

## Your story must make sense

Perhaps you know the uneasy feeling after watching a film that you couldn't quite make sense of. The plot was inconclusive; the characters left you cold. And yet you still keep yourself occupied with it; because the matter is not closed. The same feeling is sometimes triggered by stories from clients, as the following example shows.

*Peter Näf*

Working with a client in outplacement turned out to be difficult. I couldn't get to understand him and he remained a bit of a stranger to me even after several meetings.

Briefly about his story: He had been dismissed after eight years in an industrial company. The reason was a bad understanding with his superior, who considered his performance insufficient. My client was reserved in communicating about this, but made several negative comments about his former supervisor. Prior to this position, he worked for a bank with extensive management responsibilities. I had the impression that his career was showing a break and asked him about it. He reacted evasively. I could not comprehend his career; it all made no sense to me.

### Tell your complete story

After some time, I suggested that his move from the bank to industry had been a clear step backwards. He agreed with me and finally told me the whole story: he had taken the job for two considerations. First, he wanted to leave the financial services industry. He was therefore prepared to take on a less qualified role as an investment in his new career direction. Secondly, at that time

his wife had returned to work and he had taken on a larger share of the childcare. It had therefore suited him to be less professionally challenged for a certain period of time. And finally, his overqualification had also been a topic in the job interview. He had agreed with his future supervisor to upgrade his position through demanding additional projects.

### Sympathy arises from understanding

Unfortunately, the job had not developed as expected. Due to a change of supervisor, the agreed projects were not realised.

Now I understood his situation and could comprehend his behaviour. Through our open conversation, sympathy developed and our cooperation improved. He could now understand what had actually happened. Until then, he had avoided a critical examination of his professional past. We then rewrote his career history. On the one hand, he saw that he had been unlucky because of unfavourable developments in the company. At the same time, he had to admit to himself that he had failed to look for a new job in time. With the formulation of what he learned from this situation; the argumentation was finished.

Such stories, in which not everything goes according to plan, arouse sympathy. And if the person concerned shows that he has learned his lesson, an apparent failure can become a success story.

[#Job interview](#), [#Application](#), [#Storytelling](#)

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