

YOUR COMPANY'S NARRATIVE

Technology has spawned an age of communications efficiency. We live world events in real-time. We consume news in sound bites. BTW, we employ a cryptic shorthand to save time and characters in text messages and emails. We gain from this efficiency, but what do we lose?

Selling involves storytelling that is rich in detail—something we abandon for efficiency. Just the facts, please. In Value-Added Selling, you bring value to customers along three dimensions: the product, company, and salesperson. In an effort to streamline presentations, some people limit their conversations to product feature-benefit recitations. This deprives the salesperson of a powerful messaging tool, the company narrative.

The company narrative is written and delivered to convince the buyer why he or she should want to do business with your company, regardless of what you sell. It is an opportunity for you to brag positively about your company. It is a story that only salespeople from your company can tell. Hence, it is a story of differentiation. Using a timeline of the past, present and future is a convenient way to craft this narrative.

Tell the customer where your company has been. If you have a 60 year history, tell the customer how your company began, weathered storms, innovated, grew, and contributed to the community. Tell the customer where your company is. Let the customer experience the magic of your value-added, customer service, logistics, mission, culture, management philosophy, and values. Tell the customer where your company is headed. Build a case for why the customer should want to partner with a company that has a plan to grow, innovate, and evolve. It is this tapestry of your history, reality, and vision that makes for good storytelling, and good storytelling encourages patient listening.

As you build your company narrative, make it your story, punctuated with conviction and passion. Enthusiasm is contagious. Once you tell your story, invite customers to join you and your company, so that they can become part of this remarkable organization. Everyone wants to be a part of something bigger than themselves. I bet you have a good story to tell.

Author byline: Tom Reilly is a professional speaker and author of twelve books. Tom is literally the guy who wrote the book on *Value-Added Selling* (McGraw-Hill, 2010), the book that started the value selling revolution. For more information on Tom's presentations, training, and products, visit his website www.TomReillyTraining.com or call his office, 636-537-3360.