



What Are “Business Narratives” and How Are They Organized?

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An excerpt from the Description of The Aji Source Fundamental Strategy, Part 9

What are “Business Narratives”?

“Business Narratives” are a category of narrative and are, of course, used when speaking about thoughts and actions in the domain of business.

Business narratives are explanations, commitments or offers, and actions that enable people to notice, observe, make effective assessments, design action, prepare themselves to act and then *act effectively, strategically and competitively*, or with *superior* effectiveness, to take care of their human, financial, career and business concerns.

Business narratives contain commitments that explain descriptions, meanings, relevance, value and purposes of accomplishments, concerns, situations and actions.

All assessments, assertions, promises, requests or constitutive declarations made by or in a business narrative are commitments made by the speaker, *unless* they are fantasies, empty rhetoric, bullshit, lies or hyperbole.

This is another reason why identities of trustworthiness, value, authority and leadership making commitments are essential for top 1% performance.

Every offer, practice or strategy a Business Professional produces is a business narrative in action.

Every business narrative that is an offer, practice or strategy is also, always, a part of 7-12 other business narratives.

For instance, business narratives always include a tactical business narrative, a strategic one and an ultimate one.

They always include narratives of human, financial, career and business concerns and situations.

They always address “Standards of Mediocrity”, trustworthiness, value, authority and leadership.

Also, business professionals have narratives of ambition, as do customers, employers, employees or colleagues.

Whenever any narrative within the entire set of the business narratives is flawed, missing, weak or incomplete, a business professional knows to anticipate a breakdown in care or action.

This is true whether a business professional is producing the business narrative or listening to one.

This is an “Axiom of Power”.

Knowledge of this is an essential and significant source of competitive advantages and *superior* value for Business Professionals.

Task-orientation and procedures used by “business laborers” are practices without complete narratives. They are descriptions (of what to do) only. The business narratives that explain their meanings, relevance, value and purposes are, and must be, held by someone else.

Because business laborers lack sufficient knowledge to produce complete business narratives, they must rely upon others to design, craft and speak their offers, practices, narratives and strategies before they can act with them. This is another reason why business laborers cannot gain competitive advantage and perform in the top 1%.

How are business narratives organized?

First, business narratives about concerns, actions and commitments are organized around principles, laws and mechanics of *time*.

Human beings listen to stories in time. This is so because the “space of possibilities” for thought and action, and motion, are defined and governed by time. Time operates without regard for human will, intentions, concerns or actions.

Since time only moves in one direction, people listen first for the flow of care or production of situations to avoid inevitable breakdowns -- pain, suffering, failure or death.

They listen for the beginning, middle and end of stories. In literature this is called “drama”. Business narratives are dramatic.

In *The Aji Network* we teach business narratives using distinctions and practices from the discourse of literature. The discourse of literature constitutes the most powerful distinctions for noticing, observing, assessing, designing action, preparing people to act and then acting effectively with narratives.

In the discourse of literature the beginning, middle and end of a story are called the exposition and conflict (beginning), rising action (middle), resolution and denouement (end). When these five parts are well-designed, crafted and spoken, they constitute a *dramatic business narrative*. When each part is the expression of commitment and they are fulfilled satisfactorily, they constitute *dramatic action*.

Each of the 5 fundamental parts of a narrative is constituted by subsets of distinctions, practices and commitments a businessperson makes when producing business narratives.

For instance, the fundamental distinctions of the exposition are:

The Speaker of the story

The Champion of the story

The Adversary of the story, not necessarily a person

Major actors

Minor actors

The Current Situation: fantasies, possibilities, threats, obligations and opportunities

The Primary Conflict and its Denouements

The Situation that starts the action

The Resolution sought and its Denouements

Two fundamental categories of business narratives, “**High Concepts**” and “**Plots**”, are used in the marketplace:

High concepts are business narratives that repeat, “This happens first, and then this happens next, and then this happens, and then there is the expected and guaranteed, happy, successful outcome.”

Business laborers speak “high concept” business narratives they often learn from watching television or going to the movies. They are boring, *common* and uninteresting descriptions. They lack drama, meaning, relevance, value or purpose. About themselves business laborers will say,

“First, I will work hard and keep very busy making clever use of my *common* sense. I have a college education, which is all that I need to compete for the next 40 years given my special intelligence. Also, I have my own computer. I will always get the job done and endeavor to ‘think outside the box’, which entitles me to buy the things I want when I want them.

My income will always go up, and I will get to work at the job I prefer as long as I want. I will never become too old, and no younger, stronger or more highly educated worker will ever replace me.

I will never be divorced, even though 50% of marriages end that way; so my net worth will never be instantly cut in half and my retirement ruined. My wife and children are perfect.

My savings and investments will take care of themselves. After all, the future is a long time from now. My house will always go up in value faster than inflation; and since I will never be sick or injured because I am an exception, I will not really need insurance or healthcare unless my employer provides them, which it should.

When work is no longer interesting or spiritually rewarding enough I will retire and be able to live wherever I want, travel and have fun. I will live an exceptionally long, healthy and happy life.”

The end

Plots are complete business narratives with an exposition, conflict, rising action, resolution and denouement. They answer all relevant questions having to do with fundamental philosophies of success, principles, laws and mechanics. They explain who, what, where, when, why and how action to take care of concerns or to produce situations will work with *superior* effectiveness to produce a high return with low risk.

Plots that are business offers, practices (commitments) and strategies require knowledge to design, craft, make or speak, fulfill and produce satisfaction.

First, they accept the existence of truth and reality.

Plots are commitments and/or actions, and never fantasies, empty rhetoric, bullshit, hyperbole or lies.

There are no high concepts in them.

They provide *trustworthy* and *valuable* help for avoiding threats, fulfilling obligations and exploiting opportunities, and enable people to fulfill their personal ambitions for living a good life and business missions.

They are *consistent with* fundamental philosophies of human, financial, career and business concerns, and *coherent* with fundamental principles, laws and mechanics.

They acknowledge threats, risks, trust and value.

They are knowledge-based, and not labor-based.

They are dramatic without being melodramatic.

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