

Scot McKay 0:02

Gentlemen, can you believe it the year 2020 is upon us. And as a man of character who believes in virtuous masculinity, isn't it time to uplevel your life and start getting the women in your life you deserve the career or even your own business that you've always dreamed of? And certainly isn't it time to live the dream with all the adventures you've always wanted? Well go to [WWW dot mountaintop podcast.com](http://WWW.dot.mountaintoppodcast.com) click the little button in the upper right corner and let's talk about it put me to work for you to make this more than just a pipe dream in your life. Let's make it your reality. Go To [www mountaintop podcast](http://www.mountaintoppodcast.com) calm and let's talk.

Edroy Odem 0:46

From the mist and shrouded mountaintop fortress that is x&y Communications Headquarters. You're listening to the World famous mountaintop podcast and now your host Scot McKay.

Scot McKay 0:59

Hello How's it going gentlemen? This is your main man Scot McKay back at you again with another episode of the world famous mountaintop podcast. It's at Scot McKay on Twitter. Real Scot McKay on Instagram Scot McKay on YouTube, you can find us on the web as always at [www. Mountain Top podcast calm](http://www.MountainToppodcast.com). And yes, I'm waiting for you to join us. On the mountaintop summit, our Facebook group, you're missing out on a lot if you're not there already. Today, we're going to cover a topic that after, you know, 1314 years doing this show, I really just can't believe we haven't covered it yet. As a matter of fact, I'm a little bit appalled. That topic is storytelling, which as you know, has been a stalwart topic in the world of men's dating advice ever since the days of the game and probably even before, if you know how to tell a story correctly and with a certain amount of intrigue, etc, etc. You're going to be charming and people are going to love you. If you don't well, then you're going to either be really boring, or really uninteresting, and probably both. So why haven't I ever done a show on this topic before? Well, because I needed the right guest. Finally, I found the right guy to do this show. His name is Paul Smith. He's got an MBA from the Wharton School at the IV, University of Pennsylvania. He's the best selling author of several books, including lead with a story cell with a story. And his newest book, The 10 stories great leaders tell which I want to learn all about as I'm sure you do. So here he is, gentlemen, my guest Paul Smith. Welcome, man.

Paul Smith 2:37

Hey, Scott, thanks for having me on the show.

Scot McKay 2:39

Yeah, man. It really is my pleasure because guys hear all the time about the importance of telling stories, but most of us we really don't have the confidence to string words together. Even in common conversation so much let alone having to tell an entire end to end story. So is that part of what inspired you to take on this area of expertise or is it a little bit deeper than that still?

Paul Smith 3:05

Well, that that is why more selfishly, because I wanted to know how to do it. I mean, and my purpose wasn't necessarily for it for dating. In fact, it definitely wasn't it was for for business and leadership. But, you know, after, you know, spending my years at the inn in Business School, like you'd mentioned, and 20 years at Procter and Gamble, and a few years as a consultant, you know, I finally realized that, that storytelling is an important leadership skill set, right. But nobody taught me that they didn't teach me that in any of those places. And that frustrated me and so I'm, I just went out on my own little personal learning journey, I guess. And I started interviewing leaders that I thought were particularly good at it. Were good leaders in general, but good storytellers in particular. And at some point along the way, I realized you know, if I want to know this that badly, maybe other people do as well. So it stopped being my own little personal learning journey and started being an idea for a book that you know, other people could read and learn. How to be better storytellers to help them be more effective at their job. That's what got me into this.

Scot McKay 4:05

Isn't it amazing how most of us who get into a certain field and become passionate about it, especially in terms of helping other people succeed at it really started with that need a glaring hole in our lives to fill that need. And indeed, if you're in the business world, and you're in sales, right, you have a book called sell the story, intriguing customers, charming customers, having people like you want more of you is really key to climbing the corporate ladder and indeed, earning clients isn't it?

Paul Smith 4:41

Yeah, it is. And it's just but it's just not the kind of thing that people teach you in a formal way. Like they would teach you marketing or operations or math or science or anything else.

Scot McKay 4:51

Yeah, falls under social skills, which really aren't taught in school, right way.

Paul Smith 4:55

We just we assume that we learned them through socialization, you know, and so, everybody Most people think that they know how to tell a story. That's that's part of it. Like just like most people think that they know how to behave around other people. But we probably don't.

Scot McKay 5:08

Yeah, and sometimes we don't get the message either. Exactly. Yeah, I know this guy who constantly talks about his accomplishments and tell stories about the great things his kids are doing. I mean, to the point where he'll say, hey, let me show you this YouTube video of my kids swimming five laps. Can you watch this? Isn't this wonderful? Isn't this amazing? And people are just like frothing at the mouth going Oh, God, somebody come rescue me like they're giving people rescue me eyes. You know what I mean? Yeah. And that's not storytelling. And you know what hearing stories like that, which coincidentally, I guess I just told a story but nevertheless, most of us the storytelling is very fraught Paul because on the one hand, we're told how important it is how amazing it is to tell a great story. It charms women, it gets your customers to buy more things from you, it makes you the coolest uncle at the Thanksgiving table, whatever. And, you know, we see in movies all the time how that plays out, you know, great stories are not only the plots of the movies themselves, but even within the movie, people who tell great stories are always revered. But at the same time, we're also told, for example, when we go out with a woman for the first time, you know, a lot Dale Carnegie and others, we should let her do the talking 90% of the time, and we should become better listeners. And in fact, we should shut up and and let her do the talking. Because that makes us more interesting. I mean, the famous line from How to Win Friends and Influence People is after a 10 minute conversation Dale Carnegie had with a certain woman, she pauses and says, Oh, Mr. Carnegie, you're such a fascinating conversation list. And she did almost all the talking. And of course, that concept is greatly revered. So guys are left believing. Well, you know what stories are boring. I mean, you know There's the famous line cool story, bro tell it again, which is of course sarcastic in the extreme meaning like, you know, you just bored us all with that and nobody freakin cares. What is a guy to do to figure out the difference between being a boring honoris or indeed awkward storyteller versus telling stories that actually are charming that people want to hear?

Paul Smith 7:25

Yeah, well, you just actually identified a couple of them in in what you said about that. That other guy's story. So two things he was doing wrong. First of all, he kind of starts out the story. Let me tell you about, you know, my kids. Let me tell you a story about this. Let me tell you, that's not the way to start a story. In fact, you should never use the word story when you tell a story. That's cardinal sin. Number one. Don't say let me tell you a story. Because what people expect when they hear that is, oh, it's going

to be a long, boring 15 minute irrelevant story. Nobody wants to hear that. You know, you can tell a story but it should be in service of answering somebody's question. or telling them something that's important to them, as opposed to let me tell you a story about something that's important to me, which is what Let me tell you a story means. The second part of that is, is that it's about me or my kid. Right? And you said, I think all of his stories are about him or his kids. That's a problem. Like, what do you think about people who every story they ever tell is about themselves. They're arrogant, know it all self focused, you know, that's not the kind of person you want to be with. And it's not the kind of person you want to be. So most of your stories should be about other people, not about you. You can tell some stories about you, obviously. But more than half of your story should be about things that happened to other people and all those people shouldn't be your kid by the way for the same reason. And when you do tell a story about yourself, sometimes you should be the bad guy in the story or the bad guy is probably the wrong word. But it should be a failure story. It should be a self deprecating when I made a mistake stories But look what I learned from it. So you're generously giving of yourself this is certainly true in business and you can see if you can draw some parallels to dating. But in business certainly people want to work for a leader who is more interested in developing his or her people than they are about protecting their own ego and showing off so you want to work for a leader who readily tells you their failure stories so that you won't make the same mistakes they made and I think people in regular conversation want the same they want somebody who's vulnerable I'm quite certain women want that they want a man who's willing to be vulnerable in front of them sometimes not all the time, but sometimes and the way you do that is you tell them an embarrassing story. You know, and and the lesson you learned from it,

Scot McKay 9:44

you know, that idea of self deprecation is the first thing that came to mind for me, because even good quality stand up comedians, their funniest jokes are embarrassment, jokes Yeah,

Paul Smith 9:56

about themselves. Not somebody

Scot McKay 9:58

worthy. Or the butt of the embarrassment? Exactly. It just makes people roar with laughter. Time after time. If you listen to like laugh USA, you know Sirius XM channel 98, which is the clean channel, by the way, which is a lot funnier. Because it's pure comedy. You know, you can't just get up there like Eddie Murphy until dick jokes, you know, right. Although, that is extremely funny also. Yeah. And Eddie Murphy doesn't. But hearing pure comedy that's built off of irony. And self deprecation just hits people's

funny bone in the right way. Wouldn't you agree that a good story, especially would have elements of humor to it, even if accidentally?

Paul Smith 10:40

Yes, definitely. And I'll admit that that's, that's one aspect of storytelling that I don't spend a lot of time teaching and not because it's not important. But because it's hard to teach humor, and it's easy to get dangerously wrong, right especially around the office. You know, you tell an off color joke in the wrong crowd and I could cost you your job, you know, so percent right? Right. So

Scot McKay 11:02

Oh, you could tell an off color story and it would get you fired. Yeah, yeah. Especially if it's not funny.

Paul Smith 11:08

Right? So so I tend to steer away from trying to have people force humor into their stories. If it naturally shows up that way, I think that's fine. But it's not a requirement that your stories are funny, whereas it is a requirement that your stories have some emotional connection, that your your audience emotionally connects with the story that is a requirement, it is a requirement that it you know, have some of the basic fundamentals of a story, you know, a time a place a main character, that main character is going to be facing some kind of a goal or a challenge. And there's got to be someone or something getting in the way of that goal of, you know, villain or bad guy, if you will, you know, so there there are some required elements of storytelling, humorous, and I would say humor is a nice to have not a must have.

Scot McKay 11:51

Yeah, certainly. The one element that you mentioned that I think is definitely a must have, and this is kind of underscoring what you've already said is relating to the audience that requires us to be a good listener an active listener well ahead of attempting to tell the story, doesn't it?

Paul Smith 12:08

Yes. And mostly because you have to pick the right story to tell at the right time. And if you're not paying attention and listening closely, you won't know what story to tell at the right time, you'll just blurt out whatever story you've been wanting to tell since the conversation started. And that's never a good story to tell. Right? That's one of those self aggrandizement stories that you want to show off. Basically, that's

not the kind of stories you want to tell at work and probably not in dating as well. You're listening for verbal cues, conversational cues that there's a question being asked or a topic that your interlocutor wants to explore that if you happen to have a story that fits nicely into that will then share that story. But yeah, you got to be listening to know what that is.

Scot McKay 12:52

interlocutory What great usage

Paul Smith 12:55

is probably one of those \$5 sad words.

Scot McKay 12:57

Yeah, you know, we have to drop the term rockin At some point in this show,

Paul Smith 13:01

I don't ever use that one, but but you just did. So there you go,

Scot McKay 13:04

well done. The other thing that comes to mind is not only listening, but being socially intuitive enough to read the Room to Read your audience and know, okay, what is going to be appropriate here? What isn't going to be appropriate here? So you kind of have to stop look and listen, don't you?

Paul Smith 13:24

I think so all that I would encapsulate it into listening, well, being an empathetic listener. But so part of how you decide so let's say you've been a good listener in the conversation, and you do decide you're going to tell a certain story about someone, maybe not you about somebody else, but because it's interesting and fits into the conversation. What you're looking for that makes a story relevant, I think is the word you use is these three things here. Here's what makes a story relevant is it's about a relatable main character facing a relevant challenge and undergoing some kind of an honest struggle. Right. So the Those are kind of the three basic parts of a story that makes it interesting to people. So the the

relevant main character, or relatable main character is just a main character that your audience can relate to. Right? If you're, you know, around the office on Monday morning, you're telling stories about Steve Jobs, Well, okay, you know, that's great, or your bill gates or something like, but I'm not Steve Jobs. I'm not Bill Gates, I'm never going to be a Titan of industry myself. You know, that's just hard for me to relate to stories about people like that. And you're about to tell me about something awesome that they did, and the wall that might be nice for them and their billions of dollars they've made as a result of it. That's not going to help me do my job tomorrow morning. Right. But you tell me a story about a guy who used to have my job five years ago, and was facing the challenge I'm facing right now, today. That story I want to hear, right, because it's somebody like me facing the kind of challenge that I'm facing right now. That's a relevant story, to me far more relevant than hearing about some awesome thing that Bill Gates came up with, right. So those are the three real components, the relatable main character, the relevant challenge and that main character has to face an honest struggle. In other words, it's got to be hard for them to accomplish what they accomplished. It can't be too easy because that's just a boring story. And nobody's going to learn anything from a boring story.

Scot McKay 15:13

You know, what comes to mind while you were talking is you're describing a micro story, a story that would take just a couple minutes to tell, you know, you don't want to get too drawn out because then you'll lose people. But there are also macro stories. I mean, Homer's Odyssey is not told her minutes, but it's still a story that's being told. And what struck me about what you just described is there's a pattern to it. There's a predictable response when you tell a story in a certain pattern, and I think that definitely applies to macro stories as well. Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey comes to mind which we've talked about on our show. Every action adventure movie ever made. That's targeting men in particular is following the hero's journey. I mean, Star Wars is the hero's journey. And it's kind of the macro version of what you just described is something we can relate to something we can picture ourselves doing because you know, where the every man and suddenly the Every man is hit with a world class challenge that he has to figure out. And then you know, he saves the world defeats the bad guy gets the girl gets the spoils of victory at the end. And it is extremely predictable and happens over and over again. And so many movies Rocky, even like Indiana Jones, all these movies, where a normal guy ends up saving the world. And that's what's interesting at a macro level is hey, we can relate to it. But there was a problem that needed to be overcome. And for some reason, however, we're wired as humans that really is extremely interesting to us, isn't it?

Paul Smith 16:53

It is and so I agree that both micro stories and macro stories as as you've described them, have A structure to them, the hero's journey structure that you mentioned. That one is particularly good for the macro stories, you know, the saga, the long saga from Star, you know, whatever. When you're trying to tell a two or three minute story around the office, I found that one to be a little too cumbersome

because if you study it, you know, Joseph Campbell's structure on that I think it's 17 plot steps that you're going through, right? Of course, it just it's too cumbersome to craft a leadership story. So what I advocate or really, it's a four step process, there are eight individual questions you need to answer. But that's when I'm coaching executives and telling a story. It's easier than talking about, you know, the context, the challenge, the conflict, the resolution, all that kind of stuff, which sounds rather academic, I just say, look, here's a questions, you got to answer the questions, and you got to answer them in this order. And that's how you tell a story. Or at least that's how you structure a story. So let me give you the questions. If you're interested. You're far away. Yeah. So first of all, answer them all, you will know because you're not telling a story right now, but when you do you need to answer them. Yes. Okay. So first of all, you have to answer the question, why should I bother listening to your story? Right? That's the first question you have to answer, you have to give the audience a reason to bother listening to the next three to four minutes, two, or three or four minutes of you to tell this story. Because if you don't give them a good reason, they might not listen to the story, right? They might just walk away mentally or emotionally or physically. Alright, so once you answer that question, Well, you've kind of earned the right to answer the next five questions. So here they are wearing when did it take place? Who's the main character and what did they want? What was the problem or opportunity they ran into? What did they do about it? And how did it turn out in the end? That's the basic flow of a story. Now, if you're doing the math, there's still two more right. So the last two are, what did you learn from the story? And what do you what do you think I should go do now? Right? So this is you. You need to tell them or have them answer for themselves? What should they go do now. Now, the They've heard your story because these are typically trafficking and sales stories or leadership stories or something like that, where you have an objective, you're trying to get somebody to go do something, either buy my product or take this job or go run that project better than you're doing now or, you know, do something and and maybe if it's men and women, it's a Yo, I'm trying to get you to go out with me. I don't know what whatever your goal is. But those are the eight questions. And if you answer those questions, in that order, a story will emerge in a natural structure, right without you having to remember the 17 plot twists, and you know, the Joseph Campbell's hero's journey, storytelling structure. So this is just a basic format for I think, any decent story. I love the

Scot McKay 19:39

idea of having a call to action at the end. That's powerful. Yeah. Because then you've given the story with a purpose and interactive purpose. you're inviting them to respond. And then it becomes a conversation instead of just a versation.

Paul Smith 19:55

Right. In fact, I teach my clients that you should not be in Question seven or eight unless you really screw up. Right? So your job as the storyteller is to answer questions one through six. And then question six is how did it turn out in the end? So it should feel like the end of the story. That's where you pause,

because like you said, You presumably you're having a conversation with somebody, right? It's a requirement that you let them talk at some point. This is the moment right, you've answered question six, take a breath. See how they respond. They will tell you what they learned from the story nine times out of 10. And they'll probably tell you what they think they'll go do now. Oh, yeah, that's really interesting Boss, I, you know, well, so here's what I think I'm going to do that. I think I'll go try this, you know. And if they tell you that they've learned the lesson you wanted them to learn and that they're going to go do what you wanted them to do. You're done right? is far better for them to come to the conclusion that you wanted them to come then you just beating them over the head and wagging your finger at them and telling them what to do. So you always want the audience to answer questions seven or eight. The only time you would answer it if they came to the wrong conclusion, if they just didn't get it, maybe you didn't tell the story, right? Or maybe it was a bad story. But, you know, if they fail, then you've got to redirect them. And it's easy to do. You can just say, you know, that's an interesting conclusion. I thought about that. But here's a, here's a better conclusion, I think, and here are my reasons why See, you can always redirect if it doesn't work, but that's the goal is you answer one through six, let them answer seven and eight.

Scot McKay 21:21

Now what you're talking about? Well, absolutely. 100% correct. In principle, and I'm sure in practice, throws one hell of a wrench in the machine. How's that? Because a lot of times guys are told, Hey, you know what, you need to have a few good stories on the room. You need to know how to tell them, You need to practice them. And what you're talking about sounds a lot more like hey, because I'm actively listening because I'm observant. I'm going to custom craft a story to where someone is right now, and what their needs are and you're talking about the importance of that how does that intersect with having a You have them already practice? Is there a time in a place for one versus the other?

Paul Smith 22:03

Yeah, I'm not suggesting what you just said. So I'm not suggesting that you should make up a story on the spot and crafted in like, you're like you're writing fiction on the spot and making up the seven or eight answers. Based on what you hearing?

Scot McKay 22:17

Well hold on a second, not that you're making things up. But that you're able to think outside the box a little bit and somehow trigger your mind to the point of being able to recount a memory in the manner that you're prescribing as opposed to, I don't know, becoming this boring guy who tells the same six stories over and over again at Christmas parties.

Paul Smith 22:39

Right? So let me let me try and answer it a different way. Because what I'm suggesting is more the second thing that you said, you do need to have a few stories on hand. Well, let me edit that. You need to have a lot of stories, okay, as a leader, as a marketer, as a salesperson as a just as a man, as a father, you know, husband, whatever. You need to have dozens Hundreds In fact, that's my first book, there's 115 leadership stories in it, to start your repertoire of leadership stories to start, right, you need more than that. My second book parenting with a story 101 stories that parents can tell to their kids to teach them important life lessons. That's a start. You need more than that. Okay? similar with the sales stories. So you need lots of lots and lots of stories, not just two or three good stories in your back pocket, because those two or three good stories are good for two or three situations, you're going to run into countless situations in life, you're going to need different stories. So it would behoove you to create a large repertoire of stories and choose to tell the right story at the right time. What I'm what I'm suggesting with a questions is, when you tell each of those stories, that's the order in which you tell it. You don't say, hey, look, I learn this lesson about whatever whatever and I'll let me tell you what happened. So it was back in whatever time you know. Well, you started by answering questions seven Any skip back to number one? Don't do it that way. Right? Start with, you know, question number one, then go to two, then go to three. So I'm giving you the order to tell the story. But you're not inventing it on the spot it most of the stories you tell, especially if you're telling them at work, it's part of your leadership repertoire. You shouldn't be telling them just for the first time, every time you tell them, I'm suggesting that you think about the stories you need ahead of time, create a wish list of stories, I need these 1015 stories right away. Right? That's what the 10 stories great leaders tell us about. It's to give you here the most important 10 stories, you should tell, right? go spend some time doing some homework and craft these stories, answer the eight questions for each of these 10 stories and I give you a little workbook to do that. answer all those questions for all 10 stories. Now you have those 10 stories. Now, when you find yourself in a situation where your leader where your team needs some leadership for you to set the vision for them. Oh, that's story number three vision story. I'll tell that story now. I've already thought through the eight questions and the answers to that. Now, I've not scripted it out. But I know the story. I know the answer the questions in general, and I will deliver it in an extemporaneous manner at this point in the conversation, because the conversation requires it. Is that more clear?

Scot McKay 25:15

Oh, yeah. And I think that's excellent advice about kind of stepping back, and thinking about the kinds of stories you could potentially need to tell and then developing those stories with 2024 site. I like that a lot. Because I think virtually none of us ever think to do that. But what you're doing here is reminding us that storytelling isn't accidental is indeed a skill. And like any other skill, you're going to have to hone it, you got to work on it, you're going to have to practice and perfect practice makes perfect. Which means before you even tell a story, you need to know that story. The story has to be mindful to you because

then it'll flow a little bit better out of your mouth. And then after a couple times of having told it, you'll be a pro at that story, but instead just having six, like my birthday Christmas is like a birthday. Yeah, you told me about the time \$100 in Atlantic City 44 times now you know, instead of being that person, you build a large enough repertoire, that's you can really be not only selective about picking the right story to tell, but you can avoid boring people to tears telling them the same story over and over again. Another thing that you brought up there is what I've heard described as inductive storytelling versus deductive storytelling. And I think this is, as you would phrase it, one of the other Cardinal Sins of storytelling, and deductive storytelling, which is the bad way to do this, for lack of a better word, would go something like this. Let me tell you about the time I completely failed a test and then my teacher found out I was cheating but then realized I wasn't cheating after all. What's you know is a lot like one of those times, which I'm sure you've had, like I've had, every guy can relate to what I'm about to say, you watch the two minute trailer for a certain movie at a theater and you go, Well, I've already seen the movie and I need to see this thing. I know exactly how it's going to end just based on the hints from the trailer and what's going to happen. And they've probably already told me the cool parts. Well, if you tell someone how a story is going to end before you even told it, then you've taken all the intrigue, you've taken all the mystery and indeed, the element of surprise away. And that along with weirdness, I'd say are the main reasons why a story would be interesting to begin with. So what I loved about what you said earlier in the podcast is don't tell people you're telling them a story. Just lead them on that journey to where that story is going to end and let them kind of get their juices flowing in their brain trying to figure out where this is going. And so they can see whether they're right or not. It's like a murder mystery. A level of intrigue every time you tell a story that way, whereas if you kind of blow the ending before we even give the beginning, there's no reason left to talk is there?

Paul Smith 28:10

Right? And I've never heard it referred to as inductive and deductive storytelling, but I think I like that now. So yeah, that deductive, I think you said method where you basically tell them the story before you tell them the story that that is a cardinal sin. And that's part of why I came up with the eight questions because it forces you to not do that. Because how did it turn out in the end? And what did you learn? And what should you go do now? Those are all the last questions. You can't answer them at the beginning at the beginning. It's just a very short Why should I listen to the story? And then you get right into Where did it happen? When did it happen? Who's the main character? What? You know, it was a problem they ran into what to do about it. So you're walking through in chronological order, as opposed to giving them the big finish all the way up at the beginning? Yeah, that's a bad way to tell stories.

Scot McKay 28:53

Yeah, he tried to tell stories like Quentin Tarantino and Pulp Fiction, you just gotta lose people. Just a visual to go along with All these changes in venue and tries and time coordination is you better keep it simple, stupid in terms of the actual structure of the story, right?

Paul Smith 29:09

Yeah, that's that's what these eight questions do and you know, once you get really good at it, and you can certainly take some liberties with it, but this is like home base, I think, the safest way to tell a story, you're probably not going to mess it up if you if you do it this way.

Scot McKay 29:22

You know, along with that this kind of inductive storytelling. I know you mentioned that humor is an important, but if you're going to plan this story to be humorous, and others if there's a punch line at the end, if you're telling a story joke, it's always better. If you don't tell people the jokes coming. You're letting them figure it out. I'm reminded of a show back in the 70s called welcome back Kotter with Gabe Kaplan on dating myself here. We're at the end of every show, he would tell a story to his wife. The last segment, you know, between the last commercial segment of the show and the credits was Did I ever tell you about my uncle Abraham Carter and his wife would always laugh, because she knew a story was coming that would culminate in a joke. Now, on the surface that sounds a little bit reductive. You don't know what the story is going to be, but because he always starts his jokes like this, you know, it's going to be funny. That's kind of like an advanced level of funny storytelling because, yeah, in one sense, Gabriel Kaplan analyses about to tell a joke, but you still don't know what the jokes about. It could be anything. It's just, he has this relationship with his wife who adores him in the show. If you've ever seen reruns, these are the this is the show, by the way, where John Travolta got his start is Vinnie Barbarino and Arnold Horshack, isn't it and you know, it's an iconic show from the 70s. And I'm sure you could find it on TV Land or something. It's very funny. But his wife adores him in the show, and she just loves the fact that he makes her laugh, that it's going to be a story worth listening to and it's going to be funny, but I will stand by the belief that story jokes are even funnier, the more surprising they are.

Paul Smith 31:04

Right. Yeah, I agree with that. In fact, the surprises one of the key elements of storytelling that I do, teach and advocate and cover in most of my books is there needs to be some surprise, probably more than one place in it. But certainly at the end, that's the best place to put a surprise in there. There are simple techniques to create a surprise, and stories where were none naturally exist. So you can craft the story to where you create these surprises. Even if you don't think they're they're going to happen.

Scot McKay 31:31

Yeah. Can you give us an example of how to do that?

Paul Smith 31:33

Yeah, so the simplest way I'll just I'll illustrate it for you. So there's a young boy named James nine year old kid, he's in the kitchen with his mom and his mom's sister. So while mom and Auntie are sitting at the kitchen table, having a cup of tea, James is standing at the stove watching the tea kettle boil, and he's just fascinated with it right. He's watching the steam come out of a jet of steam right come out of the kettle and he's got a spoon. He holds it up there in the genestein. He's watching the little drops of water for Warm on the spoon and drip down into a cup. These got sitting there and he's just watching that cycle go over and over and over again just fascinated with it. Well, eventually his mom just gets tired of him. She just barks out and she's like James, go ride your bike, do your homework, read a book, you know, do do something. Aren't you ashamed yourself just wasting your time like this? Well, fortunately, young James was undaunted by his mother's admonition there because 20 years later, obviously, at the age of 29, and in the year 1765, James Watt reinvented the steam engine, ushering in the industrial revolution that you and I, of course, all benefit from today. And all based on a fascination with steam that he developed at the age of nine in his mother's kitchen right now. Unless you're a history buff. It was probably a surprise to you that that story was about James Watt, the inventor of the steam engine, right? And why was it a surprise? And the answer is because I didn't tell you his last name until the end of the story. Right? It was just a story about James nine year old kid in the kitchen, right? So you take one vital piece of information that belongs at the beginning of the story, the main characters last name, right? I think it's question number three, right? Who's the main character? And what do they want? You're supposed to give the main character's name at the beginning of the story. But if you take one or two small pieces of information from the beginning, and save it to the end, you create a natural surprise. Now, if you do that, with a lot of things, you're going to have one of those Quentin Tarantino messes. That's it's going to be no way to tell it. But if you do it smartly, like that you can create a surprise ending in almost any story.

Scot McKay 33:29

Yeah, that's really fascinating, because, indeed, the story is going somewhere, but we don't know where yet. Right? You know, which reminds me to something you've graciously offered, while we were chit chatting before the beginning of this podcast, which is to go ahead and disclose the 10 stories that great leaders tell. So don't keep us in suspense anymore. Tell us that.

Paul Smith 33:51

Yeah, we should probably do that. Yeah. So. So the first four of the 10 kind of go together because they're about setting the direction for the organization. So here they are. where we came from. So that's a founding story, why we can't stay here. So that's a case for change story, where we're going, which is a

vision story, and how we're going to get there, which I call a strategy story. Because the strategies, you know, the journey about how we're going to get from where we are now to where we want to be. So if you can tell those four stories, as a leader, you're more likely to get your organization to go where you want them to go, because you can accurately and in a compelling manner, articulate where we came from, why we can't stay, where we're going and how we're going to get there, right. All right, the next four go together as well. But there are more about who we are as an organization. So that's what we believe that's a corporate values story, who we serve customer story, a story about your customer, what we do for our customers. So that's kind of a classical sales story, a story of you doing something so awesome, you know, with your customer, people should pay you to do more of it. And eighth one is how we're different from our competitors. I call that a marketing story because marketing is generally in charge of differentiating you from your competitors. So imagine you can tell those four stories easily and in a compelling manner, you're much more likely to have an organization be successful because you can explain who we are, who we serve, what we do for those people we serve, and how we're different from our competitors. Alright, so that gets us through number eight. The last two kind of go together as well. But they're more personal to you as the leader. So number nine is why I lead the way I do. So that's a personal leadership philosophy story explaining why you have become the leader you've become. And then 10 is why you should want to work here, use the person you're talking to. So it's a recruiting story, right? Because every leaders job is to bring in talented people to the organization and have them be successful and follow the leadership. You know, that's not just the job of HR, or recruiting just like that sales story and that marketing story are not just the job of sales and marketing. Every leader in an organization needs to be able to tell it least one good sales story and one good marketing story, right? Because as a leader, you need to know what you're selling. And you need to know how you're different from your competitors, you can leave the hundreds of others to those departments. But a good leader should be able to tell all 10 of these I think,

Scot McKay 36:14

and I'm sure you give examples of each of these in your book, correct?

Paul Smith 36:17

Right. Yeah. So there's each chapter, there's one chapter per each of these 10. There's one example in each chapter. Explain why the story is important. And then there's some kind of tips for how can you go find and craft your own story like that? Because these are just these 10 examples are from some other company, right? You have to develop your own story to fit these 10

Scot McKay 36:37

Yeah, most definitely. So guys, if you want to get your hands on Paul Smith's book, 10 stories great leaders tell and get some ideas for telling your own stories and building that repertoire of stories we talked about a few minutes ago. Definitely go to [WWW dot mountaintop.podcast.com](http://WWW.dot.mountaintop.podcast.com) front slash Paul Smith, pa ul s m th all one word That will take you directly to the amazon.com link for that book. I've also edited my Amazon influencer page so that you can grab a copy not only have 10 stories great leaders tell but also lead with a story and sell the story. And you can have whole library of Paul Smith books right there at your fingertips on Kindle or you can even get them in paperback send directly to your doorstep go either to mountaintop.podcast.calm front slash Amazon or if you want to go directly to 10 stories great leaders tell once again go to www.mountain.top.podcast.com front slash Paul Smith pa ul SM i th and Paul Smith. It's been a pleasure to have you on the show. I think a lot of guys have gleaned some very practical information that will make them tell better stories instead of cool stories, bro.

Paul Smith 37:51

Exactly. I hope so. Thanks for having me on.

Scot McKay 37:54

Yeah, man. My pleasure. and gentlemen, if you haven't been to [WWW dot mountaintop.podcast.com](http://WWW.dot.mountaintop.podcast.com) lately I am You to go there and get 25 minutes on the phone with me for free. We can talk about where you are right now where you want to be, be the kind of man who attracts women that you want in your life, not these toxic women, not women who are going to disrespect you, not women who are going to treat you poorly, not women who are going to cheat on you, but women who are sweet and wonderful, who actually like men who are feminine and who also turned you on. We can talk about where you are right now and what the future is going to hold for you. When you get on the phone with me for 25 minutes. It's absolutely free. And you can reserve your time at www.mountain.top.podcast.com where you'll also find a host of other things that will be of interest to you including links to my newsletter, which you can also get for free, which gives you daily advice on how to be a better man and how to get the woman of your dreams and also transcripts and YouTube versions of each and every podcast from Episode Number 150 onward. And until I talk to you again real soon This is Scott McKay from x&y communications in San Antonio, Texas. Be good out there.

Edroy Odem 39:13

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