



The Big Why Video (Pt. I) Overview/Transcript

Here is the first video you'll make that features transparency and polarization; two elements that attract the right people while building trust. And all in one minute. Pretty cool.

The Big Why is about why you do what you do or why you do what you do in a certain way. It's a story from your earlier life. It could go all the way back to grade school, or all the way up to your first job. But it represents a kind of turning point in your life, because either at the time it happened, or in looking back on it now, you realized that because of that experience you developed a belief that has influenced your actions and led to the success you've enjoyed.

The Big Why is a one-minute video divided into 3 sections.

The first section is 40 seconds and begins with words to the effect of "I remember when", then you tell the story. Remember that a story is about a moment in time. We should be able to be in that moment with you, so use sensory words that help us enter into the moment. When you write it, come up with something for all 5 senses initially, and use the most powerful details. You don't want to overwhelm us with detail. You want just enough to pull us in. What kind of sensory detail? Well, there are only 5 to choose from:

Sight: Her usually lustrous hair is matted with spitballs.

Sound: Suddenly the air is split with an explosion of laughter from the entire class.

Touch: The freezing ocean water is starting to make my limbs feel numb.

Taste: I was expecting chocolate. This ice cream tasted like coffee.

Smell: Suddenly the air is choking me. Clearly my dog has just had a run in with a skunk.

Notice how all the preceding sentences are in the present tense. That's another powerful way of bringing your audience into your world. Now they are there experiencing that moment with you.

Also, very important, there should be a sense that we don't know how this is going to resolve. In other words, suspense.

The second section is 10 seconds and begins with words to the effect of "I believe that..." wherein you state your belief.

The third and final section is also 10 seconds long and begins with the words "My name is" continues with words like "...and I help <type of person> <benefit> without <problem>. If this is something that interests you, I invite you to <call to action>.



EXAMPLE:

I remember my first day of senior year. I was 16. We'd just moved to a one stoplight town in North Carolina, and it was clear from the screaming and spitballs pummeling the head of our pretty but haggard teacher...and the fights breaking out in the stifling hot morning of English 4 class, these kids had no particular plans post-graduation.

Now, in the afternoons I went to college, just across the street, and the contrast blew my mind. Our Western Civ professor perched cross-legged on her desk talking about enlightened self-interest?

I was in air-conditioned teen-age heaven. Violent history became my touchstone for appreciating the peaceful present, as if the two were separated by mere hours. Over time I came to believe that, indeed, who we are in here determines what we will see out there.

My name is Steve. I help service providers upgrade the way they see their value, and use that to bring material success into their worlds.

So let's talk about the story. Many people when they hear this explanation for the first time draw a blank. They can't think of a single incident that had that much significance. But big incidents like that rarely happen in the lives of most regular human beings. Instead, it's the little things that when you look back on them have more significance than they did at the time. Some of the most effective stories are the smallest observed moments.

Take this example from an executive working in the high-tech field. She tells a story about when she was in 7th grade and a new girl walked into the cafeteria in a jacket with a pocket in the back. Something about it being so unusual tempted her to reach into the pocket. She found a note. And the note said "Hi. My name is Laura. My phone number is" and as she tells it the two of them became best friends forever.

Her belief was that little things most of us don't notice can make all the difference to the success of a project. Nothing earth-shattering in that story, was there? It even had a little suspense. How would the girl react to a complete stranger reaching into her pocket? Pretty crazy, right?

We all have moments like that in our lives. I can remember being in my Grandma's apartment in the sky and back then she had one of the highest of high-tech devices. One of those new-fangled TV remotes. You know the kind you click with a click so loud it could wake the dead? Boy, has high-techery gone to whole new levels. So when you're choosing your story, don't think it has to be perfect. You can always change it. After all, we're talking about a one-minute video. Good luck choosing your first story.

Now let's talk about the way you express your belief. In my example I just said "I believe who we are in here determines what we will see out there." Remember you only have 10 seconds. You won't be able to expound on the subtleties of Anselm's Ontological Argument for the existence of God.



But it's plenty of time to say "I believe most human beings can give the love they need to themselves." or "I believe the most powerful leadership comes from your example, not your fine words." Remember, your belief is important in this video in the sense that your viewer is getting the idea that you staked your life on this belief and it's paid off. And I believe that's about all we need to think about, about the belief.

Next is the call to action, for which you also have about 10 seconds. It's a little unusual, though. It starts with you introducing yourself for the first time. If that sounds backwards, there's a reason. Since your viewers of this video are people who have probably never heard of you, making the introduction first is not of great interest to them. They aren't watching in hopes of you telling them your name, at least not yet.

They're hoping to get something of value out of watching this video. The value in this case is getting a peek behind the curtain at the person they are thinking about doing business with. So jumping into the story is the most attention-getting and interest-creating thing you can do.

Then once you've stated your belief, well, now they are curious about who you are. So that's why we hold that until the end. It's the personal introduction and call to action. And the first part starts with "My name is Joe Smith." Then you add a simple formula that goes like this: "I help <blank> get <blank> without <blank>."

So for example, "I help companies build highly profitable distribution channels for new high-tech products without sacrificing the older direct channels." Yes, there's more you could say, but save it. Less is more.

Now the last bit is the direct call to action and it may look something like this: "If you think these ideas could be of benefit to your organization, I'd be happy to connect." Remember, this video will be on LinkedIn and that's what LinkedIn calls getting together.

Surprised to find out just how much information can be squeezed into 60 seconds? That's what makes it fun to watch and it says a lot about you in a very short period of time. Now you may be wondering about choosing the right story for this. The story doesn't have to be apocalyptic or super-dramatic. It just needs to have something to do with your origin. If you're feeling a little stuck at the moment, here are some questions to help you pick a story.

What do you most remember about your parents? Your siblings? Your teachers? Your classmates? Your best friend?

What do you most remember about your first employer?

Often those memories are there because you built moments with those people that were imprinted on your soul. That makes them very important. Let them speak to you!



Think about your accomplishments in life; the ones that did work out and the ones that didn't. People more easily relate to our failures than our accomplishments, as long as those failures lead to eventual success. In other words, the hero's journey.

What have you done in your life that you are most proud of?

What was your most embarrassing professional moment?

There is a connection between the best and worst memories you have about your first job. The best memories are usually about having gone above and beyond, while the "worst" are often the mirror image. You proactively went about something that didn't work out the way you had hoped. Lots of lessons learned there. And those lessons often lead to astonishing successes.

You might look to more personal experiences for inspiration.

What's the funniest thing you ever heard, the saddest thing, the thing that made you most angry, the most grateful to be alive, the scariest moment, the most hopeful or hopeless?

Admittedly these are more dramatic moments, and some naturally shy away from sharing moments like that. There are easier moments to share, though. Try some of these family-related questions.

What were some of your favorite family times or activities?

Who is your favorite relative and why?

Who is your strangest relative and why?

If you'd prefer to keep family out of it, you can look to your own cultural preferences.

What's your favorite movie and why? Favorite TV show? Sports team? Car? Places to visit? Favorite book? Kind of music? Hobby? Have you ever gone on adventure just because?

Spend about 5 minutes asking yourself these kinds of questions and I bet you'll get a pretty clear answer.

Of course any story you choose is eventually going to come back to the value that you provide, so you may think it has to have something to do with that. Nothing could be further from the truth. You probably never thought you'd be in the position you are right now. So you don't need to look back on your life in search of a sanitized memory that matches up perfectly with what you do. No, what you believe now is what gives meaning to what you did all those years ago.

Think about the story I told you about the contrast between high school and college. Could I have seen back then where such an experience would take me almost 50 years later?

You may have already noticed that a one-minute story should land at around 150 words. That is NOT a lot of words. Some casual emails are more than that. So limit yourself to the highlights. You'll find they capture and hold attention just fine when coupled with the belief statement and call to action.



One last thing. Let's not make a fetish out of the one minute thing. It's a good goal, but I have found that a lot of really good stories are taking closer to a minute and a half. If after a lot of editing, that's where yours comes out, no worries. You've made it concise as possible. Your viewer will notice and be grateful for that.

You can go ahead and make the video now, or open part 2 of this lesson, where we go deeper into the structure and provide more examples.

Happy Shooting!

