

# Persuasion Framework

## STEP 1 - ENGAGE



### A moth goes into a podiatrist's office...

Even if you've never [heard this one before](#), you probably recognize that I just started to tell a joke.

Jokes follow familiar patterns that help us immediately feel **engaged**. We have a hard time resisting the urge to anticipate what's going to happen next. The success of a joke is often tied to its ability to establish an expectation and then defy that expectation.

There's such a template to it that we have a name for that moment when the expectation shifts--**it's called the punchline**.

Stories also follow patterns that help people lean in, focus, and anticipate. You'll hear these called plot outlines, spines, or structures. In the Persuasion Framework, we call these **story templates**.

# Persuasion Framework

## INTRODUCTION

**The Persuasion Framework does not present revolutionary, new, insider information.**

Actually, these are the research-backed and time-tested techniques of three key disciplines.

Most marketers already leverage best practices from at least one of these disciplines.

- **Stories** prove themselves effective every time you read a book, sit through a two hour movie, and every time an advertisement catches your attention.
- **Decision Science** - As you become familiar with confirmation bias, reciprocation, authority, scarcity, and a host of other **reflexes** of our decision centers, you will find that your messages are not only more persuasive, they are easier to come up with. The techniques themselves will inspire creativity.
- **UX Design** is a research discipline. It can tell us, for instance, what parts of a website, tv screen, page, or billboard actually get read. Importantly, UX design helps us empathize with customers: to understand their problems, needs, desires, intuitions, and barriers to entry.

## YOUR MESSAGES COULD BE WORKING AGAINST YOU



If you aren't at least aware of these three disciplines, it's quite possible that your messages are working against you. Every day you wait, more prospects may be reading the wrong messages and forming undesirable opinions that will be harder to change.

But there are a handful of easy changes you can make to turn your message into a persuasion machine. You should learn these techniques somewhere. The Persuasion Framework organizes it all into a **5-step plan** that is easy to implement, teach your team, and remember.

All you have to do is keep reading.

**Want help? Bruck Marketing** offers workshops to help you bring your marketing foundation to life.

[SCHEDULE A FREE CONSULTATION](#)

# Persuasion Framework

## THE 5 STEPS

**01 Engage** - Engage your prospects with a high-stakes story that paints a vivid picture of success and failure.

**02 Guide** - Rig your message to achieve business objectives faster and more effectively.

**03 Captivate** - Out of the gate, do two things fast: Win favor and capture attention. It's step 3 for you, but it's the vital first impression for your prospects.

**04 Court** - Build relationships and touch points. Be the first name your prospects think of when they are ready.

**05 Close** - Once your customer indicates an interest in buying, the systems you use, people you introduce, and materials you share all have the power to close or kill the deal.

This guide focuses on Step 01 - Engage.



# Step 1: Engage

Engage your prospects with a high-stakes story that paints a vivid picture of success and failure



## Step 1: Engage

**Your ideal customer has a problem.** You have a plan to solve that problem that will stave off failure and bring them success.

*That* is the foundation of an engaging story. So, if your message is focused on how your founders met, what technologies your product uses, or the innovative new machines you are using to facilitate mass production-- put that aside for a minute and pull out a blank sheet of paper.

There are many time-tested **story templates** that will help you write faster and more effective messages for your website, blog, advertisements, and etc. All of them have one thing in common: They are fundamentally about your customer. Your customer wants to read about your customer, not about you. Don't worry, you'll get to talk about your company, too. But the story is *about* your customer.

In the **Engage** step, we'll look at four story templates developed by storytellers, marketers, and decision scientists. When Bruck Marketing writes messages, we typically try all four and use whichever is most effective for the particular story. There are advantages to each one.

**Before we start writing**, discovery is a critical first step. There are a few things we need to know.

### What We Need To Know

**Who is your ideal customer?** What are the goals, industries, and aspirations of this special group?

**What are the stakes?** What is your customer's challenge or vulnerability? How is it impacting their lifestyle or business? What is the emotional toll? What do success and failure look like?

**Why You?** What statistics, testimonials, and examples of customer empathy succinctly prove your authority? What is special about the experience of working with you? What is your plan to solve the customer's problem?

At **Bruck Marketing**, we are experts at guiding discovery and aligning teams to the most effective answers. **Want help?**

[SCHEDULE A FREE CONSULTATION](#)

**With those answers in front of you**, let's take a look at four story templates.

ENGAGE customers with a

# Fear Appeal

**Loss aversion** is a more powerful motivator than the potential for gain. Loss literally activates more brain activity, which is exactly what helps engage a reader.

But what's the best way to tell a story that leads with loss? Here is the proven template:

YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMER

IS AT RISK

SHOULD TAKE PROTECTIVE ACTION

AND CONSIDER YOUR SOLUTION

ACT NOW

First, speak directly to your customer to capture their attention. By speaking about the risk and the protective action before you pitch your solution, you engage the customer so that they can truly hear the offer.

Fear Appeals appear to be quite effective at influencing attitudes and behavior according to a comprehensive review of over 50 years of published research by the [American Psychological Association](#).

## EXAMPLE

As a busy sales executive,

you may be losing sales to something simple to solve, but awkward to talk about.

Research shows that the wrong tie can be a significant detriment to sales.

But, it's easier than ever to match your personal style with a winning look.

At TieBuy, we curate the best ties and give you several new options to choose from each month, so you can approach that next sales meeting with confidence.

Get started today.

An example of a fear appeal can be found in the right column of p2 of this guide.

ENGAGE customers with an

# Aspiration Appeal

Alice Tybout and Richard Yalch developed [The Labeling Technique](#), which plays on our aspirations.

Start by giving your customer a label/trait they will like and agree with. Then tell them how people with that trait behave and align that behavior with your offer.

IDEAL CUSTOMER TRAIT / LABEL

CORRESPONDING BEHAVIOR

OFFER

STAKES

Notice these are not mad-libs. The template guides the organization of information, but there's still plenty of room to be creative.

In fact, a great exercise once you write a story is to convey the meaning with as few words as possible.

## EXAMPLE

You are a powerhouse sales executive.

Your words resound with confidence, and your tie sings a tight harmony—perfectly in tune.

At TieBuy, we curate the best ties and give you several new options to choose from each month.

Because the office is no place for a dress rehearsal.

Get started today.

ENGAGE customers with a

# Story Spine

The **STORY SPINE** was developed by [Kenn Adams](#) and famously used by [Pixar](#) both in writing movies and in Pixar's [22 Rules of Storytelling](#). The story goes like this....

ONCE UPON A TIME

EVERY DAY

ONE DAY

BECAUSE OF THAT

UNTIL FINALLY

The Story Spine is effective for stories about unfortunate disruptions in the way things once were, and eventual returns to a positive and stable state.

In addition to being entertaining, stories that promise a return to “the good old days” can be incredibly persuasive--even when there never actually was a good old day. You can see this at work in recent political campaigns that use words like “again” and “back” to imply a return to the way things once were.

## EXAMPLE

We were business warriors once.

Our weapons were the substance of our words and the cut of our jib.

But the fine tailors of old took to malls and big box stores.

We no longer recognized ourselves among the fluorescent lights and frenzied crowds.

TieBuy gets you back on the battlefield by learning your preferences. We send you 3 ties a month to try. You keep your favorites.

We're bringing back the cut of your jib.

Get started today.

ENGAGE customers with a

# Brand Story

**Origin stories** nearly always feature a guide who passes on his or her knowledge or assistance to the hero. [Donald Miller's Brand Story](#) template leans heavily on the guide / hero relationship. You are the guide. Your customer is the hero.

A CHARACTER

HAS A PROBLEM

AND MEETS A GUIDE

WHO SHARES A PLAN

AND CALLS THEM TO ACTION

TO AVOID FAILURE

AND ACHIEVE SUCCESS

You can see this template repeatedly in stories and movies. In [Karate Kid](#), a **character** (Daniel) arrives in a new town and has a **problem**. He is bullied as he struggles to establish an identity. His safety, belonging, and esteem are all at risk. But then he meets a **guide**: Mr. Myagi.

Mr. Myagi has a 3-part **plan** (wax on/off, paint fence, sand floor) and **calls Daniel to action**

## EXAMPLE

You're a busy sales executive.

You need to look sharp, but you don't have time to shop.

At TieBuy,

we learn your preferences and send you 3 ties a month. Try them out, and keep only your favorites.

The wrong tie can set an unpleasant tone for your meeting, ultimately costing you sales.

But with TieBuy, you'll show up looking like the powerhouse you are, win the deal, and impress your colleagues.

Sign up now.

("Karate do yes or karate do no. You karate do 'guess so' get squished, just like grape.")

The **stakes** are high, especially after the initial sweep of the leg, but Daniel ultimately wins the karate tournament.

In a final glorious one-legged crane kick, Daniel ends the cycle of bullying, wins the respect of his rival ("You're all right, Larusso"), and establishes his personal identity, which lasts through at least two sequels.



## PERSUASION FRAMEWORK

# Engage Workshop

Working with these templates can go a long way to helping you engage customers. But we are just scratching the surface of your potential.

Bruck Marketing offers a scalable workshop to help you engage your customers. Here are a few examples of how we can help:

- **Align, focus, and energize your team** - The discovery discussion alone helps your team realize and align on the value your company provides.
- **Deeper discovery** - Initially, discovery questions tend to unearth surface-level customer challenges. Digging deeper, we often find that the problem your business is tuned to solve is more gritty and exciting.

- **Tuned for decision reflexes** - We bring our knowledge of decision science to help you achieve your objectives and avoid messaging mistakes that can scare off customers.
- **Set your course** - With your story in hand, you are ready to take on the world, but... Now what? We can help you set a course and prioritize your next steps.

### Ready to Engage?

[SCHEDULE A FREE CONSULTATION](#)

# Persuasion Framework

01 ENGAGE WITH STORIES - QUICK REFERENCE

## Fear Appeal

YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMER

IS AT RISK

SHOULD TAKE PROTECTIVE ACTION

AND CONSIDER YOUR SOLUTION

ACT NOW

## Aspiration Appeal

IDEAL CUSTOMER TRAIT / LABEL

CORRESPONDING BEHAVIOR

OFFER

STAKES

## Story Spine

ONCE UPON A TIME

EVERY DAY

ONE DAY

BECAUSE OF THAT

UNTIL FINALLY

## Brand Story

A CHARACTER

HAS A PROBLEM

AND MEETS A GUIDE

WHO SHARES A PLAN

AND CALLS THEM TO ACTION

TO AVOID FAILURE

AND ACHIEVE SUCCESS

## The Race for Clarity

Some businesses find themselves wrapped up in a race to make the boldest claims and have the longest list of features or services. When that doesn't work, they race to the bottom on pricing.

They are taking the joy out of their business by failing to revel in the real value they actually do provide. They are in the wrong race.

You know better. You are in **the race for clarity** because you know that a customer is more likely to buy from a company who has shown they can articulate the customer's problem and offers a clear plan to solve it.

The Persuasion Framework will help you tell customers the truth wrapped in a persuasive bow. You will revel in the deep value you provide, not in the shallow trenches of features lists and checkbox delivery.

**Want help?** Bruck Marketing offers a scalable workshop to help you **engage** your customers. Visit us online at [bruckmarketing.com](http://bruckmarketing.com).

SCHEDULE A FREE CONSULTATION



# ARE YOU READY TO ENGAGE?

Driving prospects to your website before you get the messaging right isn't just a waste of money – it burns valuable leads who are unlikely to return.

The **Persuasion Framework** blends the most powerful research-backed conclusions of behavioral science with storytelling and designs that will **captivate, engage, guide, court, and close** new customers.



## Step 2: Guide

Rig your message to achieve goals faster and more effectively.



## Step 3: Captivate

- Win Favor
- Establish Serendipity

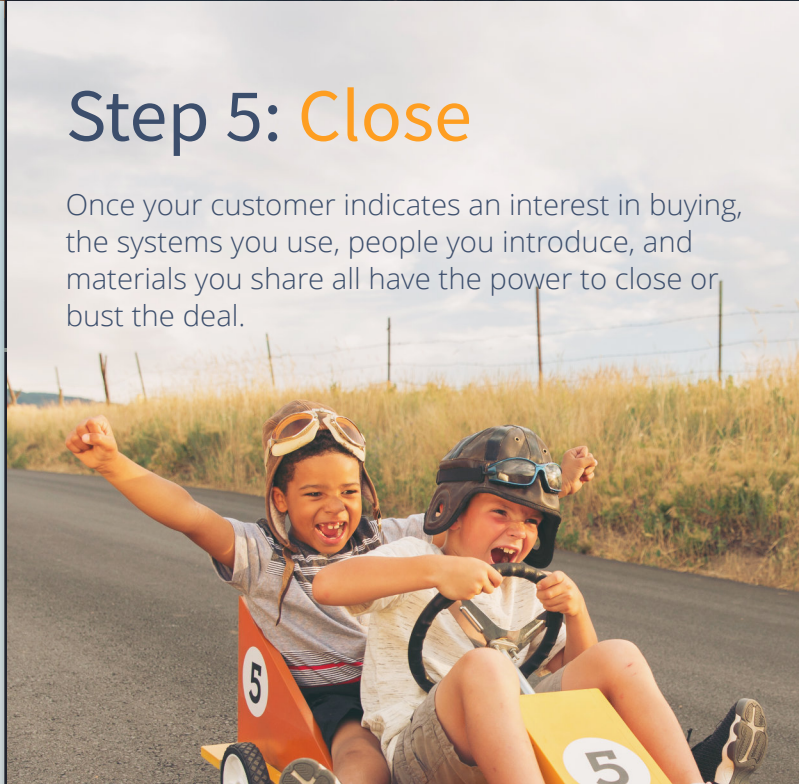
### Hurry Up

UX Design research has proven that prospects form lasting opinions about websites in **1/20th of a second.**



## Step 4: Court

Build relationships and touch points. Be the first name your prospects think of when they are ready to buy.



## Step 5: Close

Once your customer indicates an interest in buying, the systems you use, people you introduce, and materials you share all have the power to close or bust the deal.