (1991, pp.106-126) asserts that storytelling has the drive to put influence or the exercise of power hence promoting employee motivation. While the need for such aspects of power is important for those in management, storytelling has a greater role to play in enhancing affiliation, love, warmth, relationship and affection. Many employees therefore are out in the search of development and also to increasingly take up much more activities to be developed. Giving employees such opportunities of telling their stories concerning the organization can assist them attain success both for themselves and the organization in general. This promotes such matters as of making decisions and in situations which are competitive. In addition offering motivation by putting individuals into situations such like storytelling where they can air their opinions and views can greatly impact the way people see the world and find a position for the organization in the market place. This indeed comes to realization when these views and opinions are listened to and later on acted upon.

Job Enrichment

According to Boje (1991, pp.106-126), storytelling enriches the job employees do because their behavior in the workplace is changed. It is through storytelling where employees express their dissatisfaction and such areas where they seem to conflict with the organization as a whole. Such areas of conflict could be in matters of working surrounding and wages. Employees cannot be motivated to perform well if these matters are not heard and acted upon. All the same, this does not happen at the expense of the organization but whatever conflict that may arise; they will certainly reach a consensus for the common good of all. In fact, it would be true to state that storytelling promotes work satisfaction together with performance. At such a point, this is what managers would refer to as the enrichment of the jobs in the workplace. It becomes a very crucial strategy since a number of the motivational requirements of the employees can be realized through this kind of enrichment. This is a great legacy that can be realized through storytelling and a very important action in the branding of employees.

The personal motivations of the employees together with job performance can be influenced through five fundamental areas found in storytelling. These areas include: varieties in skill, identification of skills, and the significance of each task in the organization, autonomy and lastly feedback. Job enrichment is a commitment of finding positive methods of addressing the aforementioned areas and eventually promotes the motivation of employees and individual satisfaction. This actually is what counts; winning the attention of the employee who now through their work of quality wins the attention of the customer in the market. Storytelling is what unveils the information hidden deep down the hearts of the employees; the information that is useful in providing the patterns which are well suited in enriching the jobs that employees do in the organization.

The main objective of job enrichment is to develop the quality of the employee and in the end help employees in accomplishing many tasks through this kind of motivation. All the same, the worker in the organization must desire and in addition accept new methods accompanying their tasks for the enrichment of their jobs to be effective. To attain the main objective of the job

enrichment, the manager is expected to be cautious when it comes to making a judgment concerning the suitability of the task for an employee to tackle. In addition, a great mistake has always been realized when the employees had the feeling that the tasks were too complicated or there was the lack of suitable skills required in completing the task.

Job Enlargement

Employees in their stories make available more tasks for them to perform while having the same complexity or nature as described by Ambler and Barrow (1996, pp. 185-206). Technical aspects of the job also realize some useful changes. The stories from different employees could encourage job rotation which is also part of the enlargement of the job being done. It incorporates a wider scope of activities to do. This should not be thought as a burden to the employees. Job enlargement has a great benefit in reducing individual job monotony or may be repetition while promoting diversity by the increased activities which need to be performed by the worker. For instance, a Company can enlarge the task of the personnel manager to include activities like acting like an officer in the administration. A developmental activity that can be established is including job enlargement together with working in task teams or group.

Team Working

The benefits of storytelling in an organization form a wide scope. There is a kind of team work that is promoted through storytelling. Team work is very essential in resolving the social needs of the employee. A story in an apt way builds friendship as well as a sense of belonging to the entire organization. This can be connected to being a member of a team in sports or troops of culture that represent a country, state or community. Therefore, through the created friendships, the employee is aiming at promoting the image of the organization and therefore must represent it well. Various kinds of teams can be made by the organization according to the needs and opportunities that emerge from the stories told by the employees pertinent to the organization as described by Kelly (1995, pp. 5-11).

Leave alone being a motivator, working as a team as seen through storytelling, greater service and production flexibility is also realized. In this case, employees are most likely to show various skills which could be appropriate to the organization; being in a position to do more than what a person is assigned to do. This is because storytelling can promote the learning of skills from other colleagues in the organizational teams or in the process of rotation in their duties and responsibilities. This means that the absence of any member in the team can easily be covered while maintaining continuity in production hence the organization not affected in any way. This reduces time loss and costs incurred in production to attain some particular activity, and may be assisting to improve productivity or performance.

Well, storytelling may seem to nullify the fact that individuals work to get paid and that financial rewards may not promote organization excellence long enough. However, there is much empirical evidence that the rewards given to people surpasses just throwing funds to them according to Ambler and Barrow (1996, pp. 185-206). Therefore, the increment of the employee salary or pay may not have a long term effect on the organization's employees than what other non-financial efforts like storytelling would offer to rescue the condition. Moreover, the implication of costs makes it difficult to be established in a proper way by the company and therefore making the rewards of money to become less important to the workers. Various researches have highlighted the use of effective methods of employee branding and performance management that will provide satisfaction, engagement together with retention to the employees. Such like methods is storytelling.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

Appreciate Inquiry is an organizational process of development as described by Theodore (2003, pp. 12-67). It is a philosophy that has been used to engage employees within an organization at times of its change, renewal and focused performance. The development process of AI is founded on the assumption that organizations and companies change in the way they seek and the claim held that an organization making an attempt to resolve difficult problems or situations will continue searching more concerning the matter but an organization that seeks to make an appreciation of the best in it will be in a perpetual discovering of the good things.

The process of development through Appreciate Inquiry was adopted from practitioners and research theorists in the past and later on developed by such people like David Cooperrider, Case Western Reserve University. This was in the 1980s. Another research theorist who also made advancements in the process was Suresh Srivastva. The notion held was that, an organization is a miracle that has to be embraced instead of a problem that needs a solution. Therefore, inquiry into the life of an organization must have such characteristics like: appreciative, applicable, provocative and collaborative.

Theodore (2003, pp. 12-67) asserts that Appreciative Inquiry is a commonly adopted practice while in the process of creating a strategy of development in an organization and the establishment of tactics of effectiveness in the organization. AI is a specific method of making enquiries together with envisioning the future that fosters positive correlations while building on the elementary goodness in an individual, a condition or an organization. By doing so, it promotes the capacity of the system for change and collaboration. AI is therefore a cycle which makes use of four processes emphasizing on: discovering, dreaming, design and destiny/deliver.

Discovering basically is the identification of the processes of organization that perform well. Dreaming on the other hand is the envisioning of such processes that would perform well in the organization's future. Designing is the prioritization and the planning of such processes that would perform well and lastly, Destiny is the implementation of the design that has already been proposed. The basic knowledge therefore is to build organizations going round the things that work instead of making attempts of fixing inappropriate things.

AI has been used as the appropriate method of solving problems in the organization. It closely relates to storytelling and that is why it suitably fits in the determination of how storytelling helps in employee branding. Appreciate Inquiry does not focus on gaps and inadequacies in remediating practices or skills. The focus therefore in Appreciate Inquiry is on the approach of creating more of outstanding performance that is taking place when a core of various strengths is arranged. AI opens the way to a world of possibilities because the work in the organization does not end when a specific problem is resolved but instead lays focus on what best the company can be. This kind of approach recognizes the contribution of all persons with the aim of increasing trust together with aligning the organization. AI in addition aims at creating meaning through the drawing from various stories of concrete victories and lends itself to social activities across the organization.

Different researchers in the past have employed various approaches in implementing the concept of Appreciative Inquiry. These include huge-mobilized interviews and a big, diverse collection known as Appreciative Inquiry Summit. Both these approaches incorporate bringing very huge, diverse teams of individuals together to build upon and study the best within an organization or Company. The fundamental philosophy of AI is therefore realized in other approaches which have a positive orientation to personal change together with the anticipated change in the organization.

AI fosters relationships which are positive and build upon the elementary goodness in an individual or a circumstance. The principles that lie behind Appreciate Inquiry are founded in the ever growing positive psychology science. The concept of building on strength, instead of merely focusing on the weaknesses and faults is a very powerful way to apply in programs of mentorship as well as in dynamics of coaching. It is the fundamental idea lying behind the teaching and training of “micro-affirmations” together with teaching concerning micro-inequities. AI has been used extensively in administering change in the organization or company. This has been so evident in such areas of healthcare, social organizations for profit, institutions of education, local governments, institutions of religion and communities.

Management Involvement

The management that has been found in many organizations in the past has concentrated much on external branding; carrying out market research in the market place and getting the needs of the customers to address them. Companies and organizations have in the past committed themselves in making products or providing services that can sale instead of struggling to sell what has been produce. This indeed is the essence of marketing; to direct the flow of such goods or services to the consumer. However, what was thought was the best approach has been surpassed by such methods of internal branding or internal marketing through such methods as those of storytelling. In fact, storytelling has a lot of impact when managers put off their traditional approach in staying at the top of the organization and coming down to meet the employees and listening to them.

For the management to successfully execute marketing in the organization, it is very imperative that a definition is given to the organization on what would be the efficacy to be linked to the organization; highlighting the attributes that bring the difference of the company or organization from others. Well, the focus here is not laid upon the competitors but first on the employees whose performance determines the end product to be disposed in the market. Therefore, the management is expected to clarify the ‘give and get’ deal of employment for employees; i.e. balancing the value and worth that employees are expected to add up with the value that is from the employment that they are expecting in return.

The focus by management therefore is to promote the communication of the employee brand promise, and the behaviors and attitudes which are absolutely expected from the organization to make sure that a delivery is made on that promise. While it is clearly advantageous to the entire organization for the management to understand the role in delivering employee brand promise, the success of storytelling can sometimes be short-lived if the values of branding on which experiencing of service is based upon are nor realized by the employees while they interact with the organization. This is the gap that storytelling seeks to deal with a more mutually advantageous deal of employment; a psychological contract.

Compared with a more naturally employee centric focus of storytelling, internal branding or brand engagement has a more “inside-out”, approach based on values to shape the perceptions and behaviors of employees going after the lead of highly influential successful norms of companies and organizations which are visionary; Visions which are built to last for long according to Denning (2007, pp. 5-25). Research has demonstrated that organizations and companies having distinctive, consistent and intensely held values tend to perform more than the organizations having less clear and coherent ethos. While a change of culture that is led through branding is in most cases the stated anticipation of such programmes, the focus on communication-guided, methods of marketing has been subject to similar downfalls of conventional internal branding (Denning, 2007, pp. 5-25).

One of the things found in companies and organizations is that the moment a culture is formed; it requires nuclear weaponry to alter it. Therefore, according to Mitroff and Kilmann (1975, pp. 18-28), managers cannot merely assert their ways to the new culture, no more can they assert their way to a robust brand, it requires to be a continuously and consistently managed and shaped, which is one of the basic reasons many companies and organizations have turned away from the short term focus on engagement of activities of internal branding to more long lasting focus on the employee brand management.

According to Ochs et al (1992, pp. 37-72), storytelling reminds the management that employees are also workers in that organization whose input is highly needed. Despite being contracted by the organization, they are the most valuable asset to the organization or company. If employees could be assumed, then no business activity would be conducted and thus nullifying the whole idea of doing business. No big organization or company can successfully carry out their business if they had no employees. It is therefore important for managers to brand their employees through what is commonly referred to as internal branding. The employees are closely linked to the money that comes to the organization or company and therefore require a considerable attention than the customers in the market would.

In normal settings, different employees have various skills according to Denning (2007, pp. 5-25). A combination of the various employees brought together through storytelling brings together these skills to get the job done. Companies and organizations make efforts of creating strong employee brand marks as they offer a multiple sensory stimuli in enriching the recognition of the employee, loyalty of brand and advantages realized financially. In modern times, there are many organizations and companies still serving the same particular customers and which are ever in constant competition. Owing to this fact, marketing concepts and procedures have diversified. Marketing is therefore no longer a task entirely for the marketing department.

Internal branding has seen the diversification of the marketing procedures to include all employees in the organization. A powerful employee brand therefore provides a lot of advantages for marketers. For these same reasons, organizations make an effort of creating a strong employee brand mark as it offers diversification procedures to the organization. Storytelling has found application in such procedures of promoting excellence. Storytelling has a remarkable benefit of becoming an employee brand mark because of the fact it offers various sensory stimuli which enriches the recognition of the employee as explained by Gabriel (1995, pp.477-501).

Most importantly the product and the organization as a whole become visually recognizable. Employee brand mark through storytelling becomes a distinct logo and consequently facilitates its ability to be recognized. The managers must therefore understand that images of the organization as perceived by the employees are more discernible than mere words would. Therefore a combination of an effective employee brand mark together with other motivational incentives can promote the realization of the anticipated performance in the organization.

Storytelling in its Totality

The sharing of experiences in the organization is therefore a very powerful instrument in the exchange and the consolidation of knowledge as explained by Boje (1991, pp.106-126). It has been suggested by research that the sharing of encounters through stories within the organization cultivates norms, builds trust, promotes unlearning and in addition generates emotional links. The effective use of stories hinges on making choice of the suitable moments of the story while being clear on the goal of sharing knowledge. Storytelling finds much application

in modern organizations because it is a natural as well as an ancient method of passing on culture and wisdom. What have been most explicitly valued in the past in organizations of business have been harder kinds of knowledge that can be categorized, classified, calculated and ultimately analyzed.

It is only in the recent past where managers in organizations have found value in the use of stories and anecdotal data presented in stories. This emerging interest in the ancient kind of communication is conceivably an outcome of the realization of the vitality of knowledge in companies and organizations and the realization of the knowledge cannot be absolutely abstracted into analytical and categorical forms and is insufficiently conveyed in such kinds. Instead, companies and organization are seeking forms of communication that synthesize instead of analyzing and stories have been included in this category. In organizations specifically, storytelling has been pointed out as a method of:

- i. **Sharing values and norms:** Denning (2000, pp. 7-31) asserts that stories in a powerful way convey values and norms all through across generations in the company or within the organization. These norms together with the values come from the past of the organization but in addition can define the future of the organization. Therefore a key role of leadership is to provide a compelling robust vision and context while this can be determined through stories that lay focus on the more empowering characteristics of a company's history and put them in a context for the awaiting future, thus promoting the identification of opportunities in the future. Members of the organization express commitment and understanding to the organization in using stories and propose, furthermore, that extend of the familiarity of the member with the prevailing organization story could include the adaptation level to the values and the norms of the organization.
- ii. **Developing commitment and trust:** stories can indeed communicate the experiences and commitments of an individual and that of the rest. Showing individual stories can exhibit an individual's commitment and competence to matters together with signaling personal trust and the desire to be vulnerable to other employees. During work, commendation stories or complaint concerning other individuals communicate their trustworthiness and reliability to others. This could either reinforce the commitment of employees or undermine it. According to Wilkins (1984, pp.41-60) the generation of commitment is a major function of storytelling in organizations.
- iii. **Sharing tacit knowledge:** stories make it possible for a more effective exchange of embodied and embedded highly contextual ideas that can assist in solving hard problems in a fast way. In most cases, the canonical knowledge and wisdom of the organization which is founded into formal procedures, is sufficient in meeting the needs of the issues that emerge in the actual world. In such particular times, the tacit knowledge based on experience and built on practice gets to the fore instead. Stories concerning work deliver such tacit knowledge in a more absorbable and manageable fashion.
- iv. **Facilitating unlearning:** Denning (2000, pp. 7-31) asserts that increasing transformation of the environment needs organizations not only to learn but in addition to unlearn, to think again the way and the reason why certain activities are undertaken. Realizing that there is a tacit, assumed dimension to all that we have knowledge of explains why unlearning could be so hard: employees need to unlearn cultures and frames of the mind that they do not depend on but those which indeed shape our entire perspective. Rational arguments are therefore inadequate in accomplishing new developments; an intuitive or

emotional element is also required in convincing individuals at the tacit understanding level. Storytelling can be successful in attaining this.

- v. Generating emotional linkage: Denning (2000, pp. 7-31) points out that storytelling has the inherent ability of engaging emotions since they are concerned on the inconsistencies in life, about such things and conditions that get hold of attention through seeing in a different way from the anticipated one. Stories of the unanticipated induce responses of emotion since they make a suggestion of the potential threat of being out of control over life, although simultaneously provide a method of comprehending and responding to the future. The emotional response therefore makes ideas “sticky” being indicative of the ease of retrieving in future conditions according to Szulanski (1996, pp.27-43). Storytelling communicates complex ideas within an organization which could take into account awareness of norms and values or even details of potential solutions to complex problems.

The Spirit of a Knowledge-Sharing Story

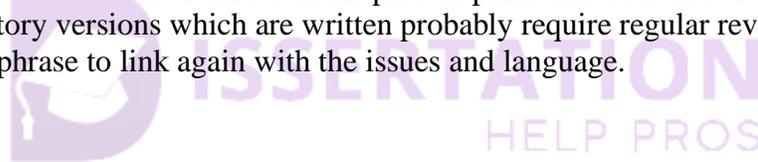
Knowledge in organizations is often described as the ability for effective action according to Senge (1997, pp.17-18). Therefore, knowledge in its application makes it indeed valuable within the organization. Well, all stories can be said to be narratives although not all of these narratives would be termed as good stories in the sharing of knowledge. Movies for instance give stories which are primarily designed to entertain and could be secondarily purposed if any case to share knowledge while informing people to may be influence behavior change. The real meaning of a story used to share knowledge is two-fold. Such a story gives a streamlined encounter. These good idea-sharing stories have a lot of elegance in their simplicity. They are created to bring along particular points through the avoidance of peripheral data and information distracting from the main idea. These stories are therefore a stripped of extra detail.

According to Gabriel (1995, pp.477-501), a story within the organization used in sharing knowledge provides surrogate experience. When an individual gets to read a certain book, he or she may have the feeling that they could be living the same experienced as explained in the book. Similarly when a narrative is recounted, the story form provides the audience with a chance to experience in a surrogate style the condition that was felt by the one telling the story. The audience can get information of the major concepts of the situation and the correlations in the similar cumulative or progressive way that the individual telling the story tried to understand it. A major point of the notion of surrogacy is that despite the listening not having a direct encounter with the situation of the story, it should be possible, and even probable, that the audience could encounter a similar condition. If the condition put forward in the story is at a distance from the reality of the listener, or is apparently improbable and uncertainly to take place in the world of the listener, then it becomes irrelevant and the lose effect that could have been initially anticipated. Generally, good knowledge storytelling approach becomes effective if they get to be streamlined as well as having a surrogate nature.

Knowledge-Sharing Stories Traps

Although storytelling has power, it can fall short in attaining their intended aims and objectives which entirely is sharing ideas with the purpose of promoting behavior change and performance in the organization according to Kelly (1995, pp. 5-11). Storytelling could be insufficient or not apposite due to their forms or may be delivery. These traps that could make stories inefficient are:

- i. Seductiveness: storytelling can be very much compelling, so vivid and seductive-either due to the amount of the content or eloquent presentation making the audience be absorbed deeply in the story truth and can have hard importantly evaluating it like a template for individual encounters. In such times, the audience can be influenced by the distraction of the intention of the storytelling process, which is to enhance the seeking of applications and analogies in personal duties and domains of effect according to Gabriel (1995, pp.477-501).
- ii. Single viewpoint: stories are narrated from an individual's perspective. This viewpoint may be not that directly significant to the concerns and activities of quite a number of people. When this results, power is lost to link with the audience. Researchers of stories have therefore worked out on some ways of creating stories that purposely include various perspectives.
- iii. Static-ness: the effect of a particular story is certainly expected to vary depending on the way it is delivered. The teller and the form of presentation affect the manner of delivery. Written stories for instance may suffer quite a number of similar problems that exhibit knowledge face representations; cutting the link from the teller, fitted linearity in storytelling and a specific level of "petrification" that is needed of any snapshot. Such like stories are also taken at a particular time with the listeners of that time in period in mind.
In a developing surrounding, such forms of stories could ultimately become distanced from the concerns and the realities of the present particular audience. To prevent this drawback, story versions which are written probably require regular revalidation and update or rephrase to link again with the issues and language.



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