

Flagship Storyselling Immersion - Session 5

Against-the-Odds: The Story that Builds Confidence

October 14, 2026

with Jen, *The Storyselling Sherpa*

Check-in / Stories of the Week

Story Moments?

**Values-In-Action Story
Realizations?**

Our Journey



- Session 1: Why your work matters (Core Story)
- Session 2: How you got here (Origin Story)
- Session 3: What results can clients get (Client Success)
- Session 4: Shows alignment...*or not* (Values-In-Action)
- Session 5: Works even when it's hard (Against-the-Odds)

Purpose of Against-the-Odds Stories

To remove doubt, and build confidence.

Helps a prospective client believe
you can handle the difficult stuff,
not just deliver when everything is smooth.

The Emotional Shift of This Story

"But what if..."

Fear and uncertainty



"Even if..."

Confidence and
reassurance

The question in their head...

"But will this work for ME... in MY situation?"

An Against-the-Odds Story addresses doubt, including those people may never say aloud.

This story addresses (and alleviates) fear and helps prospects trust their "YES."

Today's Focus...

Your Against-the-Odds Story answers:
"Can I trust this person to handle adversity?"

It shows how you respond under pressure.

This story gives proof that your work holds up
in good AND not-so-good situations.

What are this story's "jobs?"

- Shows your work under pressure
- Helps people overcome hesitation
- Makes your expertise visible
- Builds confidence
(without claiming perfection)

Against-the Odds: What it IS & ISN'T

It is not:

- a failure story
- a long explanation
- a dramatic struggle
for the sake of drama

It IS:

- a moment of challenge
- a test of your approach
- proof that your work
"holds up"

What Against-the-Odds Stories Convey

It shows that even when things aren't ideal...

your work still works.

This story tells your audience:

Even if you're unsure...Even if things feel messy...
Even if it's not perfect...*This can still work for you.*

First, find the fear...

- What do clients worry about *before* working with you?
- What makes them hesitate?
- What “*But what if...?*” might they be thinking?

Name one real concern. (If you have more, write those down too.)

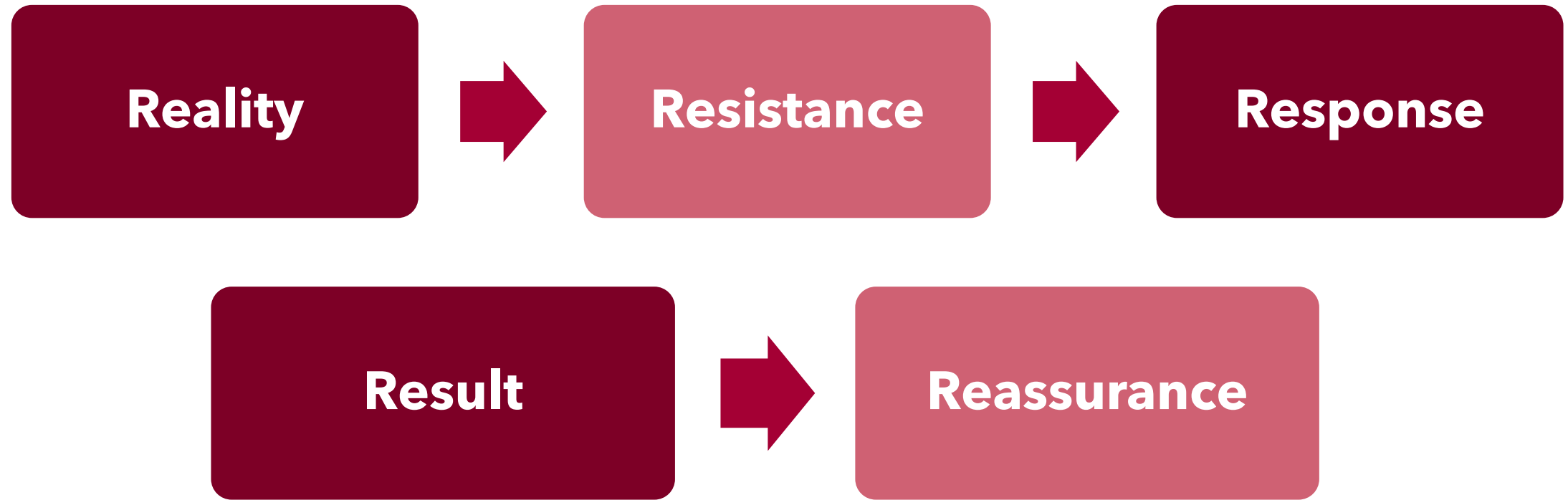
Next, find a story that qualifies...

Think of a time things weren't straightforward.

- A skeptical client?
- Limited time or money?
- A failed prior attempt?
- Low confidence?
- An unexpected obstacle?

Against-the-Odds Framework

This story has five parts:



Your Against-the-Odds Story Builder

Think of the **reality** of a client's situation:

"Even though _____ (resistance),

we focused on _____ (response),

and as a result _____ (result).

This showed me that _____ (reassurance)."

Against-the-Odds Story Goals

The main goal is NOT to prove perfection.
The main goal is to build confidence.

Also...to be relatable:

**Does this story
remove a fear your audience has?**

Against-the-Odds Story

Setting the right mindset...

*Think about a time
when things weren't straightforward...*

Where did your work prove itself?

Not because things were easy,
but because they weren't?

Against-the-Odds Story Prompts

A time when...

- A client was unsure this would work?
- Someone has been skeptical or hesitant?
- Someone came to you, after trying other things that didn't work?"
- The world wasn't easy (ex: Pandemic)

1 + 2: Reality & Resistance

Reality:

Who was involved? What was happening?

Resistance:

What made it difficult? What doubt, fear, constraint, or skepticism was present?

Write:

Name the tension without overexplaining.

Point #3: Response

- What did YOU notice, decide, or do?
- What did you guide them through?
- What stayed consistent in your approach?

Your response reveals your thinking.

4 + 5: Result & Reassurance

Result:

What changed or worked
despite the challenge?

Reassurance:

What does this prove?
Which fear does it remove for your next client?

An Against-the-Odds Story Exercise

Start your first draft with this framework.

Then revise it into an actual story.

- WHO came to you?
- WHAT were they worried about?
- WHAT did you help them realize?
- HOW did your approach hold up?
- WHAT worked anyway?

Against-the-Odds Story Builder recap

Think of the **reality** of a client's situation:

"Even though _____ (resistance),

we focused on _____ (response),

and as a result _____ (result).

This showed me that _____ (reassurance)."

Self-Checklist: Against-the-Odds

A strong Against-the-Odds Story should:

- ✓ Describe a real challenge or obstacle*
- ✓ Show how you responded or adapted*
- ✓ Reveal character, leadership, or expertise*
- ✓ Demonstrate learning or growth*
- ✓ End with a clear takeaway*

Story Time!

- Share your story
- Pay attention to how it feels

Things to try this week.

1. 1st draft with Against-the-Odds Story Builder.
2. Revise your first draft with some of your actual Against-the-Odds stories.

Pro Tip: If you get stuck, rewrite a few versions of the the two pink sections on slide 13. The power of this story is in the client resistance (“Even though...” line) and your reassurance.

Remember What We're Going For

- Clear beats clever.
- Shorter is stronger.
- Make it real, even if you don't use names.
- We're not telling everything. We're showing a moment of transformation that builds confidence.

Closing Thought

Your stories are already there.
Our job is to bring them into focus.

Need help? Email me at jenb@storyselling4success.com.