

Interreg  Co-funded by
the European Union
Northern Periphery and Arctic



From slides to stories

PechaKucha Principles for
Better Presentations

[Nebojsa Nikolic](#)



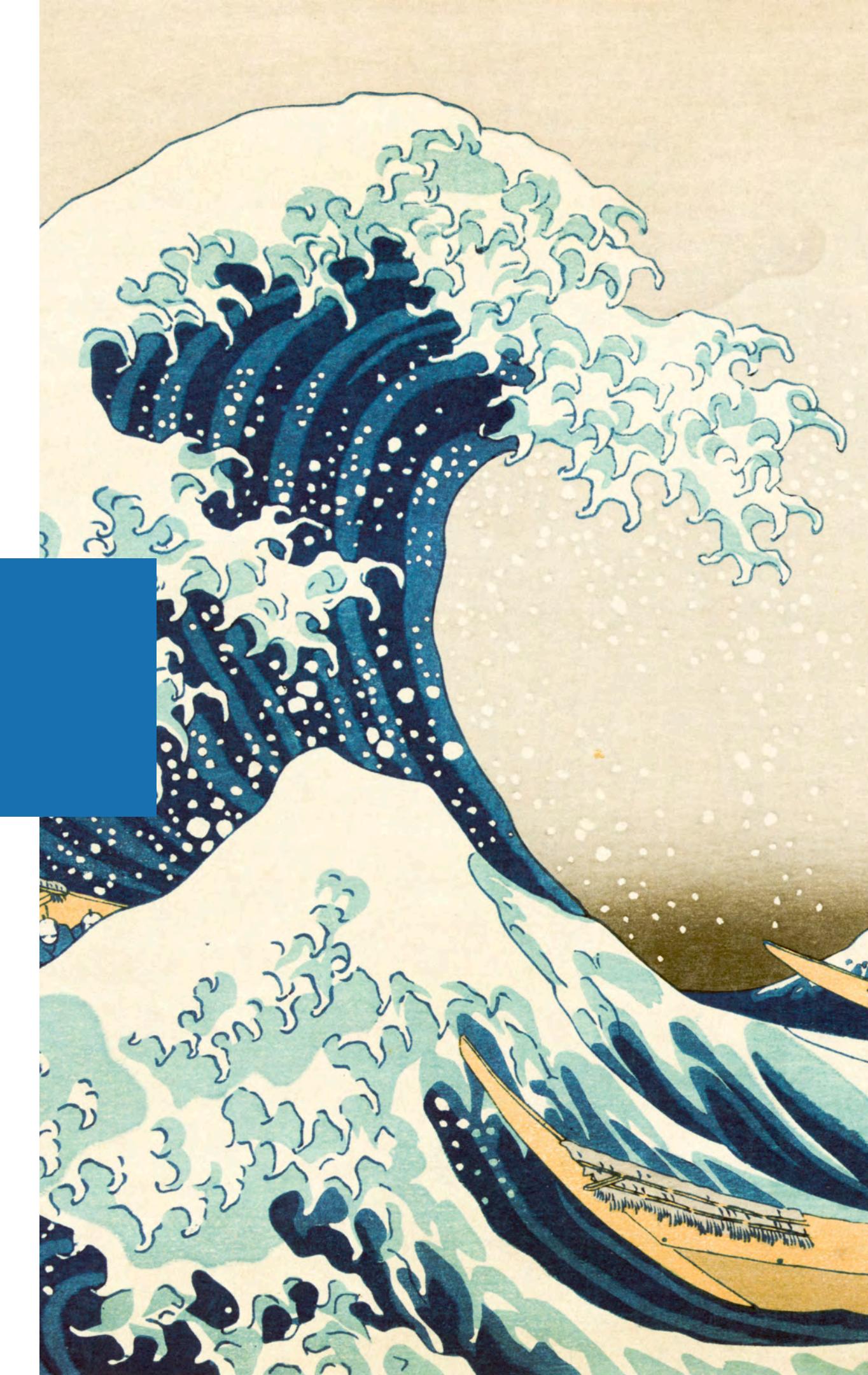
Agenda

Why Pecha Kucha?

How to structure a story

Tools and resources

What did you think
of this **PechaKucha**?



Storytelling

The kinds of stories

The structure

Common mistakes





Since the dawn
of time...



What makes it work?

Types of learners:

- **Visual:** with illustrations and mental pictures
- **Auditory:** from words, lectures, discussions
- **Kinesthetic:** by doing, experiencing, feeling



Exercise

Inclusive theater project

You made high-quality video recordings of the best national theater plays in your country. People can now watch them at home.

How would you include the **visual, auditory and kinesthetic** elements in a short promo video?

Example - auditory storytelling



Interview with Benedict Cumberbatch | National Theatre Live: The Best Seat in the House. Published by National Theatre on YouTube
Watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hzomFy4cYQ&t=1s> Used for educational purposes. All rights remain with the original creators.

Example - kinesthetic storytelling



National Theatre Live: The Best Seat In The House. Published by National Theatre on YouTube
Watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZjYMFheFBA> Used for educational purposes. All rights remain with the original creators.

ADMINISTRATION

- Brand at the start
- Mostly auditory
- Dry list of outputs
- Overwhelming, confusing
- Boring

PRIVATE SECTOR

- Brand at the end
- Auditory, visual and kinesthetic
- A relatable story
- Simple, easy to follow
- Cool

"Once upon a time, a
brave expert decided to
compete in Regiostars..."



Storytelling
≠
fairytales

THREE TYPES OF STORIES

FICTION



ADVERTISEMENTS



LECTURES



LEARNING FROM EACH TYPE

FROM FICTION

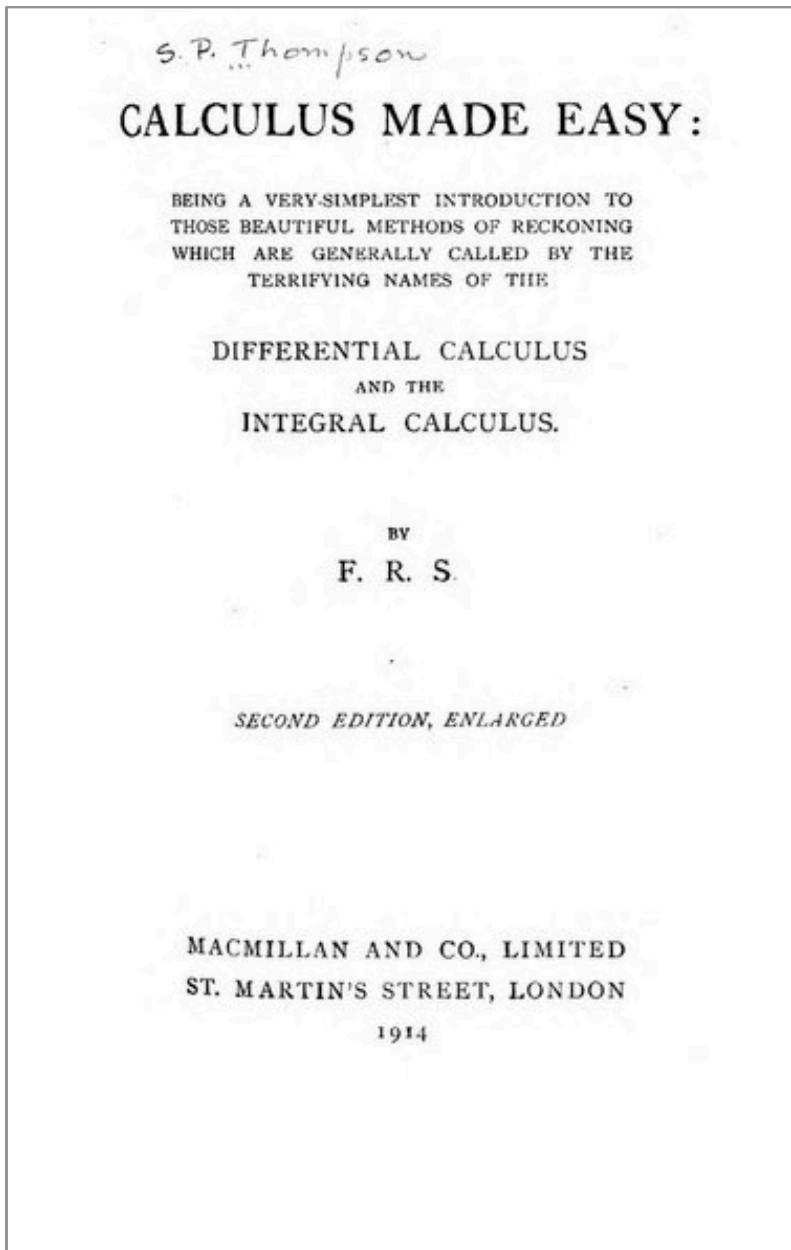
Show, not just tell.

FROM BRANDS

Use emotion to make it memorable.

FROM TEACHERS

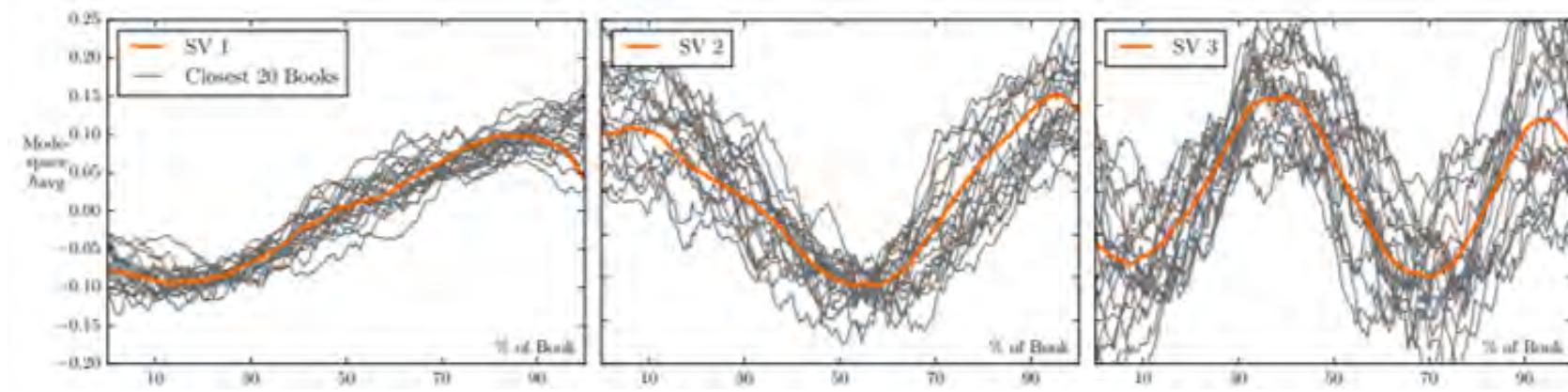
Turn complex into simple.



What good stories have in common

- Plain language
- Relatable examples
- They take you on a journey

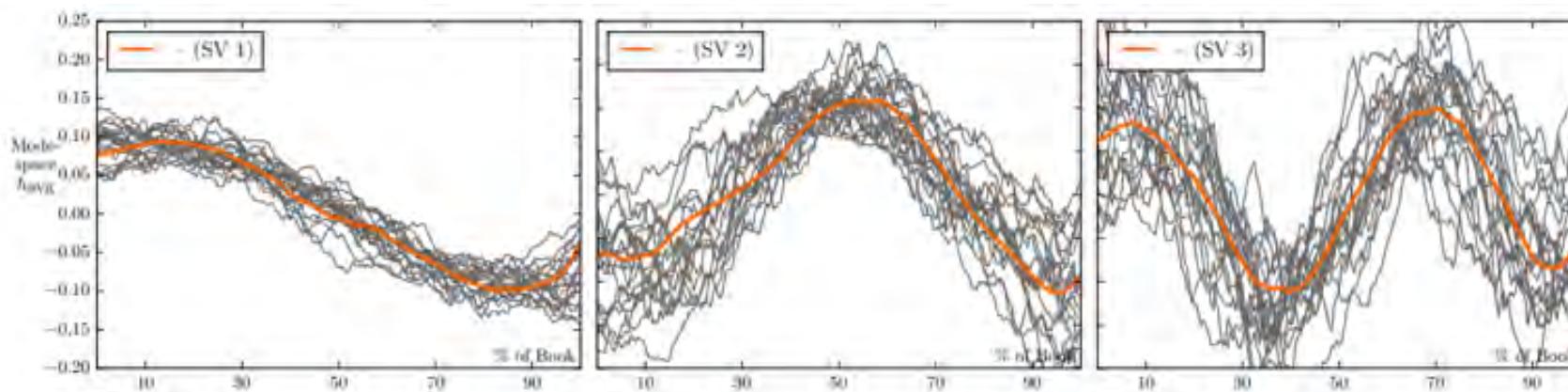
The six story arcs



1. Rise

3. Fall - rise

5. Cinderella



2. Fall

4. Rise - fall

6. Oedipus

- “Rags to riches”
- “Riches to rags” or “Tragedy”
- “Man in a hole”
- “Icarus”
- “Cinderella”
- “Oedipus”

Story structure

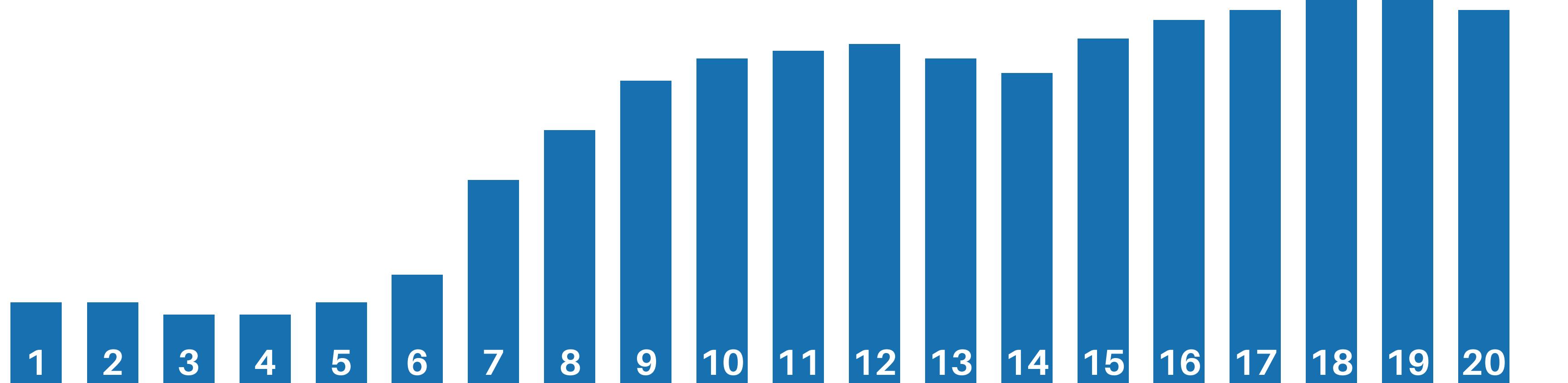
WRONG

- Brand, institutions, partners
- Technical details, budget
- Dates, procedures
- All of the outputs
- Co-funding statements

CORRECT

- **Context** - audience intrigued
- **Problem** - audience relates
- **Solution** - audience understands
- **Proof** - audience appreciates
- **Brand** - audience remembers

“Rise”



Context

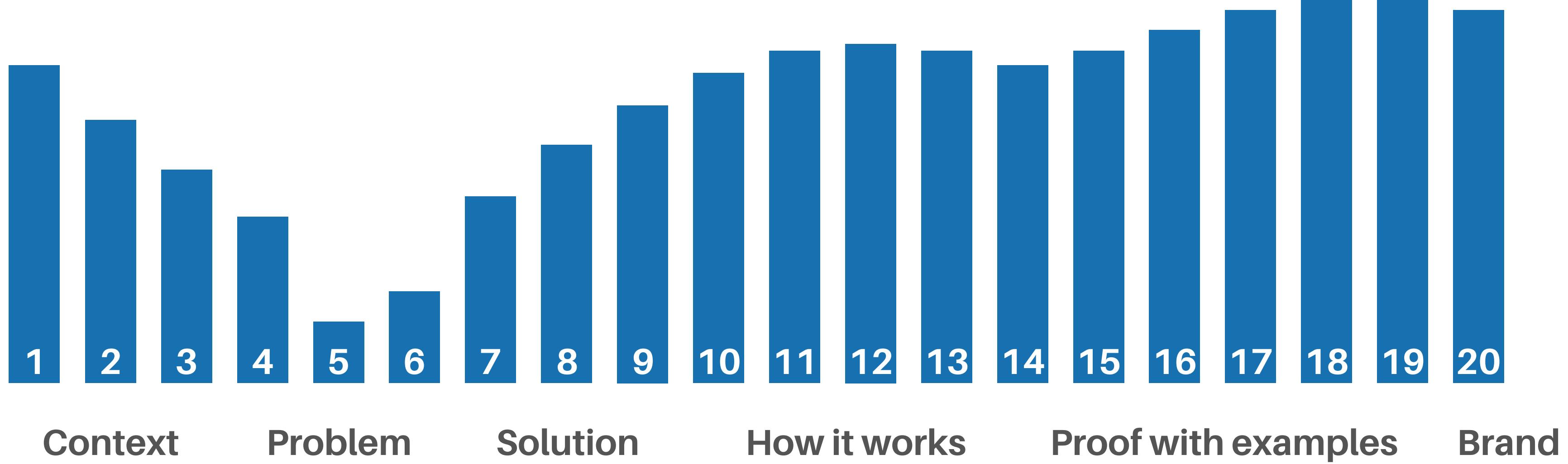
Problem

Solution and how it works

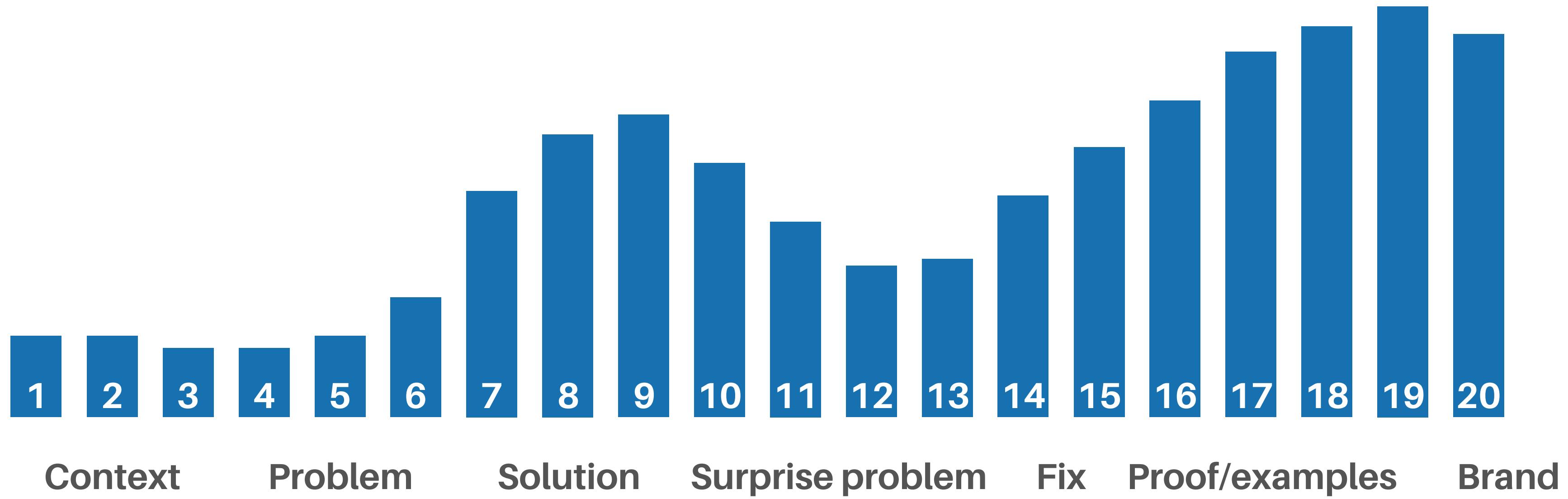
Proof with examples

Brand

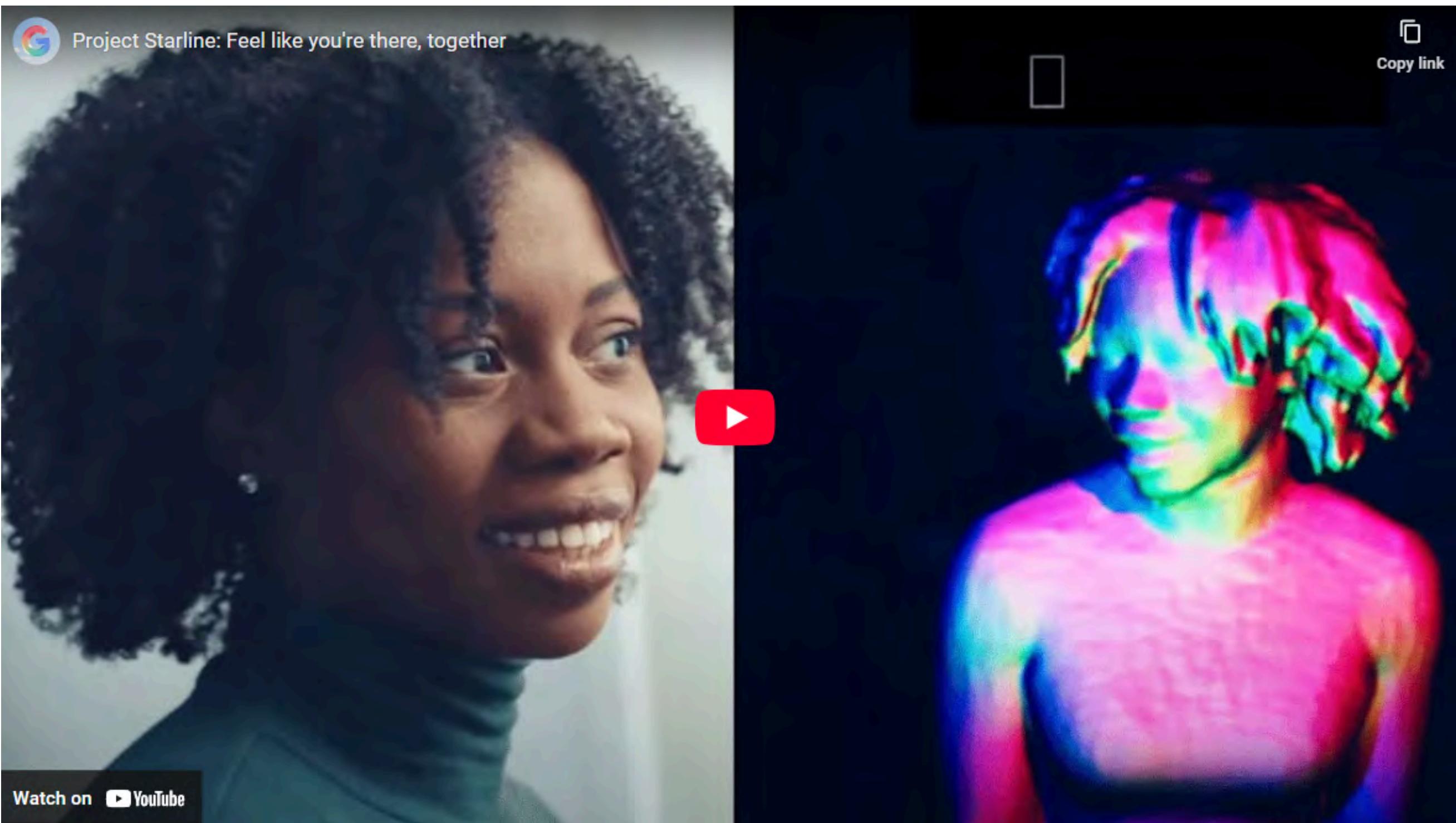
“Fall-rise”



“Rise-fall-rise”



Example:



Project Starline: Feel like you're there, together. Published by Google on YouTube
Watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q13CishCKXY&t=1s> Used for educational purposes. All rights remain with the original creators.



Comfort break
10 minutes



Storytelling mistakes

FORMAL LANGUAGE

Exhausting and confusing

INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Overwhelming

UNREALISTIC PROMISES

Damages your credibility

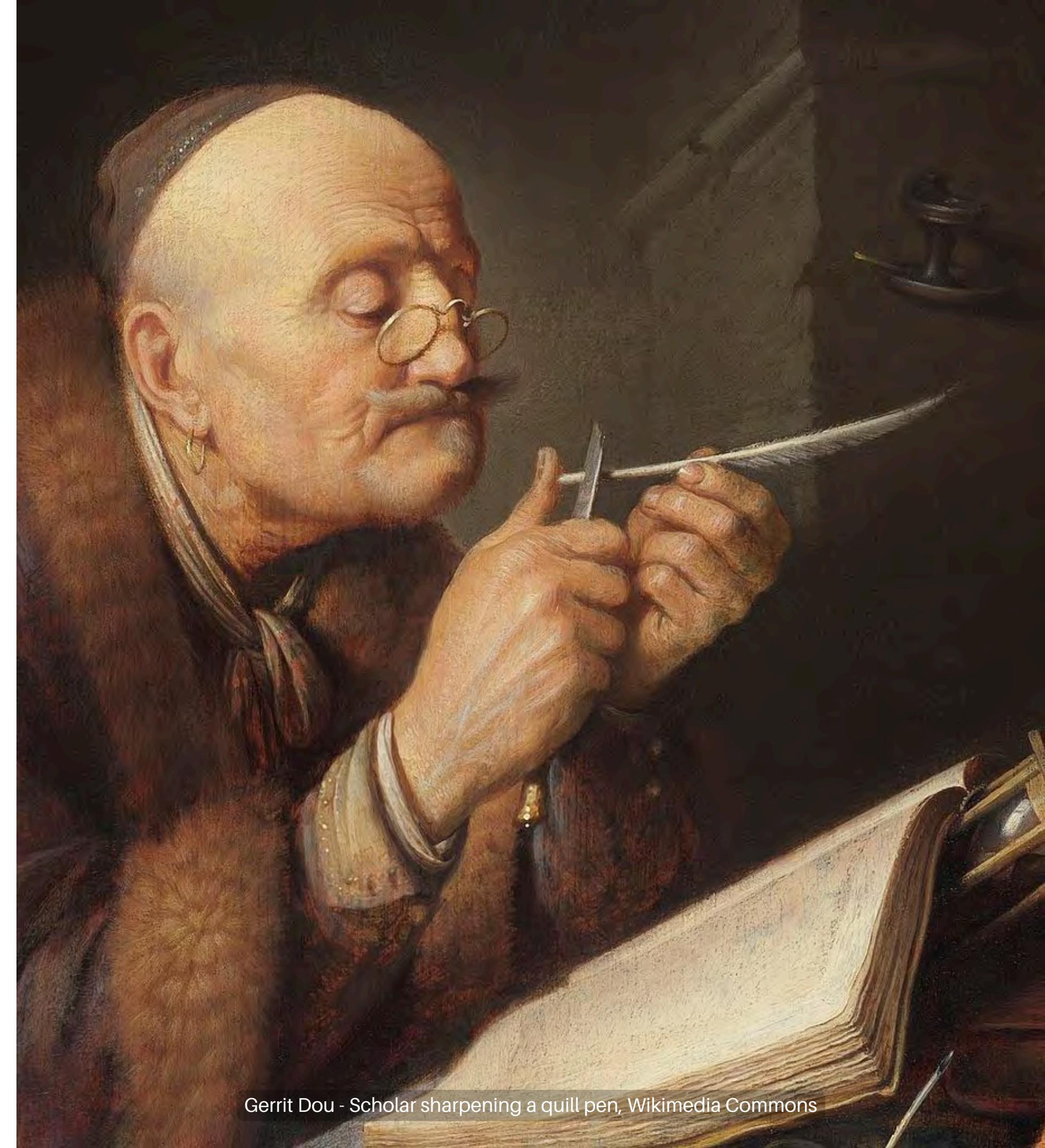
Formal language

Avoid:

- Words like: *stakeholders*, *synergies*, *capacity-building*, *beneficiaries*, *cross-cutting*, *innovative (if not explained)*, etc.
- Empty, general claims
- Passive voice
- Abbreviations

Solution:

- Plain language

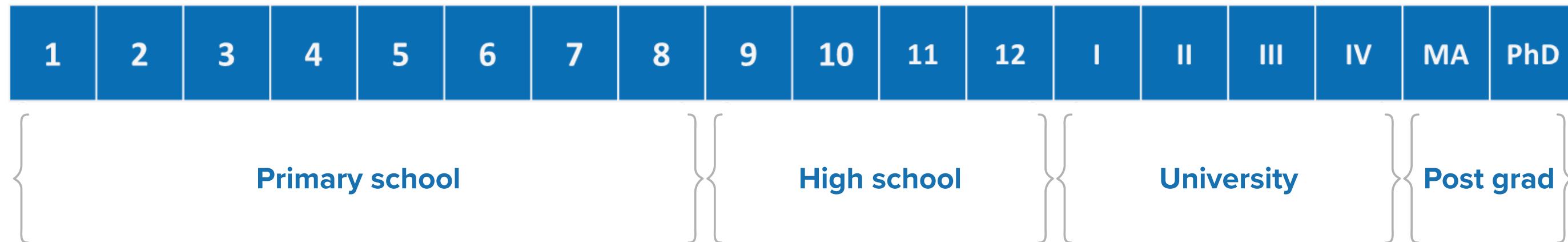


Gerrit Dou - Scholar sharpening a quill pen, Wikimedia Commons

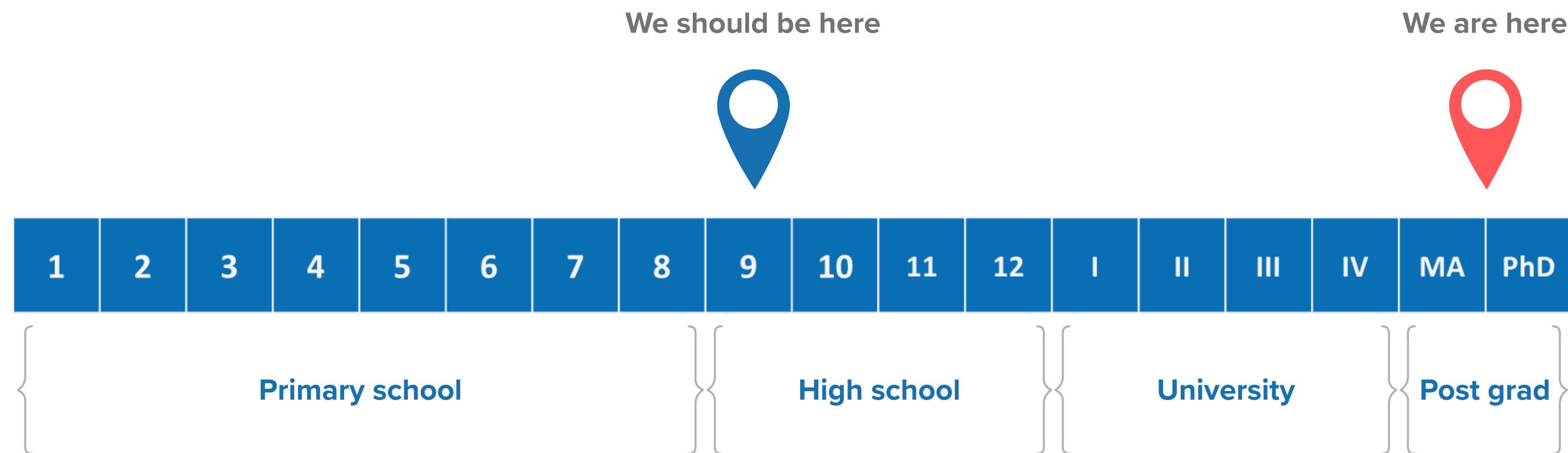
Readability score

Estimate of what should be your **education level** to **easily follow** the story.

- What is the average score of an EU-funded project?
- What should we be aiming for?



Readability score



Instead of – you could say

“Utilized” – try “used”

“Facilitated” – try “helped”

“Improved competences” – try “trained”

“Improved knowledge levels” – try “taught” or “learned”

“Held public awareness campaign about the project...” – try “we promoted the project by...”

“Fostered” – try “helped” or “supported”

“Procured” – try “bought”

“Target area” – just name the city/region

“Target audience” – people

Information overload

Avoid:

- Overwhelming your audience with too many numbers, statistics, and specifics

Solution:

- Choose only the most important information



Unrealistic promises

Avoid

- Making claims and promises that you cannot prove

Solution:

- Be honest - a small project with real impact is better than a big project with questionable impact



Instead of saying...

With our three major workshops, monthly Zoom meetings, broad distribution of a variety of promotional materials (pens, notebooks, mugs and more), multiple cross-border synergies on capitalisation and cohesion, and a high-level conference with policy makers on the future of the post-27 thematic ERDF networks, as well as the website, the newsletters and the internships we have significantly improved the challenging environment of complex systematic administrative congestions when applying for the initial career progression of young people and youths in the programme region. #AreYouStillReading, #WHY



Try...

We helped twenty young
people start a business.



STEP BY STEP

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PECHA KUCHA





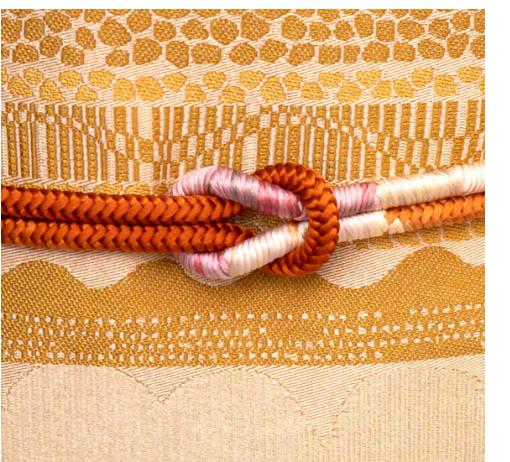
PLANNING

Make a spreadsheet with 20 rows, one per each slide. Plan your story flow - a keyword or simple phrase per slide.



IMAGES

Once you have a solid structure, start searching for the highest quality images that fit your keywords - consistent style.



PRACTICE AND ADAPT

Put your images on 20 PowerPoint slide and setup auto transition each 20 sec. Practice and adapt, then trust the script.

HOW TO PREPARE



Planning

[Link to PechaKucha planning template](#)

PechaKucha planner by Nebojsa Nikolic - 2025

Tr	Content	Type	Keywords	Tr	Details
2	Slide 1	Context	Why?		Why this specific format? (Make a joke to lighten mood and audience to relax)
3	Slide 2	Context	Overload - you are busy		100 things to do and now a creative presentation. How should it look?
4	Slide 3	Problem	Frustration		You try to come up with something interesting, feel obliged to add more and more...
5	Slide 4	Problem	Clutter		And your presentation ends up looking like this desk - full of information, but cluttered.
6	Slide 5	Problem	Audience bored		The mess leads to confusion and disconnect by the audience
7	Slide 6	Solution	Clarity and peace		Make it like this desk - simple but clear and purposefully beautiful
8	Slide 7	Solution	Origin		Where the method is coming from
9	Slide 8	Solution	Meaning		PechaKucha - "the sound of conversation" or "chit-chat" in Japanese
10	Slide 9	How it works	The method		You get 20 slides with just images and 20 seconds per slide
11	Slide 10	How it works	Haiku		Similar to Haiku - Simple but hauntingly beautiful
12	Slide 11	How it works	Quickly spread		The method spread across the world and proven to work great
13	Slide 12	How it works	Simplicity		It spread because super simple rules - easy to teach and easy to follow
14	Slide 13	Proof	Fresh		It's refreshing - people are tired of long boring slides with text
15	Slide 14	Proof	An image is worth 1000 words		With 20 images it's like 20.000 words - a rich story
16	Slide 15	Proof	Focus		No distractions - focus on one thing
17	Slide 16	Example	Creativity		The method unlocks creativity - like origami
18	Slide 17	Brand	I will show you the way		By teaching you how to prepare and enrich with storytelling
19	Slide 18	Brand	I will arm you		With tools and templates to make your job easier and more fun
20	Slide 19	Brand	I will shield you		By showing you common mistakes and what to do instead
21	Slide 20	Brand	And we will practice together		I will show you how it all ties up in practice



PechaKucha mistakes

INCONSISTENT IMAGES AND THEME

Breaks the flow, confuses the audience.

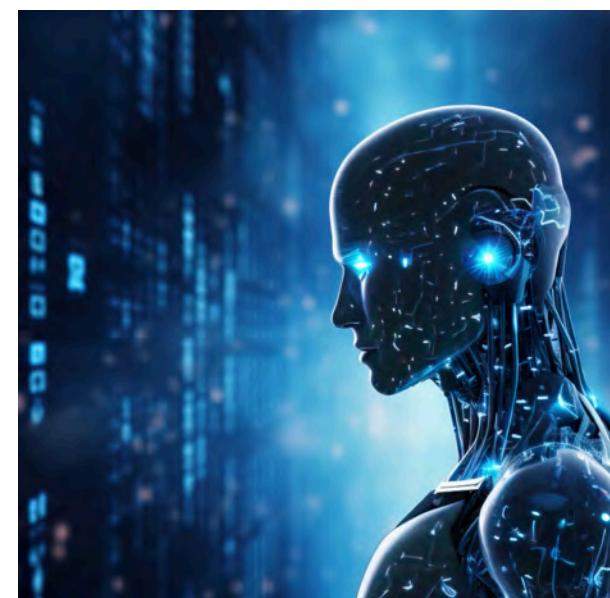
FIGHTING THE CLOCK

By trying to say too much per slide you leave the impression that you are unprepared and uncertain.

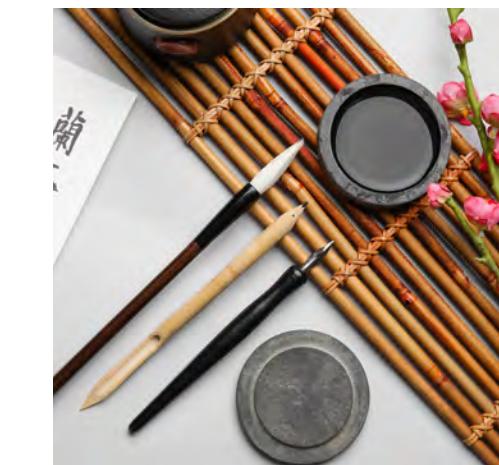
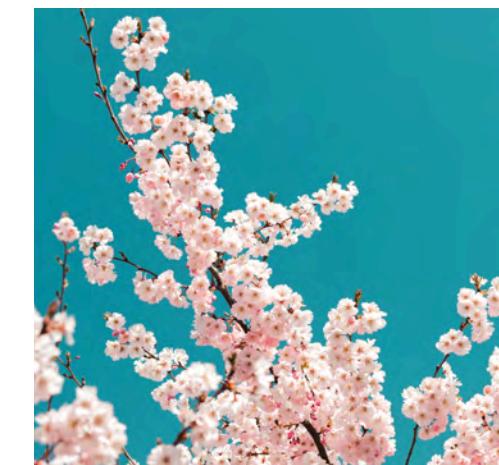
LACK OF PRACTICE

Affects your confidence and flow.

Visual and thematic inconsistency



Visual and thematic consistency



A photograph of a busy night street in a Japanese city, likely Osaka, featuring numerous illuminated signs in Japanese and English. The signs are densely packed, creating a visually overwhelming and cluttered scene. The text on the signs includes "セラ", "ドラ", "Japa", "Tax-f", "Shop", "ocomo", "OSA", "We are OSAKA", "道頓堀商店会", "KURA 道頓堀店 4.22 OPEN!", "WANAKA", "100m ↑ We are OSAKA", "SAKA", "ZAZA DOTO", and "LIVE space".

AVOID BUSY IMAGES AND COLLAGES

FREE AND EASY

STORYTELLING TOOLS AND RESOURCES



AI tools

1. LLMs

- ChatGPT
- Copilot
- Gemini
- Claude



2. Writing

- Resoomer
- Grammarly
- Quillbot
- Hemingway
- LLMs



3. Multimedia

- Dall-E
- Midjourney
- Runway
- Suno AI
- 11Labs



4. Create content

- Canva
- Adobe Express
- Gamma



Example: Test your full presentation story for readability

Hemingway App makes your writing concise and correct.

H2ignite is a transnational project funded by the Interreg North Sea Region Programme. We aim to foster cross-sector collaboration to bring green hydrogen into the mainstream of the North Sea Region's transport systems. With our innovative approach, we are breaking down barriers to hydrogen deployment by connecting industry leaders, public authorities, and research institutions. Our mission is to create a greener, more sustainable future for transport through hydrogen-based solutions.

Through our collaborative efforts, we aim to accelerate the development of hydrogen ecosystems that will transform transport and energy systems across borders. Here, you'll find key information about our groundbreaking pilots, the latest innovations in hydrogen technology, and opportunities to engage with a cross-sector network of experts.

Join us in driving the green hydrogen revolution and discover how we're shaping the future of sustainable transport. Dive into our interactive platform, explore our regional pilots, and stay up-to-date with our latest insights and innovations. Together, we can unlock the potential of hydrogen for a greener, cleaner future.

The project duration: three years, 1st of September 2024 to 31st of August 2027

The North Sea Region (NSR) is at the forefront of green energy transformation, offering enormous opportunities for energy security, economic growth, and hydrogen innovation capacity. The global green hydrogen market is projected to reach €591bn by 2030 (Deloitte, 2023), and hydrogen has a particularly crucial role to play in decarbonizing the transport sector.

However, three major challenges persist:

Small H2 Ecosystems: Most hydrogen ecosystems consist of small, isolated private sector groups that are in early test phases, with little public sector coordination or knowledge exchange.

Scarcity of Business Models: There is a lack of innovative and viable business models for both single and multi-user hydrogen applications.

Readability ⓘ 
Grade 15
Poor. Aim for 9.

Words: 401
Show more stats ⓘ

14 of 23 sentences are very hard to read.

1 of 23 sentences is hard to read.

Find grammar and spelling issues with Editor Plus. [Upgrade](#)

1 weakener. [View details](#)

3 words with simpler alternatives.

© 2013-2025 :38 Long LLC



Stock images

- Pexels
- Pixabay
- Unsplash



Storytelling exercises

Freewriting

Task:

Write down your thoughts quickly and without any filter or worry.

Benefits: Great for brainstorming, processing thoughts and emotions, releasing stress, unlocking creativity + helps you working with AI.



Storytelling exercises

PowerPoint Karaoke

Task: The participants get a set on slides with unrelated images, and they have to present on the spot, pretending it all makes sense and that it is all very important.

Benefits: Helping you develop improvisational, public speaking and storytelling skills.

Questions and answers



YOU'VE
GOT THIS

REMEMBER TO PRACTICE





Good luck!

And have fun

Nebojsa Nikolic

Sources and credits

This presentation includes images licensed through Canva Pro, and additional photos from free stock platforms (Pexels, Pixabay, Unsplash). Some visuals may have been created with AI tools and are used for illustrative purposes. One artwork ("Scholar Sharpening a Quill Pen" by Gerrit Dou) is in the public domain via Wikimedia Commons.

Screenshots of software tools (e.g., Google Spreadsheets, Hemingway App) are included for demonstration and educational purposes.

The logos are included to acknowledge and illustrate the tools, initiatives and the competition supported by this training.

Embedded videos are streamed directly from YouTube and remain the property of their original creators.

This material is provided exclusively for participants of the training. You are welcome to use it as a personal reference and inspiration in your own work. However, the content may not be copied, published, sold, or distributed as your own. Please do not share it outside the training context without prior permission, and avoid altering or reusing slides in a way that could misrepresent the source.

Nebojsa Nikolic