

## Statistics vs storytelling. How to make a presentation memorable?

So, what is better: statistics or storytelling? What kind of material could you use to influence others?

Time for reading: X min.


This article will help to figure out:

- how to find a balance between storytelling and statistics;
- do we need this balance at all;
- consider a couple of examples.

### People recall information in different ways

We remember stories much longer than simple data. Do you remember that expression about rainbow colors “Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain”? You can tell about all the colors in your presentation, but people hardly remember it and even forget some colors at all. The story bands the whole information and it sticks in people’s minds. Let’s imagine that each color is a slide with one key idea. Now let’s think how to connect them and make a story to be remembered.

Compare the two slides below. The first one is very popular and shows only the fact. The second one has the photo and the story about girl Yanina. Which one will stick in your mind more?

20 % of kids born out of a wedlock	 <p>Hi, I am Yanina and I don't have dad.</p> <p>20 % of kids born out of a wedlock</p>
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Memorizing is better when you use stories as the main information. It’s all because our brain perceives information in the logical hemisphere. Listening to the story involves both brain hemispheres and evoke emotion. If you need to show some numerical data in your speech, tell about their origin and who’s behind them. Abstract statistics than takes form, so people will remember it better.

### Stories affect human emotions

One group of [researchers in the USA](#) decided to prove stories affect people more than just statistics. They were asking students if they want to take the survey in exchange for \$5. Each student got \$5 along with an envelope and letter after the survey was done. They were told that they had an opportunity to donate any money to the charity. Half of the students got

the letters with a photo of the kid and a story. Others got the statistical victims. Those who had an envelope with a photo and a real person donated twice as much.

This research shows that people conceive more real characters than generalized statistics. Use it for your presentations. Let's say you are making a presentation about a new product. The main purpose of this presentation is to sell. Your slides may have such data: the number of satisfied customers, low prices and sales statistics. That would be much better if you also tell how this product will change the buyer's life after getting it. The buyer will become the main character in your story and the audience will feel much closer to your product.

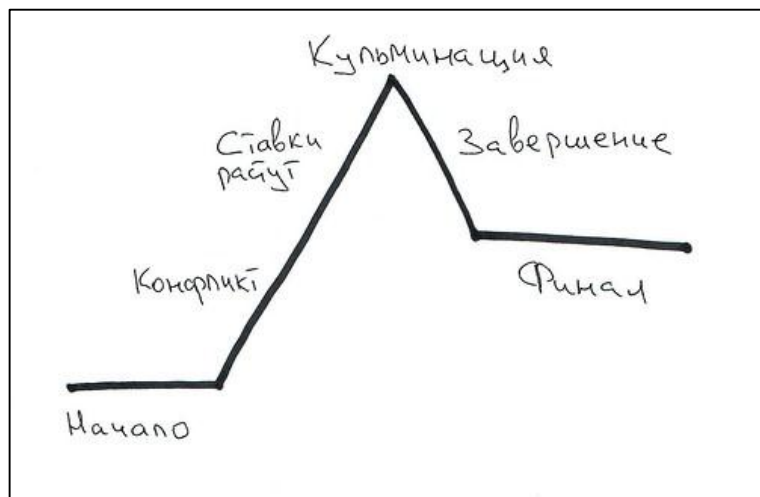
A tip. Use stories to reduce stress during your performance. In the beginning you feel more stressful. If you start with the story, you overcome nervous and make a good impression. When we tell stories we use such tricks for creating trust: we smile, use body language, establish eye contact. Listeners immediately start reacting. You see, they smile, lean forward on their seats, listening to the story. Your confidence will grow.

Добавлено примечание ([1]): Выделена как цитата в блоке

Of course my parents red me a lesson, but then send some money and homemade food.

How to make the story people will understand

There is a simple story structure to use: **exposition** → **conflict** → **conflict rising** → **culmination** → **conclusion**. Such a structure is used for books, advert, movies. The audience got used to it and it helps them easily follow the story.



Exposition, Conflict, Rising action, Culmination, Falling action, Conclusion

So let's consider an example:

I remember a real-life situation

Once I had run out of money and the scholarship was delayed. I ate leftover pasta and soup for three days. Then I asked mom for some money and decided not to live catch-as-catch-can anymore. I decided to lay out expenditure.

**The same real-life story using the structure:**

**Exposition: 10 years ago I was a student and live on scholarship.** The first days after receiving the scholarship I was living high and the last 3 weeks after I saved my pocket.

**Conflict:** Once I spent all the scholarship too fast. I was eating onion soup (water, potatoes, onions), pasta without butter and drank sugar-free tea for several days.

**Rising action.** In the university, we were informed the scholarship will be paid with 18 days' delay. So, that day I started to eat two-minute noodles.

**Culmination.** Truth be told, I had to work. But I didn't know anything. I had to call my parents and ask for money.

**Falling action.** My parents red a lesson to me but sent money and even mom`s pies.

**Conclusion.** After having normal food, I created an Excel table with all my incomes and expenses. I've been doing it for 10 years, and now that`s me who send money to parents. That moment taught me how to manage money.

Each story has a plot, and the structure helps to reveal it. The audience waiting for the simple structure and absorbs it very quickly. The story without a structure can`t get across an idea so it'll be unclear. The main message of my story is – lay out your expenditures. The example story has no clear plot, so an idea was lost. But the second story showed us everything starting from the problem and its solution. The main idea was saved and the conclusion is made.

*Лайфхак от тренера по публичным выступлениям Александра Заёмы: вспомните, выучите и отрепетируйте 5-10 своих историй на разные случаи жизни. Это поможет вам быть готовым к неожиданным ситуациям на выступлении. Если вдруг что-то пошло не так и появилась пауза. Истории не будут лишними во время деловых встреч и неформальных собраний.*

Добавлено примечание ([2]): Выделена блоком

## Statistics also matter

**1. Statistics make your presentation more truthful.** Numbers and facts make abstract ideas more manageable for your audience to understand. [Using statistics](#) also makes your statements more compelling because you have exact numbers proving your words.

### Not convincing

Our graduating students are successful.

Our customers are satisfied with the service.

### Convincing

100% of graduating students work within their specialty

90% of clients come back to us again and again

Ukrainians don't read.

[57% of Ukrainians haven't read even one book for this year](#)

**2. Use statistics to [raise your credibility](#).** Citing statistics shows your audience that you know the material. The audience trusts you if you use statistics from reliable sources. You become a "trusted information resource".

You can use statistics from many resources: local authorities, state organizations, nationwide or global researches. Examples for statistics and data: [Nielsen](#), [Open source data portal](#), [Eurostat](#), [PWC](#), [Gartner](#).

**3. Show divergent angles.** Using statistics, we can influence people with diverse outlooks and visions. Human is willing to accept facts that meet their beliefs and ignore those run counter to their interests. Your task is to choose the right perspective for your audience. Let's consider 2 perspectives: *36% of Ukrainians haven't read even one book for this year* **OR** *31% of Ukrainians read books several times a month*. Those who persuaded of the fact that Ukrainians don't read will hear only the first thesis. And those who are sure Ukrainians are intellectual nation will hear the second. You can influence any audience if using the right statistics.

## Presentation design

Sometimes you have much data to be used in slides. With the help of simple charts and diagrams, you can avoid a mess and gather different data. Find the combination to make the data clear. Remove all needless things: unnecessary lines, backgrounds, borders, marks, sentences. As an [example](#), please take a look at the Dark Horse Analytics diagram. That is

how to make it simple and clear.

# Remove to improve the **pie chart** edition

Created by Darkhorse Analytics

[www.darkhorseanalytics.com](http://www.darkhorseanalytics.com)

The choice of diagram depends on the message you want to send. You should use a column diagram if your goal is to report the profit markup over the past 5 years. It will show your efficient work for the year. Use a line chart if you want to create a sensation of urgency caused by the low number of orders. That's how you can highlight the slowdown and show how critical is it.

Some examples:

## ПРИМЕРЫ С КРАТКИМ ОПИСАНИЕМ

Storytelling and statistics in presentations. Examples.

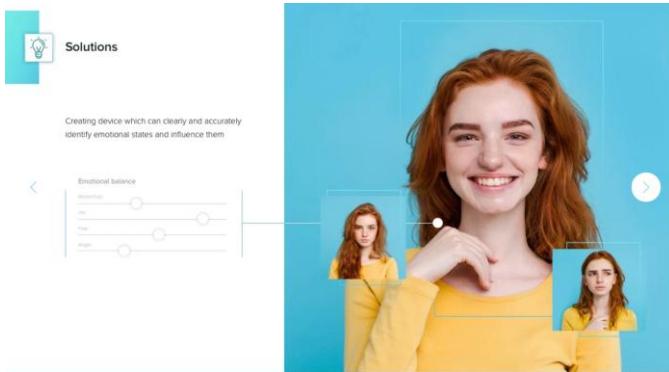
### Reprezent

Use the story and statistics to show the idea, problem or product. You can intersperse the story with the statistics or buttress up the story with facts. Finish or start the presentation with the story or make the whole presentation based on it.

[Presentation](#) for Alexandros Psychogios

Alexandros Psychogios was talking about triplex leadership. The main idea for the presentation was to make hand-drawn characters in order to relate the psychological concepts he was speaking about.

Slide from the [presentation](#) for EDEM EQ company.



Visualization of emotions in accordance to device indicators.

Slide from [presentation](#) for Sergey Hivrich from Proffstore.



**Traditional jobs will vanish**

**under the Roosevelt University and Kaufmann fund researches**

Employees leaving the office - visualization to show vanish of traditional jobs.

[Presentation](#) for American start-up Dental Rocket.

This start-up helps dentists who want to open dental clinics but don't know where to start. Our team offered to show the problem with the help of a story about a doctor, who got a medical degree, but failed to manage his business because of the lack of knowledge in relevant field.

Make your audience remember your presentation

We made hundreds of presentations over the 6 years. And we are proud most for the presentations we remember and retail to each other. Their secret is a balance between statistics and stories.

Storytelling is powerful in leaders` pockets, who knows how to use them. Nancy Duarte [tells](#) that storytelling is used to enroll your team. Leaders inspire people around to sustain and

embody their views. Storytelling helps to call up people to take bold decision and changes, inspires to develop. Leaders turn an idea to progress with the help of storytelling – a powerful motivating tool.

Make amazing presentations, inspire with storytelling and amaze with facts!

*(вставить форму контактов внизу или другие статьи. Или и то, и то)*