



Changing The Narrative: Coaching Skills for Leaders

A LinkedIn Live Office Hours Event



No matter how many fresh starts you create, you may come to realize that the **old story** continues to help you create more of what you don't want? Let's explore four things you need to know about shifting your narrative, and how this skill transfers to coaching your employees.

The overview

The story you tell is the life you live. Here is an overview adapted from my work as an enhanced practitioner in Narrative Coaching.

1. Your story is the source of your suffering.
2. New behaviors require new stories.
3. Self-regulation is required for creating a new story.
4. You can only coach a regulated person.

#1 Your story is the source of your suffering.

What's the story in your head? Listen to the "*I am*" statements to uncover the story.

- I'm too old.
- I'm not smart enough.
- I'm an introvert.
- I'm a HIGH D on the DISC.

Listen to yourself or any of your employees and you'll hear hints of irresponsible language.

- Living in the past
- Blame
- Absence of choice
- Disrespect



As a leader, become aware of irresponsible language. This type of language indicates a lack of empowerment and the inability to see choice. If you argue you will only get resistance.

Application for personal life: What may be holding you back is your framework.

Application for coaching: You must know when someone is focused on obstacles.

#2 New behaviors require new stories.

Behaviors always mirror the internal narrative.

STORY	BEHAVIOR
I already know what he will say	Avoidance
It's too difficult	Don't try
I'm the only one who can do it right	Lack of delegation
If I get it wrong ...	Perfectionism

As a leader, you must elevate your language. The more you work on yourself, the easier it will be to coach others.

Application for personal life: You can't create a new behavior from an old story.

Application for coaching: What behavior needs to change? What would the other need to believe in order to adopt the preferred behavior? It's difficult to seek behavior change if you don't understand the underlying patterns driving the behavior.

#3 Self-regulation is required for creating a new story.

When unregulated, your emotions are in the driver's seat. The amygdala takes control, hijacking your brain, and you operate from your reptile brain, behaving as if in survival mode. It's not uncommon for clients and employees alike to experience an emotional outburst and justify their behavior by claiming, "I'm just being authentic," or "You're just too sensitive!"

As a leader, you cannot afford to make excuses for harsh or bullying behavior if you want to be a good example to others.

Anger Management

I created a video series on **Anger Management** on LinkedIn Learning, where I made the following point: People often say to me, I have an anger problem. What they mean is that they have not been able to control their temperament or their outbursts, and as a result, it



has cost them opportunities and relationships. Or it causes them embarrassment because they position themselves as emotional and illogical.

Application for personal life: Usually it's not an "anger problem," it's a self-awareness problem. Or a problem of not asking for what you want, or an inability to enforce boundaries. All of these skills help you to regulate yourself.

Application for coaching: You must learn how to regulate yourself and how to notice when others are unregulated so that you give effective feedback and coach performance.

#4 You Can Only Coach a Regulated Person

When someone is angry with you, you aren't going to influence them until they calm down.

If an employee feels that you don't understand their point of view, you won't be able to lead them. If an employee continues to argue for their obstacle, it means they don't feel heard.

You may say, "I'm not really a leader," but realize that we all lead in some capacity. From being a C-Suite leader to a supervisor, to the chair of a committee, or even a parent, we all lead at various points in life.

Application for personal life: Don't get triggered by someone else's anger. Decide not to engage no matter how much you want to. You won't make the situation better when you or the other person is unregulated.

Application for coaching: You have to meet people where they are. You can't coach someone until they are calm and ready to hear your message. You have to allow the emotion to pass. Until someone feels heard, they are going to be mentally "stuck," and it's unlikely you'll be able to effectively shift the energy or direction of the conversation. Instead, you will get caught in a game of verbal ping-pong and wonder what happened. This is called "resisting their resistance." You tried to shift their mood instead of allowing them to feel what they feel. The bottom line is that you can't create a new narrative or help others to do so from a state of mind-drama.

There's no better time to create a new story, because the story you tell is the life you live.





Marlene Chism works with leaders and teams to create drama-free cultures that drive growth and reduce costly mistakes. Marlene is known for helping managers address *“the elephant in the room”* and initiate conversations that get results.

Marlene is a recognized expert on the LinkedIn learning platform, producing five educational video series on topics that include anger management, working with high conflict people, and having difficult conversations.

She has a degree in Communications, a master’s in human resources development, and she’s an advanced practitioner in Narrative Coaching.

Her most recent book, *From Conflict to Courage* was nominated for an international award in the category of **Learning Impact** by getAbstract.

Services

Services include consulting, coaching, virtual and onsite training. To set up an exploratory call email marlene@marlenechism.com to set a calendar date.

LinkedIn Office Hours

Marlene Chism regularly offers free educational live streams on LinkedIn. Follow Marlene on [LinkedIn](#).

Resources

Visit the web at www.marlenechism.com for information and resources.

