



# Developing Your Voice

## Taking It To the Next Level



Bowker COMM 390

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# Telling Your Story

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# You ARE Telling a Story

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- ▶ A story is more compelling and more interesting than a report or a business letter.
- ▶ **The best stories are interesting right away because they promise something compelling or worthwhile.**
- ▶ The conflict or tension keeps you interested because you anticipate some satisfaction or resolution.



# The Characters

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- ▶ Your building, development, product or service is the character. Show how it works and how it interacts with its environment and the people involved.



The Umeda Sky Building in Osaka, Japan, designed by Hiroshi Hara.



# For Example

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- ▶ In business reports, what might act as a character? What is the driver of the story?



# The Narrative Arc

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Set the Scene

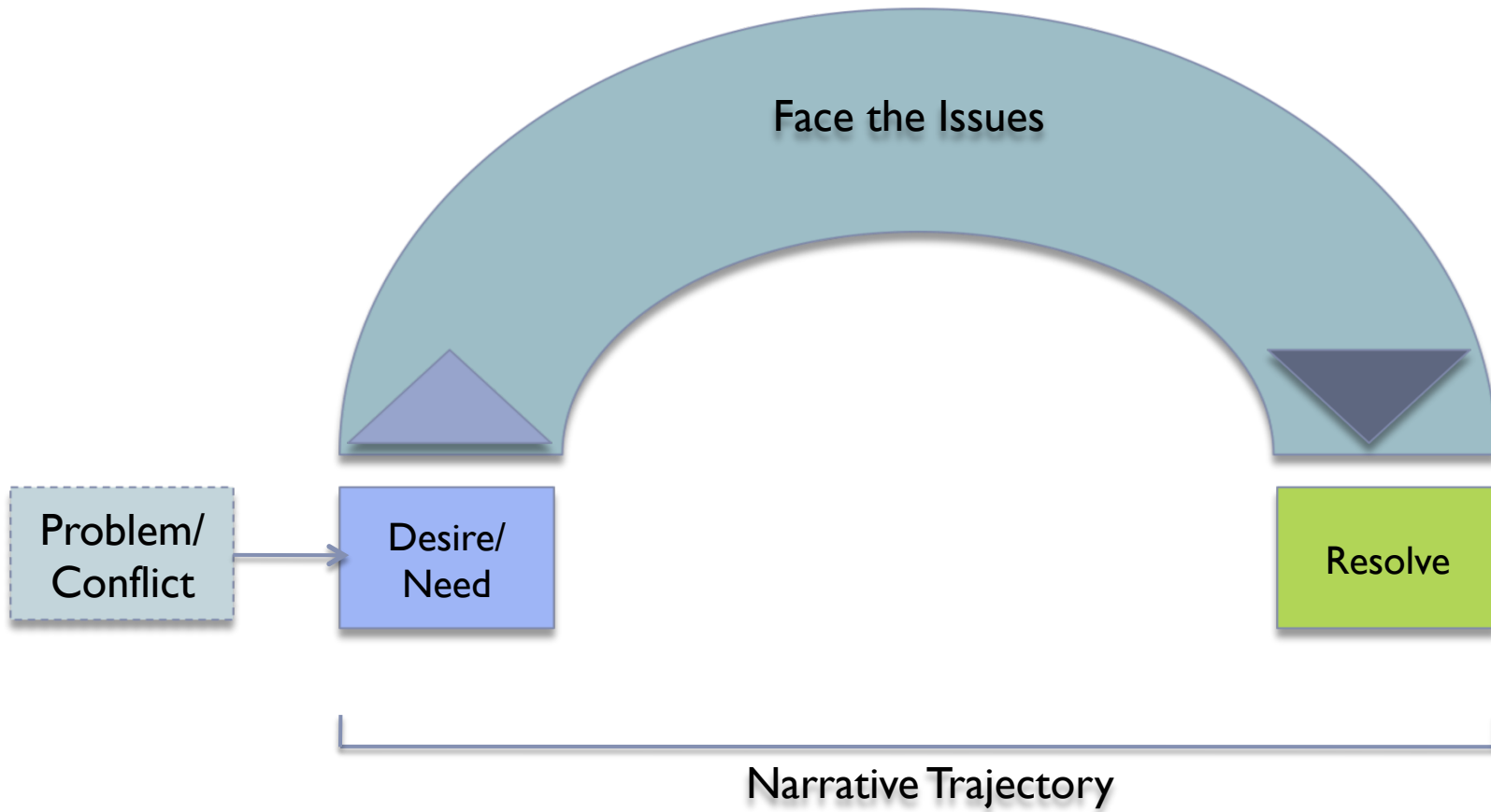
Face the Issues

Come to a Resolution



# The Narrative Arc

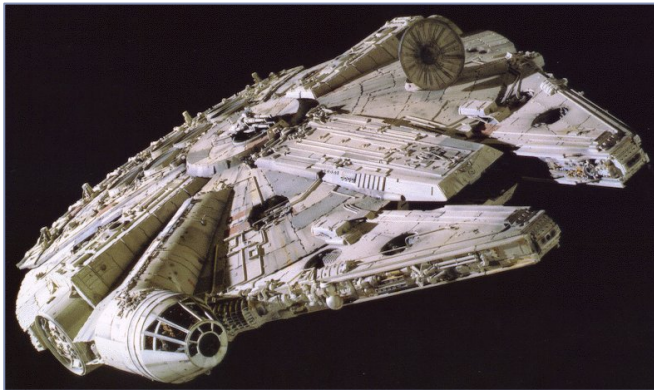
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# Solving a Problem

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- ▶ The problem or conflict creates the purpose, need or desire
- ▶ Your report should identify and explain a problem
  - ▶ It may or may not offer a recommendation or solution
- ▶ Your product or service should satisfy something for your customer





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Make It Real

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# Start with a Generalization

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- ▶ Describes your idea in simple or broad terms
- ▶ Provides a high level view
- ▶ Helps your audience know what to look for
- ▶ Sets the scene
- ▶ Determines the tone
- ▶ Indicates what is to come



# Set the Scene

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- ▶ ~~“It was a dark and stormy night....”~~
- ▶ Provide the necessary background and context
  - ▶ Sales or production volumes
  - ▶ Product characteristics and use
  - ▶ Site characteristics or process developments
  - ▶ Existing infrastructure
  - ▶ Recent events
  - ▶ Issues



# Example of generalizations

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- ▶ Consumer behaviour that will result in...
- ▶ A dramatic change in regulations in the cel phone industry...
- ▶ A busier than usual shopping location...
- ▶ The solution will be a compromise...

Turn two of these phrases, or ones similar, in to a proper sentence as it might appear in business writing using specific nouns and details that make the concept meaningful.

- ▶ E.g. This multi-use development will dramatically change the neighbourhood in which it is situated.
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# The Narrative Voice

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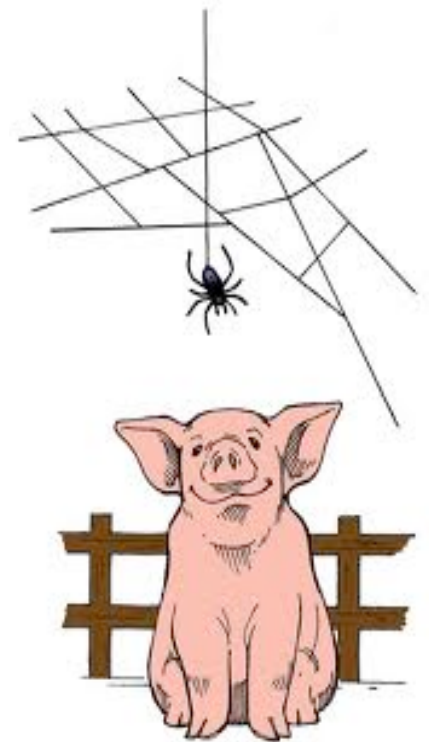
- ▶ After you have set the scene, describe the product, service, site, action or activity.
- ▶ Make the reader feel like they are there and can see what you are writing about.
- ▶ Create an image for them, help them understand your ideas.



# Be Direct & Precise

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- ▶ “Write with nouns and verbs...the adjective hasn’t been built that can pull a weak or inaccurate noun out of a tight place.” -- Strunk & White
- ▶ Use nouns that agree with the verb in meaning as well as tense
  - ▶ An *assessment* can not yield, but it can *inform*.
  - ▶ A methodology can’t beg to differ, but it can *be inappropriate*.
- ▶ Adjectives and adverbs are assistants only.



# Adjectives are Assistants

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- ▶ Show don't tell.
- ▶ Weak: huge, lots, great, very, little (imprecise)
- ▶ **Strong: significant, substantial, difficult, complex, recent**
- ▶ E.g. Beckham has enjoyed an unparalleled career characterized by dramatic fame and fortune.



# Practice Question

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Using a credible and confident voice, describe a business process. You might use:

- ▶ Distribution channels for digital cameras for amateur photographers,
- ▶ Firing a whole department, or
- ▶ Accessing investment funding for a start up business.

Describe the process so the reader will not have any questions about how it is done – you've made it real for them.

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# Example – Holographic Imaging

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- ▶ A hologram is a three-dimensional image created through photographic projection. Holography is a three-dimensional, freestanding image that is generated using light. It does not take up spatial depth or require any sort of viewing device such as three dimensional screens, or platforms. Holograms are made when one laser beam is split into two (the reference beam and the object beam) and both meet on the holographic film where an interference pattern is recorded. Laser light is projected back through the film which "structures" the light in a way it originally reflected from the object. The eye sees the original subject in three dimensions even though the material object is not present.

*An impressively clear description of a complex process. The picture helps, as do the short sentences.*



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End

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