

Brand Storytelling — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into a finished brand narrative you can ship. Each section mirrors one course module with hands-on exercises, fill-in worksheets, and checklists you run against real assets. Pick one brand of your own, a business, a product, or your personal brand, and carry it through every section. You will finish with a one-page BrandScript, a story-driven homepage wireframe, a founder origin story, a Golden Circle statement, and a stocked story bank.

Why Story Beats Information

Internalise the core shift, the customer is the hero and your brand is the guide, and pressure-test your current message before rewriting a word.

Exercise: Run the Grunt Test on Your Current Homepage

Open your live homepage (or a competitor's if you have none yet) and look at only the top section for five seconds. Then look away and answer from memory. If you cannot answer all three clearly, that is your starting gap.

- What does this brand offer? Write it in plain words.

- How will it make the customer's life better? Name the transformation, not a feature.

- What does the customer do next? Name the single call to action you saw.

- Which of the three was weakest or missing, and why?

Worksheet: Hero vs Guide Audit

Paste five sentences from your current website or deck. For each, mark whether it casts your brand as the hero (talking about yourselves) or as the guide (helping the customer-hero), then rewrite the hero-positioned ones.

Sentence 1, and whether it is hero or guide positioned

Sentence 2, and whether it is hero or guide positioned

Sentence 3, and whether it is hero or guide positioned

Sentence 4, and whether it is hero or guide positioned

Sentence 5, and whether it is hero or guide positioned

Rewrite of every hero-positioned sentence so the customer is the hero

Exercise: The Three Layers of Your Customer's Problem

Pick the single most common customer you serve. Name the problem they bring you on all three StoryBrand layers, then give the root cause a villain with a memorable name.

- External problem: the concrete obstacle they can point to.

- Internal problem: how that obstacle makes them feel.

- Philosophical problem: why it is just plain wrong that they have to deal with it.

- Name the villain: personify the root cause in two or three words (for example, the 5pm dinner scramble).

Checklist: Customer-Is-Hero Gut Check

- My message names one specific customer want, not a vague aspiration.
- My brand shows up as the guide, never as the hero of the story.
- I addressed the internal feeling, not just the external problem.
- My homepage passes the grunt test in five seconds.
- There is a single, obvious next step for the customer to take.

The StoryBrand SB7 Framework

Build a complete one-page BrandScript by filling each of the seven boxes in customer language, then stress-test it with the elevator pitch.

Worksheet: Fill In Your Seven-Box BrandScript

Complete each box in one or two sentences, in your customer's own words. This becomes the source document for all your copy, so keep it tight and specific.

Character: the one customer and their single want

Problem: external, internal, philosophical, and the named villain

Guide: your one-line empathy statement and your authority proof

Plan: three to four process or agreement steps

Call to Action: one direct CTA and one transitional CTA

Failure: what the customer risks if they do nothing

Success: the transformation and the new identity they step into

Exercise: Write Your Empathy and Authority Lines

The guide needs both empathy and authority, in that order. Draft your empathy statement, then assemble three pieces of authority proof. Keep authority quiet and specific, not boastful.

- Empathy line: a single sentence that proves you understand the customer's pain (we know how it feels to...).

- Authority proof 1: a number or statistic (for example, 4,000 businesses switched this year).

- Authority proof 2: a specific, outcome-focused testimonial with a full name if possible.

- Authority proof 3: a logo, award, certification, or credential.

Worksheet: Design the Three-Step Plan and Both CTAs

Give the customer a path that feels easy. Choose either a process plan (steps to buy and succeed) or an agreement plan (promises that dissolve fear), then write both calls to action.

Step 1 of the plan

Step 2 of the plan

Step 3 of the plan (add a 4th only if essential)

Direct CTA button text (name the action and payoff, 2 to 5 words)

Transitional CTA (lower-commitment value offer, e.g. download the guide)

Checklist: BrandScript Quality Check

- Every box is one or two sentences, written in customer language.
- The problem has all three layers and a named villain.
- The guide shows empathy first, then authority, used sparingly.
- The plan has no more than four steps.
- I wrote the elevator pitch (I help X who struggle with Y by Z so they can W) and it is clear and compelling.

Classic Narrative Frameworks for Brands

Practise the Hero's Journey, the Pixar Story Spine, and the Golden Circle so you can match the right structure to each piece you write.

Exercise: Tell One Customer Story in the Pixar Story Spine

Choose one real customer transformation. Fill in the six-sentence spine using only the truth. This becomes a ready-to-use story for an email, caption, or slide.

- Once upon a time there was ____ (the customer-hero and their setting).
- Every day, ____ and One day ____ (the routine problem, then the inciting change).
- Because of that, ____ and Because of that, ____ (the escalating consequences of acting).
- Until finally ____ (the resolution and transformation).

Worksheet: Map a Long Story to the Trimmed Hero's Journey

For a case study or campaign, map your customer's transformation across the five practical beats. Keep your brand in the mentor role, never the hero.

Ordinary world: the customer living with the unsolved problem

Call and refusal: their desire to change and the hesitation holding them back

Meeting the mentor: how your brand appears with empathy and a plan

Ordeal and transformation: how they act and are changed by the result

The return: their better life and why they tell others

Worksheet: Write Your Golden Circle Statement

Define your What, How, and Why, then write a single inside-out positioning sentence that leads with the Why.

Remember that profit is a result, not a Why.

What: the products or services you sell

How: the specific approach or values that set you apart

Why: your purpose in the form, to [contribution] so that [impact]

Inside-out sentence: lead with the Why, then How, then What

Checklist: Right-Framework-for-the-Job Check

I used the Story Spine for short pieces (captions, emails, single slides).

I reserved the Hero's Journey for long pieces with a real transformation.

Every long story builds tension before the product appears (Freytag's shape).

My brand is the mentor in every story, never the hero.

My core message leads with the Why, not the What.

Deploying Your Story Across Channels

Turn your BrandScript into a homepage, an email sequence, a founder story, and a sales deck, then stock a story bank and decide how you will measure impact.

Worksheet: Wireframe Your Story-Driven Homepage

Draft the text for each homepage section in StoryBrand order, pulling directly from your BrandScript. Keep the hero headline about the customer's outcome, and run the grunt test on it.

Hero headline (the transformation or new identity)

Hero subhead (one line clarifying what you offer) and the direct CTA button text

Stakes section (what is at risk if they do nothing)

Value stack (three benefits framed as customer outcomes)

Guide section (empathy line plus authority proof)

Three-step plan and the repeated closing call to action

Exercise: Draft Your Four-Beat Founder Origin Story

Write a short, honest origin story that hands the hero role back to the customer. Use concrete details, not vague heroics. Aim for 150 to 250 words.

- The struggle: the real problem you personally faced (be specific).

- The turning point: the moment you decided to solve it.

- The obstacles: what you overcame to build the solution.

- The mission and the bridge: how your struggle mirrors the customer's today.

Worksheet: Outline a Narrative Sales Deck

Replace the company-history opening with a story-led structure. Fill in each beat so the deck leads with a shift in the world, not with your logo.

The big shift: an undeniable change in the world that makes the status quo risky

The stakes: who wins and who gets left behind by that shift

The promised land: the desirable future, framed as the customer's

The magic gifts: your features positioned as tools to reach it

The proof: evidence, stories, and credibility that you can deliver

Checklist: Launch and Measurement Readiness

- I started a story bank and added at least five structured stories.
- My nurture email sequence delivers value and story before the sale.
- I recorded baseline numbers (bounce rate, time on page, CTA conversion, email opens) before launching.
- I will change one story element at a time so I can tell what moved the number.
- I scheduled a quarterly review of the BrandScript and the story bank.

Your Action Plan

1. Choose one brand, product, or personal brand to carry through the whole plan.
2. Run the grunt test on your current homepage and write down the weakest of the three answers.
3. Define your single customer's want and their problem on all three layers, then name the villain.
4. Complete your one-page BrandScript, keeping every box to one or two sentences in customer language.
5. Write your Golden Circle Why in the form to [contribution] so that [impact], and an inside-out positioning sentence.
6. Tell one real customer transformation using the Pixar Story Spine for reuse in email and social.
7. Wireframe your story-driven homepage in StoryBrand order and run the grunt test on the new hero headline.
8. Draft your four-beat founder origin story and a five-part narrative sales deck.
9. Set up a 6 to 7 email nurture sequence that delivers value and story before the direct ask.
10. Start a story bank, add at least five structured stories, record baseline metrics, and set a quarterly review.

