

# Communications



**Gary Tyrrell**

**Climate Action Officer, An Taisce**

**[gtyrrell@eeu.antaisce.org](mailto:gtyrrell@eeu.antaisce.org) / 01 400 2222**

# Storytelling

**“Storytelling is the most underrated skill”**

*Ben Horowitz, investor, technology entrepreneur, and author*

**“Stories constitute the single most powerful weapon in a leader’s arsenal.”**

*Dr. Howard Gardner, professor Harvard University*

**“Stories are memory aids, instruction manuals and moral compasses.”**

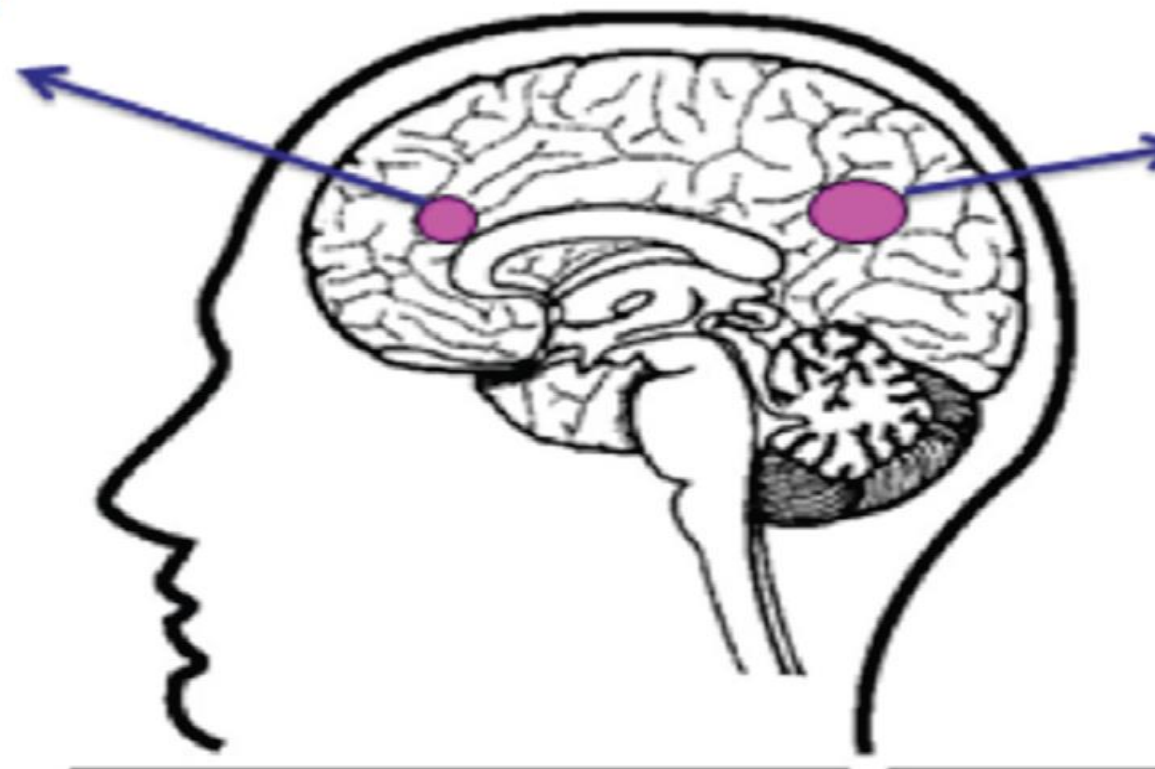
*Aleks Krotoski, author, broadcaster, journalist & social psychologist*

# Storytelling

## Raw Information – when listening to facts

Figure One: The two brain regions activated when we listen to facts.

Broca's area:  
language  
processing and  
comprehension

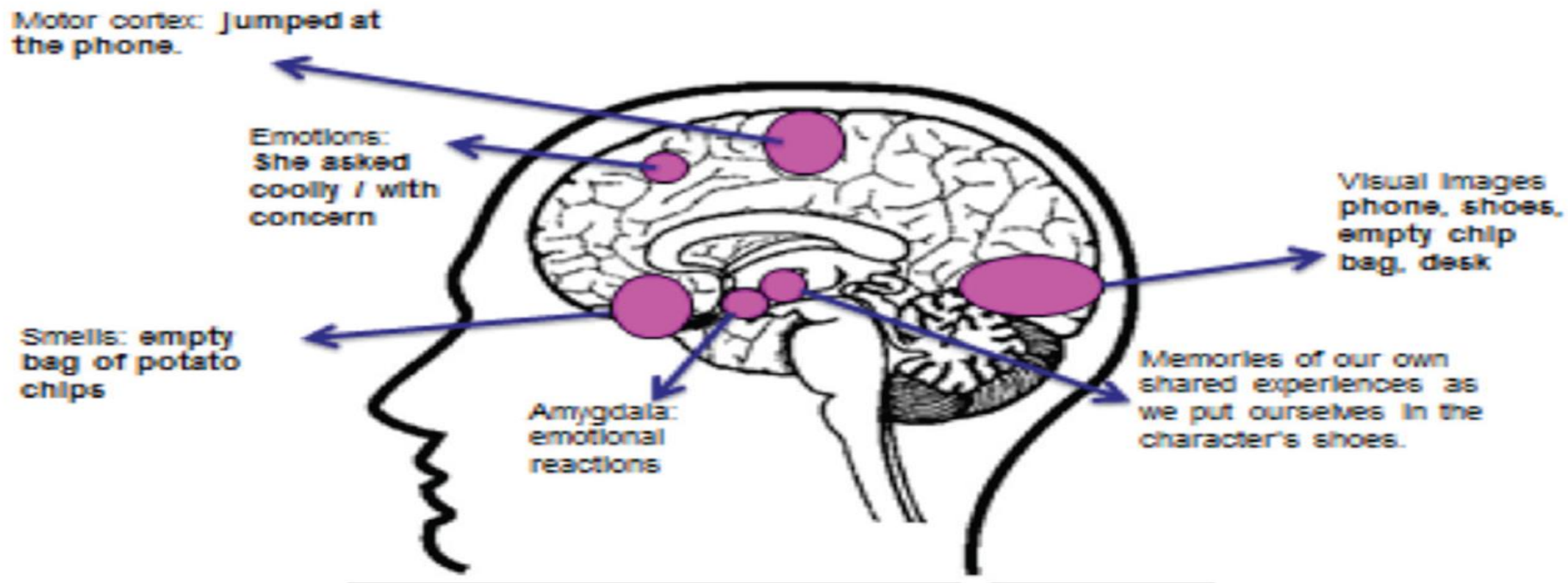


Wernicke's area:  
language  
comprehension

# Storytelling

When listening to a **story** we are more engaged

Figure Two: The multiple brain regions activated when we listen to stories.





# Storytelling (TED Talk)

## The way you tell a story can change everything!

- **Meaning** – stories always communicate a meaning
- Know the meaning of your story & make sure to communicate that meaning
- **Why** are you telling the story? What is your insight / advice / call to arms?
- **Tell a Story**
  - Relatable and likable hero, encounters a road block, emerges transformed
  - Beginning, middle & end
  - Use emotions – how did it feel?
  - Give details
  - Anchor in a time and place
  - Use characters (people/animal/inanimate) & use dialogue (can be internal)
  - Audiences backfill details – good stories can convey lots of unmentioned context

# Storytelling (TED Talk)



## The Golden Circle

### WHAT

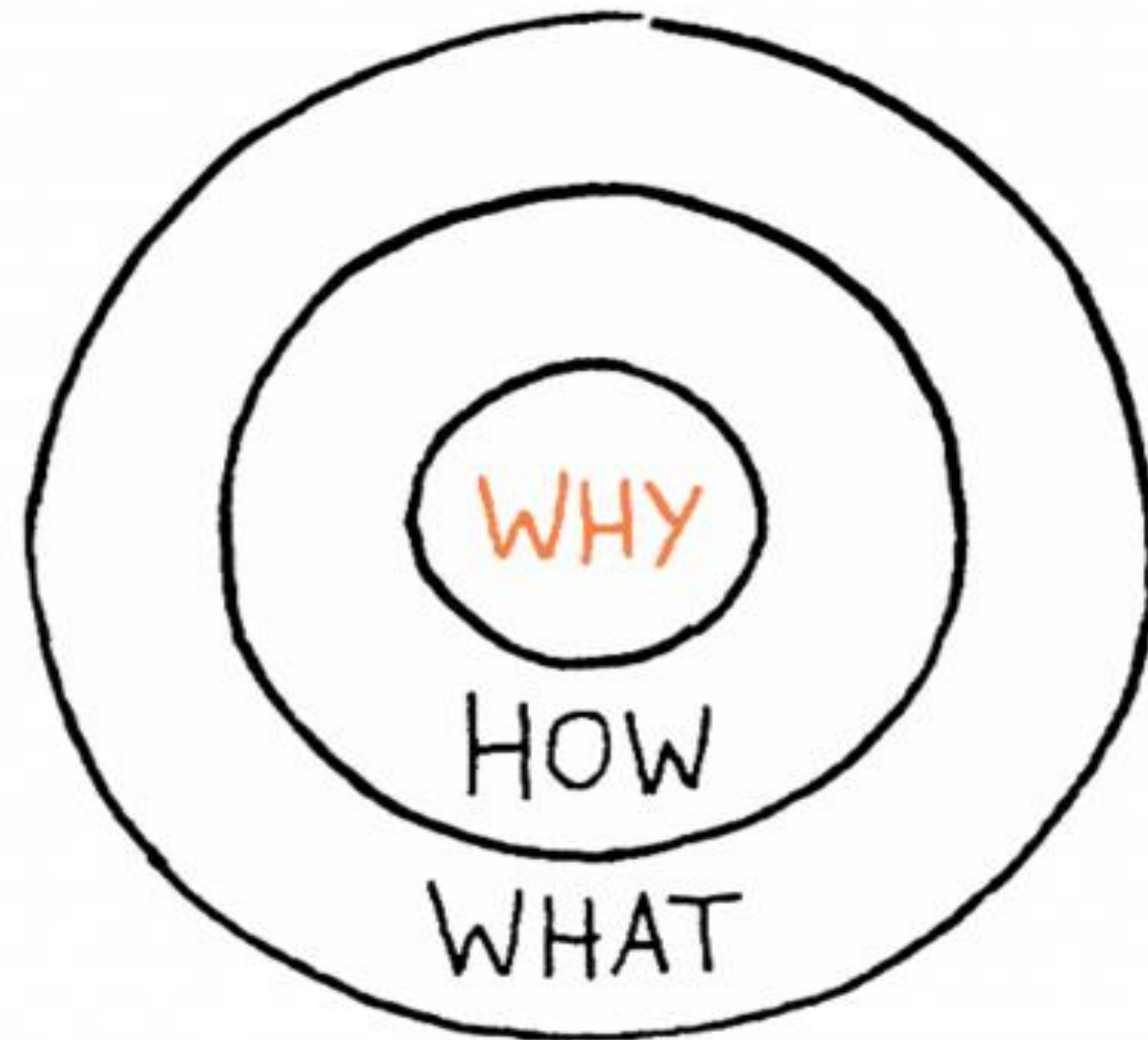
Every organization on the planet knows WHAT they do. These are products they sell or the services

### HOW

Some organizations know HOW they do it. These are the things that make them special or set them apart from their competition.

### WHY

Very few organizations know WHY they do what they do. WHY is not about making money. That's a result. WHY is a purpose, cause or belief. It's the very reason your organization exists.



'Start With Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action' (Simon Sinek)



# Storytelling (TED Talk)

- **The Audience is the Hero**
- **Know your audience – tailor delivery / material to suit**
  - Liking your audience is the first step in influencing them
- **Use Drama – Contrast emotions & data**
  - Heightened events – Trigger events & climax events (more on next slide)
- **Be Authentic**
  - Be yourself – whoever that is. Only then can you tell a great story
  - Use emotions to connect
  - Stories make it easier to connect, easier to empathise
- **Call to Action**
  - All good stories are about **change**



*The audience  
is the hero.*

*That's you!*

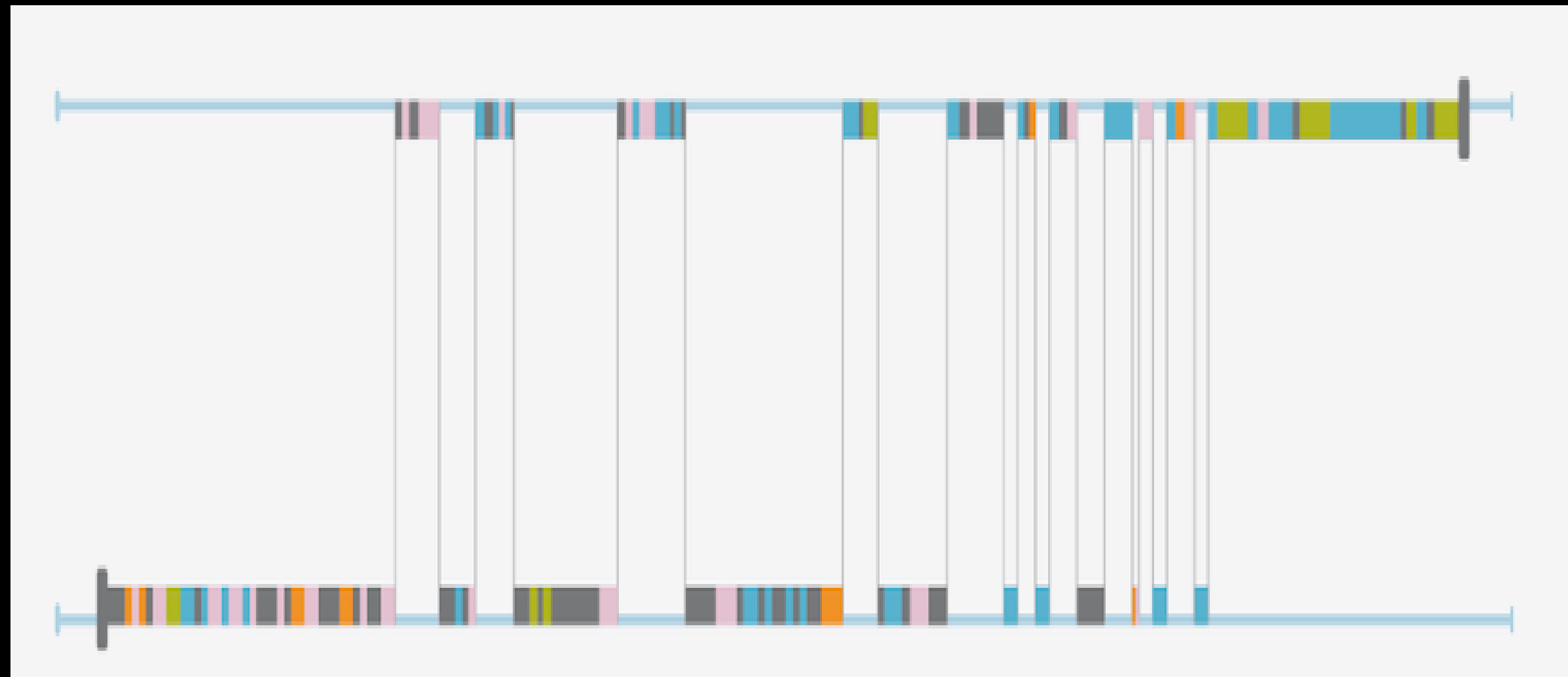


# Storytelling (TED Talk)

- Presenting Change – will involve sacrifice & risk
- **What is / What could be**
- **Make the reward worth it** (Nancy Duarte, Secret of Great Talks, 2015 – link in comments)

“I Have A Dream”:  
*Dr. MLK, 1963*

**What is / What could be:**





# Communicating an action example

## Tell a Story

- Relatable and likable hero, encounters a road block, emerges transformed

Show how the school/college currently operates. Use personal stories

## Presenting Change – will involve sacrifice & risk

- What is / What could be

College will have to change some behaviours – How is it currently behaving?  
Show what's possible, share case studies of existing amazing success stories

## Make the reward worth it (Nancy Duarte, Secret of Great Talks, 2015)

College is more integrated, healthier & fairer. Money saved. Recognition.  
Positive experiences...

“I Have A Dream”:





**Martin Luther King, Jr.**  
Civil Rights Activist

# Climate Ethics (linked to Climate Justice)



**Ethics is choosing our values - the right thing to do**

**Personal ethics & societal ethics are intertwined - I myself must take action but to bring about real change, many must strive for the same goal**

**What we do as individuals is important. Big changes start out small**

**Smoking ban - example of fast societal change**

**Also abolition, suffragettes, civil rights, workers rights, gay rights etc.**

# Storytelling Summary

- **The heart** – A personal and relatable story that gives a “why” behind what you do
- **The head** – The main body of your presentation where you give actionable advice to solve the problem you’re discussing
- **The hands** – A call to action encouraging your listeners to go out and face this problem
- **The heart** – An emotional close that ties your talk together and resolves the experience you create



**THANK YOU**