

Quick Summary

Some ideas have a much better chance of “sticking” with us than others. While it might be tempting to think that creativity is completely spontaneous, the authors contend that creative messages that are memorable tend to follow some basic rules or patterns that communicate ideas better than others.

Key Insights

- **Simple** – a simple message communicates something that is core truth to you in a way that is compact
- The curse of knowledge – the more knowledge you have the harder it is to remember what it was like not to know it – simple messages cut through that
- **Unexpected** – our knowledge (schema) gives us the ability to predict what’s coming next, for a message to stick you have to break the cycle of predictability
- It’s about creating a knowledge gap for the audience – posing a question interesting enough to have curiosity about how to close the gap, this allows them to take a journey of discovery with you
- **Concrete** – language may be abstract but life is not, you must put your idea into a form that allows people to examine it with their senses, or at least relate to it by what they can observe with their senses
- **Credible** – a new idea is battling against years of personal learning and relationships – without a credible source, they will be ignored
- External credibility comes from honest, trustworthy sources
- Internal credibility comes from using statistics or other information that allows the listener to make a connection on a relational, human-scale level
- **Emotional** – when we are presented with a choice about making a difference, we emotionally respond to the individual need over the need of the masses
- Self-interest might be enough to get a person to care about your message initially, but to truly motivate people to care in a lasting way, we need to shoot for transcendence in our message, tap into a person’s desire to make a difference

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Stories – stories provide both knowledge about how to act as well as motivation to act – they are both credible and emotional▪ When you tell stories you are asking the audience to engage with the idea, to participate in the journey rather than just giving them information
Action Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Apply the SUCCEs checklist to sermons▪ Apply the SUCCEs checklist to teachings
Quotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ “We’ve seen that compact ideas are stickier, but that compact ideas alone aren’t valuable – only ideas with <i>profound</i> compactness are valuable. So, to make a profound idea compact you’ve got to pack a lot of meaning into a little bit of messaging. And how do you do that? You tap the existing memory terrain of your audience.” (p. 52)▪ “...being concrete isn’t hard, and it doesn’t require a lot of effort. The barrier is simply forgetfulness – we forget that we’re slipping into abstractspeak.” (p. 129)▪ “If we’re trying to persuade a skeptical audience to believe a new message, the reality is that we’re fighting an uphill battle against a lifetime of personal learning and social relationships.” (p. 133)▪ “Belief counts for a lot, but belief isn’t enough. For people to take action, they have to <i>care</i>.” (p. 168)▪ “Lee [Army Cook at Pegasus camp outside Baghdad] realizes that serving food is a job, but improving morale is a mission. Improving morale involves creativity and experimentation and mastery. Serving food involves a ladle.” (p. 187)