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The Chief Storyteller®



The annual listing of 10 Emerging companies that are at the forefront of tackling customer challenges

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The Chief Storyteller®

Promise a Better Tomorrow™

The Art and Science of Storytelling

“**T**he most powerful person in the world is the storyteller. The storyteller sets the vision, values, and agenda of an entire generation that is to come.” With this observation, Steve Jobs illustrates the significance of communications and how it seamlessly conveys ideas and thoughts and builds healthy relationships in every dimension of the business world. Leaders who clearly communicate their vision with peers, teams, and stakeholders are more likely to dictate their path to success.

Established to help business leaders communicate effectively and become expert storytellers is The Chief Storyteller®. This globally recognized communications company offers services that enable organizations to communicate internally and externally, helping you to improve workplace outcomes. Leaders build trust faster, empower the workforce, rally their teams around a shared vision, and navigate organizational change with engaging messaging and storytelling that ultimately impacts both the top and bottom lines.

In an interview with Manage HR magazine, Ira Koretsky, Founder and CEO of The Chief Storyteller®, shares his insights on how the company helps leaders and executives become compelling storytellers and communicators through its coaching and communications services.

Please give us a brief overview of The Chief Storyteller®.

The Chief Storyteller®, founded in 2002, is one of the oldest and most prominent storytelling companies in the United States.



Ira Koretsky,
Founder and CEO



Our goal is to help you become your own chief storyteller

The genesis of The Chief Storyteller® occurred about 35 years ago. My high school debate coach, Mr. Height, instilled the importance of engaging our audiences from word-one and keeping that attention with relevant messages, backed up with sound data. His lessons helped us continually win tournaments.

He always said, “Our words and our delivery are inseparable.” His lessons continue to inspire me.

Fast forward to today. Everything we do starts with what I have coined as your Better Tomorrow Message™. Contrast who you are today with who you want to be tomorrow. What would a better tomorrow look like for you?

More effective leadership? Closing deals faster? Happier and more engaged teams? More persuasive data storyteller? Sought after thought leader? Confident public speaker?

Bearing this in mind, I crafted the mission for The Chief Storyteller®. And in 2001, started coaching, training, and consulting for leaders to improve how they engage, influence, educate, and inspire.

What are the needs and challenges in the industry that you are addressing?

With the evolution of technology, people increasingly rely on more impersonal communication methods as a substitute for direct contact, often at the expense of their effectiveness. Technology is a complement to direct contact. Not a replacement. As communication is about reaching and engaging your audiences, you cannot just substitute people or communication with dashboards, charts, spreadsheets, Twitter, and the like. Organizations, more than ever, must clearly inculcate their culture, vision, and strategies to



continue to grow while retaining great talent. Organizations who have realized this, proactively approach us to help them fill the communication gaps across departments, functional areas, and cultures.

Also, companies need to ensure their leaders across all functional areas are communications experts. Communicating vision, change, culture, goals, etc. effectively has become more crucial than ever, especially in today's hybrid work environment.

What is the methodology that The Chief Storyteller® follows while serving clients?

Our specialty is helping you communicate more effectively, especially when the stakes are high. Helping you engage and inspire in your own way, confidently, is integral to our coaching. Our secret sauce is storytelling in all of its forms.

We nudge and push you out of your communication comfort zone while getting you to expand your comfort zone permanently. Your success starts with a discovery meeting to understand your current and future goals—be it effective leadership, better employee engagement, more effective meetings, happier teams, greater loyalty, stronger culture, or improved sales.

We then work with you to help improve ways to engage internally and externally and achieve your goals with a customized approach. The approach includes specialized tools that are practical and easy to implement like the Story Toolbox, Experiences Map, Story Elements, and The Great Stories Frameworks™. We also have a rich library of resources including tip guides, exercises, how-to articles, and easy-to-use templates.

Sometimes we are your coach, offering advice and suggestions. Sometimes we are your one-on-one consultant, helping revise your story, rework slide content and design, and offer specific suggestions on pacing and pausing, including modeling how to best deliver the content. And sometimes, we are your personal trainer, working on specific skills with on-the-spot exercises.

Everything we do at The Chief Storyteller® is designed to improve dramatically your ability to engage, persuade, and influence with your words. For more than 20 years, we have provided customized public speaking, communication, and storytelling services in more than a dozen countries, in more than 35 industries, to more than 650 customers.

What are the factors that differentiate you from other players in the market?

First and foremost, we customize every engagement to your goals. Second, we approach coaching differently than most. We combine coaching with hands-on support, much like a consultant, where we roll up our sleeves and help with content development, ideation, delivery practice, and more. Third, we use practical and proven learning materials such as tip guides, tools, worksheets, articles, exercises, and frameworks. Next, our breadth and depth set us apart, having worked across 30 industries, in 14 countries, with executives at Fortune 50 companies to breakthrough entrepreneurs looking to scale rapidly. In addition, I bring a creative side with my performing in over 1,200 improvisational comedy shows with ComedySportz. Also, I'm an active practitioner of everything I coach on, delivering more than 540 keynotes and workshops, inspiring more than 40,000 people globally. And lastly, being an adjunct professor for 10 years at the University of Maryland Business School teaching storytelling and public speaking. Everything we do is designed to help you be your own chief storyteller, improving dramatically your abilities to influence, engage, and inspire.

Could you give us a success story?

We assisted a CEO of a multi-million-dollar real-estate financing company to articulate his vision into a high-impact and memorable keynote. After our coaching engagement, he wanted his entire company to develop these skills. Since then, for the past two years, we have been supporting him and his team to effectively communicate their value to clients and investors. We help with coaching and hands-on support for all-hands meetings, quarterly investor updates, sales presentations, communicating values, and internal communications.

As a result, the company has attracted new talent, closed many more deals, increased investments substantially, and just recently, was awarded the coveted *Best Places to Work* designation. The CEO is simultaneously working on becoming a professional speaker.

And he shared with me, "You are more than a coach. You have become a trusted advisor, helping double our business in 3 years." 