

HOOKED

**HOW LEADERS
CONNECT
ENGAGE and
INSPIRE with
STORYTELLING**

GABRIELLE DOLAN • YAMINI NAIDU

Hooked: How Leaders Connect, Engage, and Inspire with Storytelling

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About the authors

Gabrielle Dolan and Yamini Naidu are global thought leaders in storytelling and business communication.



Gabrielle has worked as an independent business management consultant and has held various senior leadership roles in change management, learning and development and project management. Her hands-on experience of the challenges leaders face in communicating effectively has led her to the power of storytelling. She is a sought-after keynote speaker and contributes articles on a regular basis to a variety of publications. Gabrielle holds a Master's degree in Management and Leadership from Swinburne University and an Associate Diploma in Education and Training from the University of Melbourne. Her current passion is in establishing her vegetable garden on her rural holiday property on the southern NSW coast where she goes often to stop and smell the roses ... well, the basil.

Yamini is an economist by training and a post graduate from the London School of Economics (LSE) and an LSE Scholarship winner. She grew up in Mumbai (Bombay), India, currently lives in Melbourne, Australia and has lived and

worked in various parts of the world including Europe, Asia and America. She is an inspirational and highly sought-after keynote speaker and a prolific writer combining authenticity and humour with rich insights. She has held senior leadership roles and has extensive corporate experience working in a range of industry sectors with senior industry leaders, key stakeholders and company boards. Yamini is passionate about storytelling and through her work she inspires business leaders to experience business results using the power of storytelling. Outside work she is a serial yoga class attendee and a guide at the National Gallery of Victoria.

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Finally we would like to thank you, the reader, for picking up this book and daring to become the inspiring leader you can be.

To all of you we dedicate this book and acknowledge your role in making it happen.

Thank you,

Gabrielle and Yamini

Introduction

Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world today.

Robert McKee, founder and presenter of the Story Seminar

Stories and storytelling can save you.

Stories can save you time and money by fast-tracking trust — and sales — with your clients. Stories can save you thousands of hours in team meetings that have no purpose and little impact. Stories can help you nail that long-awaited promotion and they can help you communicate effectively, saving you your reputation and your company millions of dollars.

Stories can save your relationships with long-standing customers and they can add magic to potentially boring presentations by making your PowerPoint slides meaningful and purposeful.

When we first started out in our corporate careers, we were in awe of leaders who possessed a natural ability to engage and inspire us. When they presented, we sat up and listened. We remembered what they said long after the event. When they suggested a new path to go down, we followed. Why did we have complete faith in their direction? What was their secret sauce? And how could we get some too?

Flash forward to 2005, and there we were sitting on a park bench one warm, sunny day in the heart of Melbourne's CBD when it hit us: all inspiring leaders tell stories that break down emotional barriers and tap into what we think and feel. Their stories hook us in.

We began to imagine a world in which all business leaders didn't just use facts and numbers, but used facts, numbers

and stories to connect, engage and inspire. This world is no longer a dream — it's a reality. In today's business world — in an age of information overload — it is no longer effective to 'just tell people the facts'. As a leader you must use emotion to be successful in business.

In his book *Business Stripped Bare*, Richard Branson explains why business and emotions go together. He writes: 'Engage your emotions at work. Your instincts and emotions are there to help you. They are there to make things easier'.

Back to 2005 ... We are still sitting on the bench having this 'aha' moment, which made us decide to leave the security, comfort and fortnightly salary of our respective employers and start a company that teaches, mentors and inspires CEOs, executives and leaders just like you to tell stories that get killer business results.

Since then we have worked with CEOs and senior leaders of large corporations, as well as small-business owners and entrepreneurs. We have run our workshops in organisations all over Australia and New Zealand, as well as New York, London and in the middle of a rice-paddy field in Indonesia (now *that* is a good story).

We are now ready to share our knowledge and experience — all that we have learned over this time. More importantly, we are ready to share what our clients have learned. In this book, you will find real-world, practical examples, actual stories leaders have shared, the successes they have had and their sheer determination to achieve. You will find all this and more — all designed to help you become a successful storyteller and leader in your field.

Whether you need to engage your employees to adopt your company's new strategy, become an inspiring presenter, attract new clients or win a lucrative contract, this book will