

# How and When to Use Narrative

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## WHAT'S COVERED

Whatever the purpose of your speech, you're going to need a way to support your statements to prove their accuracy, but a good speech also makes its points interesting and memorable. The most common forms of support are facts, statistics, testimony, narrative, examples, and comparisons. In this lesson, we are going to address narrative. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. The Narrative
2. How to Use a Narrative

## 1. The Narrative

**Narrative** takes the form of a story. Presenters use narratives to support a point that was already made or to introduce a point that will soon be made.

Narratives can be combined with facts or statistics to make them even more compelling.



### TERM TO KNOW

#### **Narrative**

The systematic recitation of an event or series of events (see also storytelling).

## 2. How to Use a Narrative

Storytelling points toward a single goal. Your story should not be forced, but should come across as a natural part of your speech. If your audience thinks you're telling a story just because you read that it was a good idea to do so, your story won't work. The task of a story is to make the audience care. Your narrative should be something that your audience can easily understand and relate to.

Keep it short and sweet. Limit your narrative to three or four minutes at the most. Remember, you are using it to support or clarify your point. Once you've done that, move on. Your story is not there to replace information. It is there to put something you have said into perspective.

The best stories paint a picture. They allow your audience to visualize what you are saying. Make sure your story builds over time and doesn't get boring. Keep your audience interested until the end. Don't overuse stories.

Of course, as the old adage says, "use what you know." Stories are not just about facts— they're also about communicating what you have experienced and what you personally know, and feel, to be true.



## SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that a **narrative** is relayed in the form of a story. When **using a narrative**, the most important rule is to make the audience care. Your story should not be forced; the audience should perceive it as natural part of your speech.

Source: Boundless. "How and When to Use Narrative." Boundless Communications Boundless, 3 Mar. 2017. Retrieved 20 May. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/communications/textbooks/boundless-communications-textbook/supporting-your-ideas-9/using-life-experience-narrative-50/how-and-when-to-use-narrative-201-8004/>



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