

Name of collection

When two worlds collide: Achieving wisdom in online groups

Contributors name:

Professor Simon Bell

Contributors name:

Charles Cutting

So, why are stories great ways to help people learn?

I mean, you want to make the information that you're trying to communicate to your potential audience memorable. And if you present a bunch of dry facts without any kind of narrative to hook the person in or generate some kind of interest in something that they wouldn't really necessarily have thought about, you're going to lose your audience, I believe-- the people that you're trying to communicate the idea to. And I think if you can make it memorable.

And stories are a perfect way to do that, and they naturally captivate our interest. If somebody starts telling a story, everybody kind of goes silent, and they listen. Whereas most of the time, people are sort of arguing to get their kind of two penn'orth in whatever. But storytelling has this sort of effect where it kind of commands attention, I think.

I think that's really great actually because this is the nature of the parable. I mean, a story, as you said, commands respect. It commands people to listen in a sense. So it's not like you're being polemic or you're sort of making a political hit.

You say, I'm going to tell you a story. And everybody is like, OK. We're going to wait for the story to finish now. Even if I don't like the story, I'm going to listen to the story and hear it through, because it has that respect. And especially if you then say, OK, well-- and then you give the story or you tell the anecdote. And people always want to wait till the end because you never know, it might be good--

Yeah, yeah. Exactly.

[LAUGHS] --in which case, you can steal it and use it in your own sort of-- but it does have this special space in people's lives that people will listen to a story where they won't listen to a lecture or someone telling you off or telling you how to do

something. And the most successful authors are the ones who can-- is it a word-- storify their message, who can make their message into a story of some kind.