

Damon Ing
EDTC6329 Week 1 Reflection

Storytelling and training

1. Have you ever used storytelling in your training or the projects that you have completed in this program?

Since I have just entered my first semester as a doctoral student this question really does not apply to me. Although, I believe I can use my Masters degree experience to answer this question. I have in the past used storytelling in my training for projects that I had in this education program. I find that telling stories can give a break from the lesson being taught and give somewhat of a break to the human brain. I found the PowerPoint by John Medina very interesting.

I discovered that when I was on Skype or collaborate; I could see when those listening to my presentations were dozing off. I took this as a cue to start telling a story, and realized that it brought those listening to me back on track and interested in my presentation. I find that if you tell stories, they describe your topic in another way instead of just verbalizing. Storytelling can also be used as a descriptor of what to do and what not to do, if I am teaching a descriptive task or project.

2. Have you ever seen or participated in training that included storytelling?

I have participated in training that included storytelling, in the law enforcement realm storytelling is heavily depended on for presentations. At the police academy when students have to sit in class for 8+ hours a day listening to presentations and the laws of the state, they can get pretty hammered down at the end of the day.

Myself and other instructors have used storytelling of experiences we faced in real life on the streets during our patrols. These experiences not only excite the students, but also paint a real life application to what they are learning at the moment. Another strong tool is the showing of videos. Videos can act as storytelling that are visual in nature. Not only does it provide a break, I have found it very useful in enforcing the topics we just discussed.

3. How do you think it would impact training?

I have found that it drastically impacted training. Students became more engaged in the conversation. Most wanted to ask questions if they had difficulty applying what was discussed in the lesson as compared to the story we were telling. I have found that sometimes funny or serious stories (those that involved serious bodily injury or death) were more profound in nature. I have even heard students during breaks still talking to others about the story I told during the lesson.

4. What are some ways that you could include storytelling in your training?

There are many ways to include storytelling and I have learned that no instructor is the same. Some ways could be by going into a story after an important fact or topic is discussed. In the PowerPoint by Art Levy, he discussed the topic of, "educating through stories". I believe that in your power points you could list topics depending on importance and schedule a story to be told with it.

Another way is to include videos, photos, or other types of media to remind you during teaching that a particular story could be told to reinforce what you just showed students. What I have done in the past is in the lower left corner of my slide I would insert a symbol to remind me to tell a story. I have also highlighted a topic on the slide to help me remember when to tell a story about that topic. These are just a few of my tips, I am sure other educators have their own ways.

5. What do you think the audience response would be to a training that included storytelling?

I have had favorable responses to my presentations that included storytelling. I find it a great tool in teaching and will continue to use it with other education technology tools. Students retain more information and are able to apply it at times to their own lives. Additionally, I have to agree with the PowerPoint when it discussed Dr. Martin Luther King and how his presentations did not include figures and numbers, but just merely his notions and ideologies.

Unless the presentation requires facts and figures, I always try to leave those out and replace them with storytelling. But it is also important to have a balance, too much storytelling can make the students believe that you really don't know the PowerPoint or are just, "winging" the presentation.

6. Include anything else you may have gotten out of your reading.

One thing I have gotten out of the reading is mainly out of slide 31. This is where we discussed that the hero's of my stories would be the audience. My students are there to learn something new, and will be immediately able to apply those newly learned items to their own lessons or work. I find this willingness to learn is very admirable. I also enjoyed how Mr. Art Levy applied movie themes and its nomenclature to how your presentations should be applied. I found this to be a very good analogy and I learned a lot from this PowerPoint presentation.

Brain rules for presenters

1. How does the information help you?

This information was really helpful to me, in the fact that they are topics I never would have considered before. In the past when I am creating a PowerPoint I was watching TV, talking on the phone, or surfing the Internet. It makes sense when Mr. Medina stated that the human mind works more efficiently when one task is processed. Although the first lesson he stated was that exercise would help in presentations. I had a difficult time understanding where he was getting at with this.

There are times when I teach and it's a Monday morning, I see students coming into the classroom that are already tired. I believe I could apply what he is talking about by having the students move around a little before starting the lesson. If I see students starting to dose off, I have the class get up and stretch some to refresh the mood. If it is really serious I allow a first break immediately so that they can have the option to get caffeine or other exercise to assist them in waking up. I did find that it was important to throw out some PowerPoint slides and replace them with pictures.

This is a concept I hadn't considered, the elimination of slides with lots of information with one that has one picture would still provide the same information. Genius!

2. Why do you think I included it here?

Why was this included on here? Simple, Dr. Butler has many power points and presentations to review from her students. I believe that Dr. Butler has seen an enormous amount of presentations and wants her students to think outside of the box. Not just PowerPoint everyone to death, but to have a productive lesson and a PowerPoint lesson that students would actually learn from and not go to sleep.

3. How will you use this information?

All of this information from both power points are very powerful and have a lot of meaning to me. I believe that this weeks read and reflect will help me not only become a better presenter, but also make my presentations more effective. I think I will start focusing on my presentations and not try to multitask during my development phase. I will also use storytelling in a way to engage my students and teach a lesson that will be more interesting and fulfilling at the same time.