**StorySelling: How to get past your Buyer’s defensive wall and create a need**

Review the following two StorySelling examples and decide for yourself if you feel that StorySelling could help your Sales Team sell more?

**Example One: “Getting past the Buyer’s Defensive Wall”**

[](http://insightdemand.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/brickwallSQ2.jpg)“So Michael, why StorySelling… and why in the 21st century would I consider it for my team?”

Well, creating the right sales message has always come naturally to me; however, finding the right way to deliver it, so that it gets past the Buyer`s defensive wall, has always been a challenge. I guess we teach what we most need to learn.

Fortunately I have discovered that Stories help overcome this challenge because they present a scenario that allows my Customers to draw their own conclusions. As a result, they can now relax and listen because they no longer feel painted into a corner.

This doesn’t mean that every point is made with a story. The key is to have a dialogue. However, because stories are easy to remember, the information is there when you need it. As a result, you can now relax and just listen to the Buyer and trust that when they finish you will know what to say, instead of listening in order to … make your point, win the argument, make the sale etc.

So, I still believe in crafting the right sales message (click [how to video](http://youtu.be/ny2Bm7fz978)), however, I feel it’s equally important for the message to be delivered in the right way (click [how to video](http://youtu.be/wskprfex4a4)) so that it gets past the Buyer’s defensive wall and is heard.

**Example Two: “Creating a need by taking the Buyer out into the Middle of the Lake”**

[](http://insightdemand.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Man-Sea-Web-300x2252.gif)Paul, Chief Sales Officer at Software Inc., is frustrated because his Reps honestly believe that if they educated the Buyer enough about their product, something will stick. But it doesn’t. Buyers can’t intuit the value of their solution based off of the Rep’s Spray & Pray product presentation; especially C-Level Executives where decisions and budgets are made.

Paul decides a metaphor may help his Reps see the light. He tells his Reps that they are like Rescue Boat Salespeople who are cruising up and down the beach trying to make sales to Buyers that are only ankle deep in problems. No wonder sales aren’t happening.

Instead, Paul advises his Reps to “Sell the Problem before the Solution”. Provide the Buyer, for instance, with an insightful story so that they realizes that they are not ankle deep in problems, but that they are actually three miles off shore drowning in the middle of the Lake.

If his Reps skip this step, Paul knows that their offering will remain valueless because the Buyer won’t feel that they have a problem worth fixing.”

With a soft economy and higher quotas, Paul needs to turn this situation around because the Reps product centric approach is costing Software Inc. over six figures per Rep in either heavily discounted sales or deals lost to no decision.

But getting the Reps to “sell the problem before the solution” isn’t easy. If Paul just tells them what to do, it won’t work. The Reps say that they need to be shown how to do it. But Paul can’t do this himself: He’s too valuable in his day job. And Sales Training and Marketing can’t help. He’d tried it in the past and the sales messaging needed to train his Reps was too customized for the big Sales Training companies and too tactical for Marketing.

Paul realized that there was no quick fix. That’s why Paul was pleased to discover that Insight Demand would take the time and effort needed to help his team get results. They assembled 4-5 of Paul’s smartest people (Marketing, Product Marketing, Customer Service, top Salesperson plus Paul) into a room to figure out how to take the Buyer out into the “Middle of the Lake.” What were, for instance, the problems and costs to the Buyer’s operations in the absence of having their unique capabilities?

Once the team got clear on what hell looked like, Insight Demand looked to sear this image into the minds of Paul’s salespeople because that’s what their Customers needed to see before they were ready to be rescued. So Insight Demand helped put this information into a series of mini user stories so that this message would not only be readily available to the salesperson in the heat of a sale but also make it past their Customer’s defensive wall.

The result was that his Salespeople sold more because they became more.

But that’s Paul’s story, what’s yours?

Have a look at these quantification questions to see how your company performs:

• How comfortable are your Reps at having Business Conversations? Do they give the same old ‘Spray & Pray’ power point to all Key Players?

• What’s the length of your sales cycle? Does it need to be that long?

• How many opportunities are lost to No Decision? How many could it be if your Reps were better at selling higher and wider?

• What’s your average discount? Could it be lower if your Reps were better at selling value?

• What’s all of this worth to you?

## Michael Harris, CxO, Insight Demand

As CxO of Insight Demand, I enjoy showing companies how to tell a better story so their Salespeople can sell value and differentiate their offering.

Because stories present a scenario that allows my Customers to draw their own conclusions, they can now relax and listen  because they no longer feel painted into a corner.

With a graduate degree in Finance and 12-years on Wall Street, I have learned how to build business value. I then ran a finance company that grew to 125 employees and 250MM sales and it was here I learned the power of loading the lips of your salespeople with the right messages. I then worked as a Business Partner at a Solution Selling Sales Training company and, after 5-years, I refined the totality of my many years of experience and formed Insight Demand.

I have lived & worked in NYC, London and Buenos Aires. Today, I live on an Island with no cars that is only 10-minutes by ferry to my hometown, Toronto. I still travel to the big cities on business but I am also able to enjoy Kite Surfing, Kayaking and Hockey 20-meters from my home. I enjoy these simple pleasures with my wife and two children.

Please email [mharris@InsightDemand.com](mailto:mharris@InsightDemand.com) to discuss how I can help your Salespeople sell more.