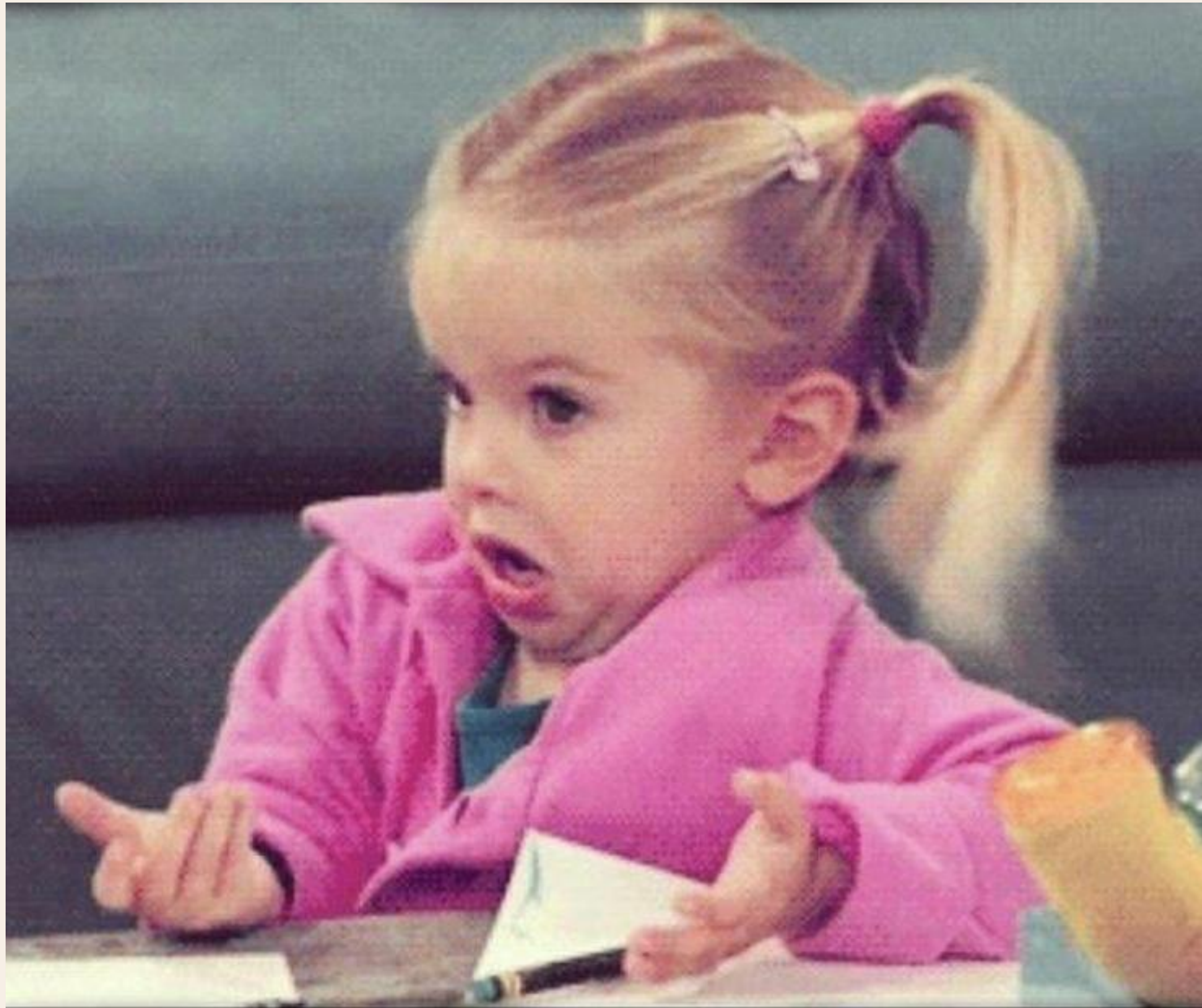




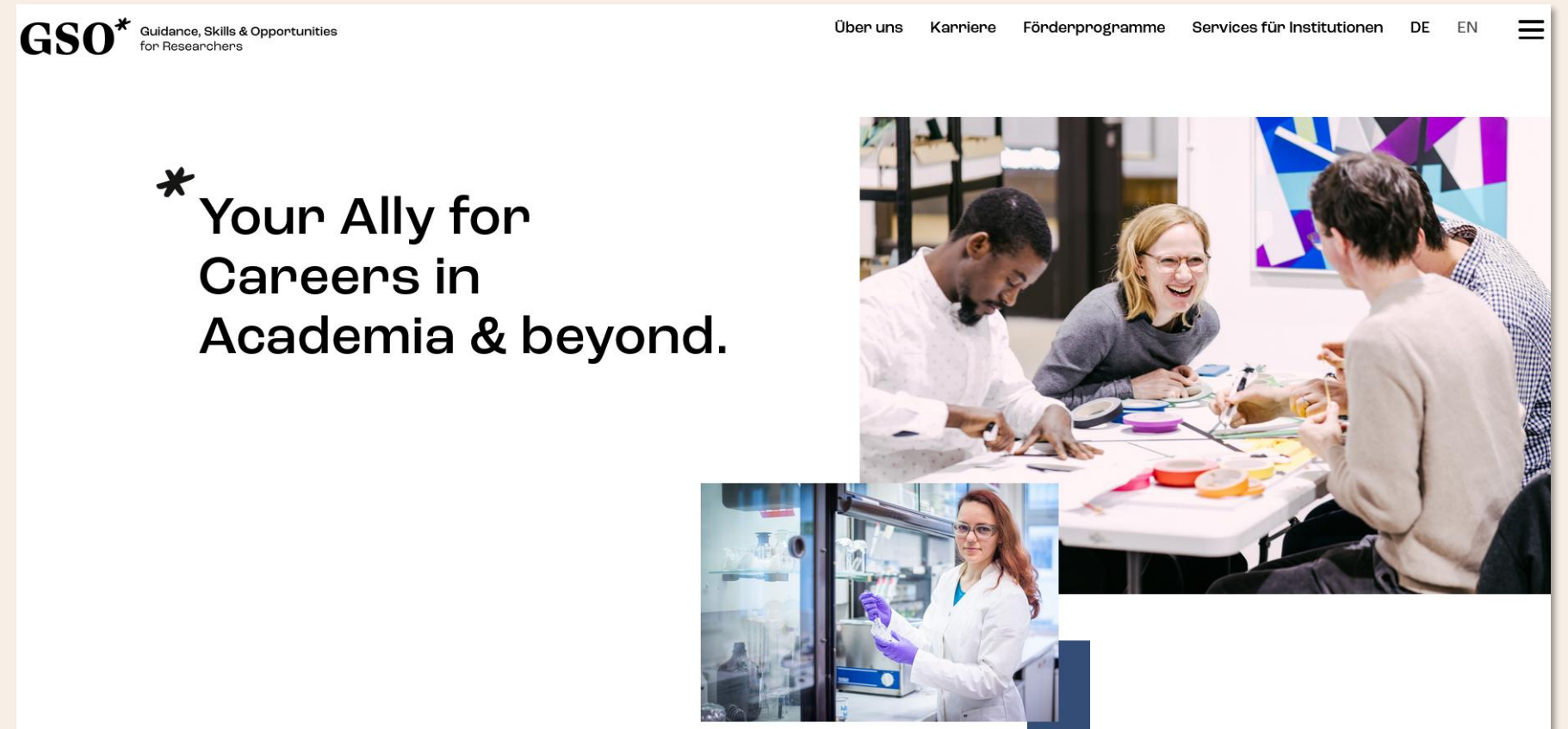
\* What's your  
(research) story?





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What's a story?

In the context of research, a story is a **structured narrative** that **connects data, findings, and insights** to a central theme or purpose, **engaging the audience** in a way that **fosters understanding**, **emotional connection**, and **recall**.

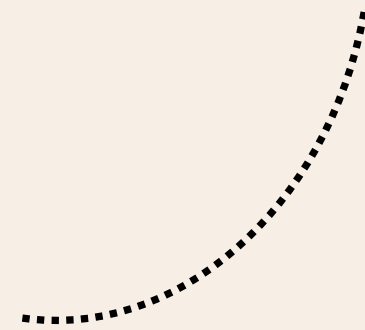
**Data doesn't speak for itself!**

A story in this sense transforms raw information into a journey with purpose, showing not just what the researcher found, but **why it matters**.



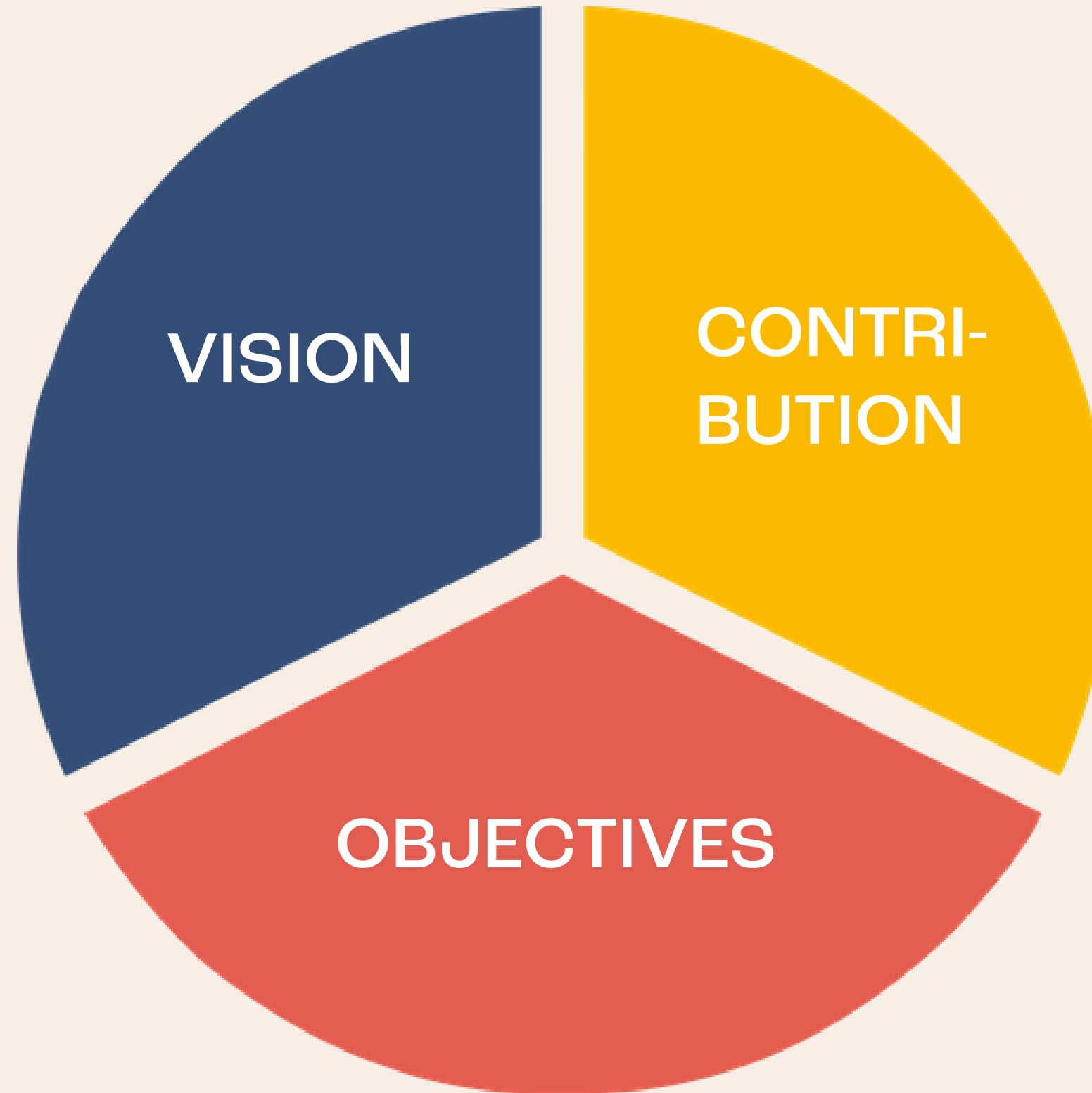
Brené Brown

» Stories are  
data with a soul. «

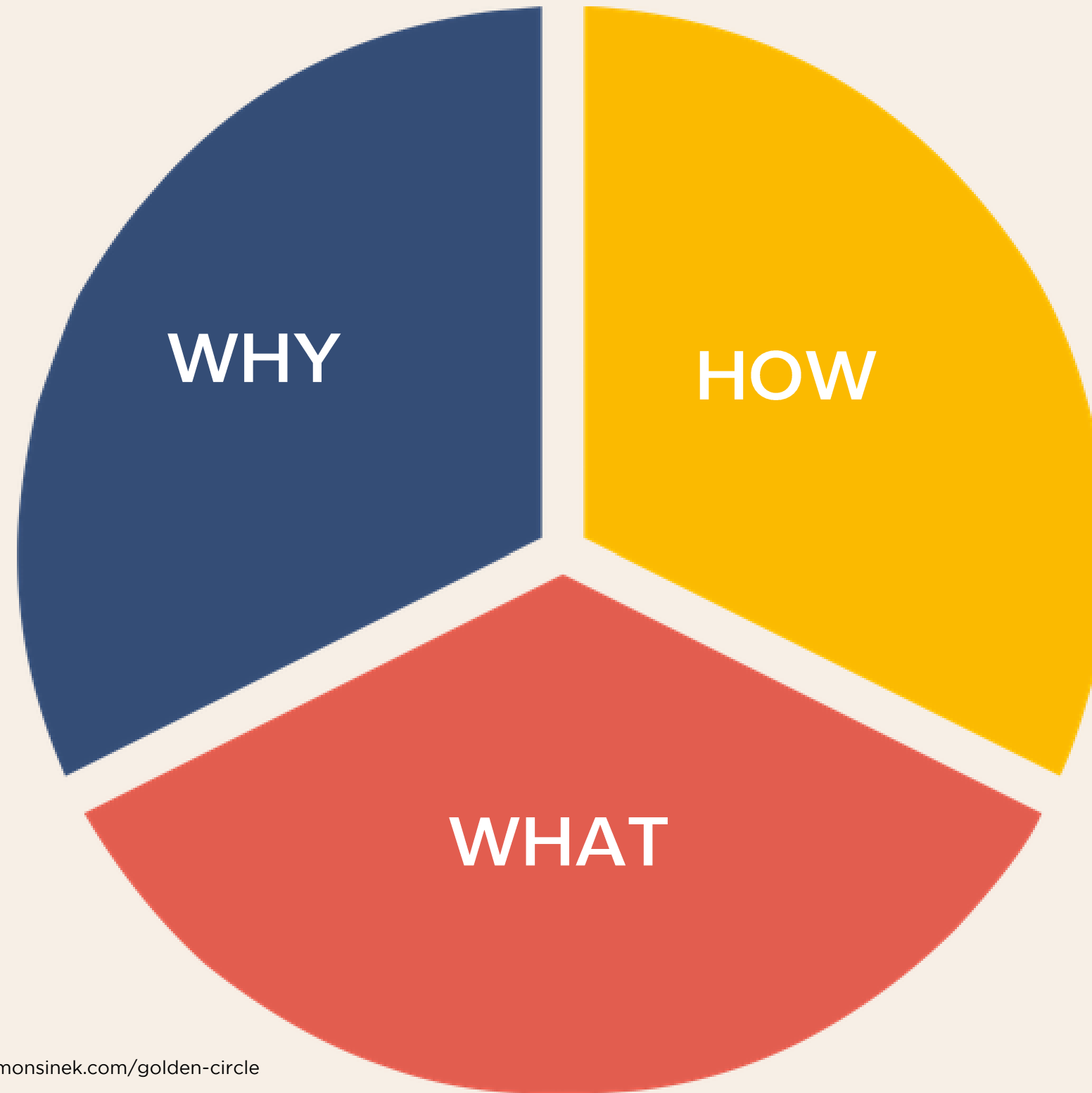


# Communicating your research

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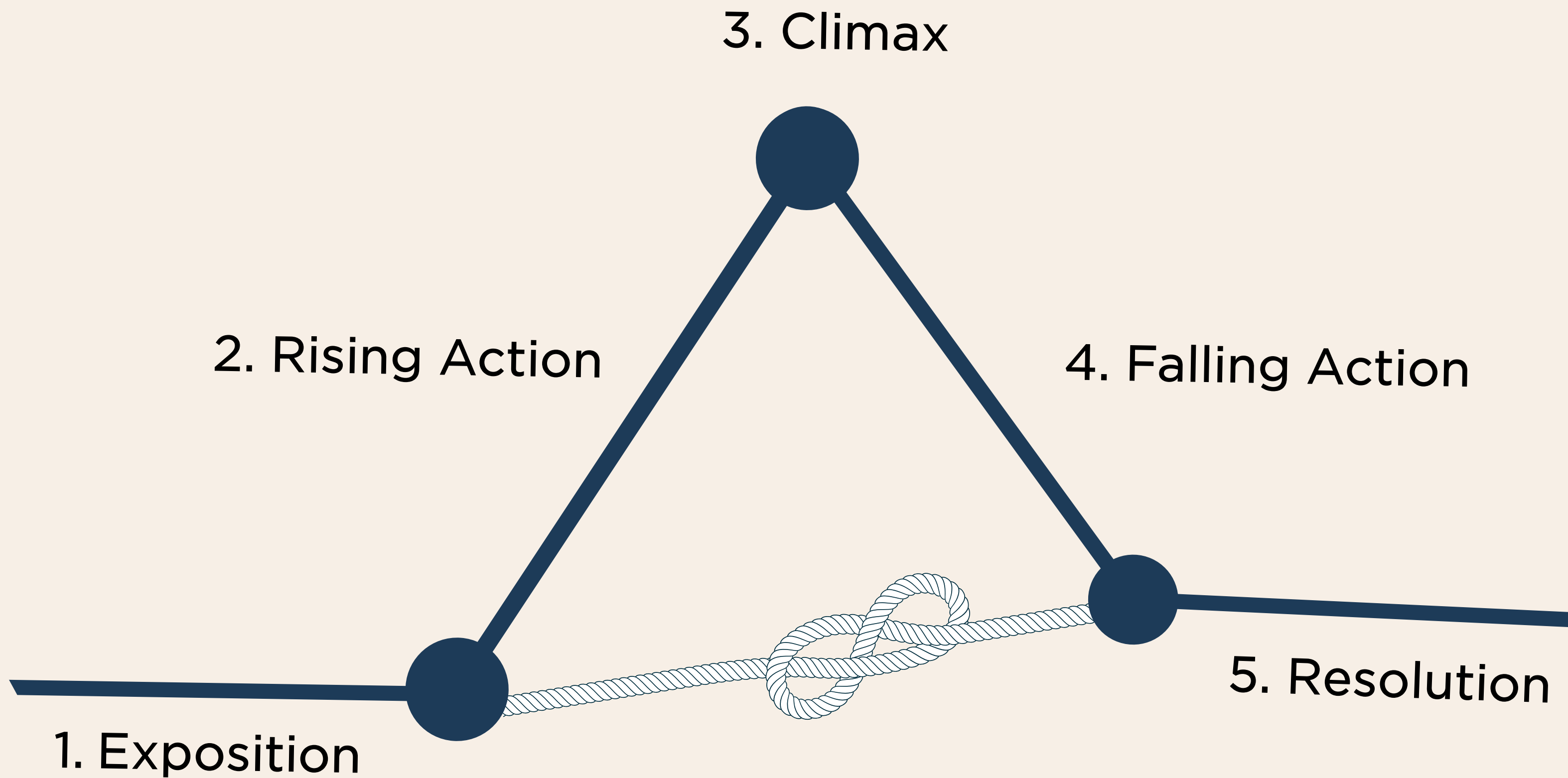


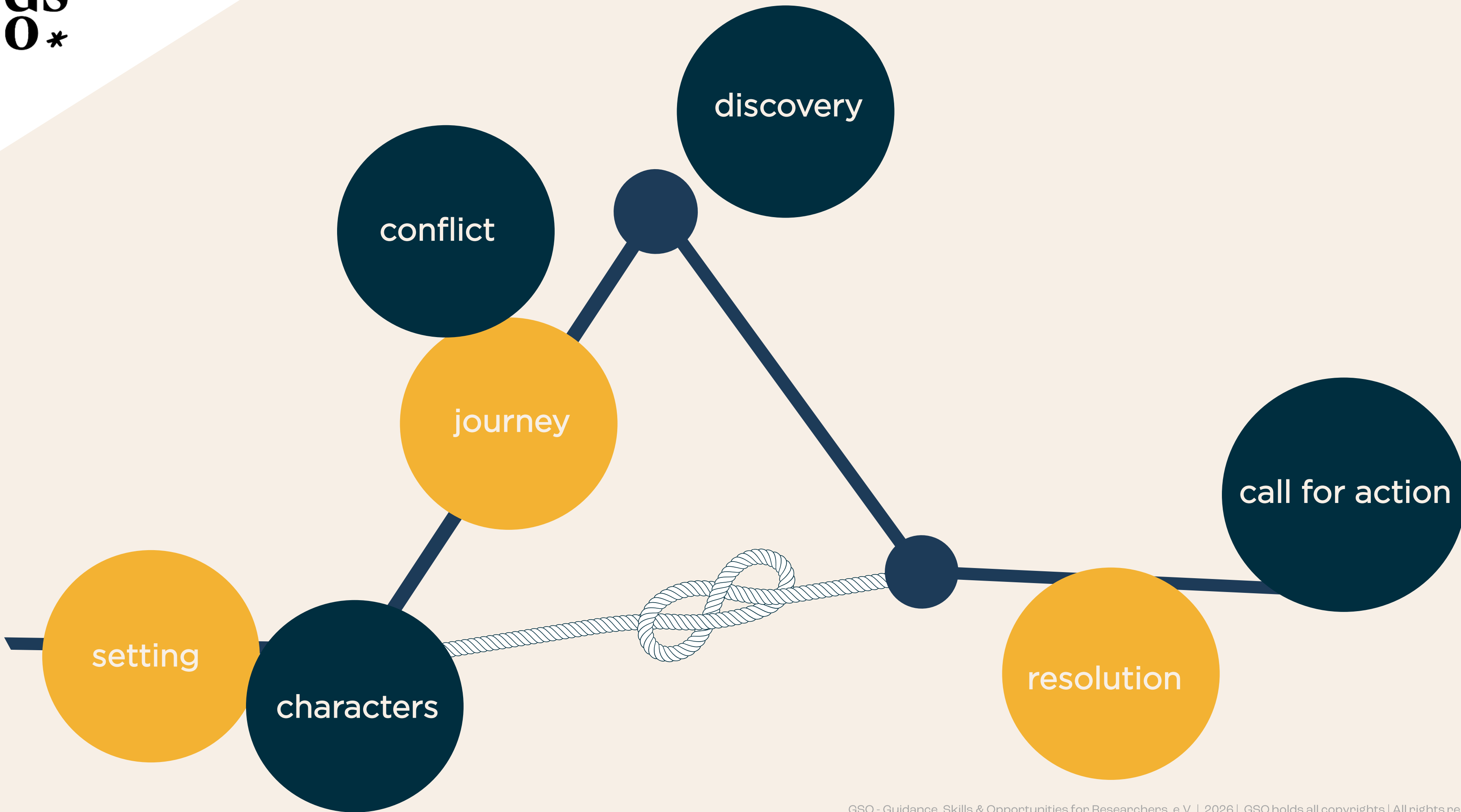
# Sinek's Golden Circle



<https://simonsinek.com/golden-circle>

# Freytag's Pyramid





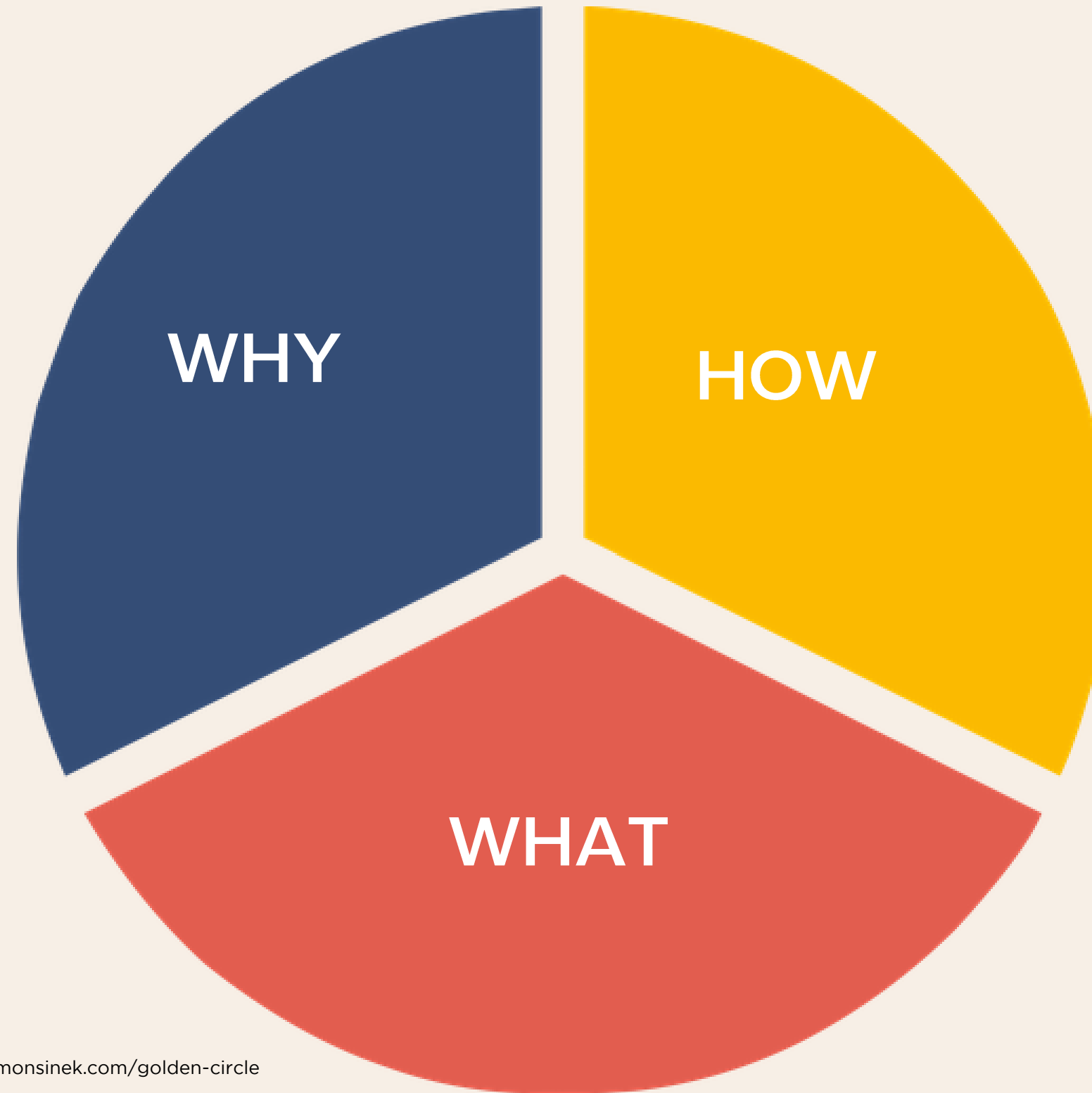


# NAWIK arrow



# Sinek's Golden Circle +

For whom



In what way

<https://simonsinek.com/golden-circle>

# Why storytelling as a researcher?

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**1**

**Practice of Research**

**2**

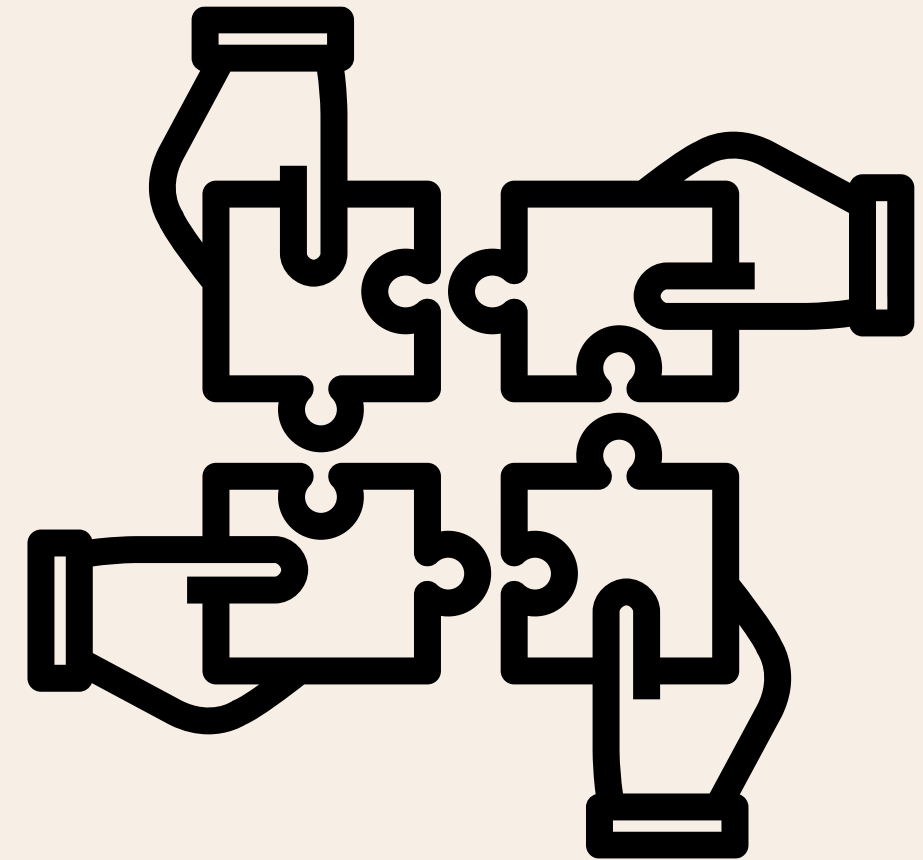
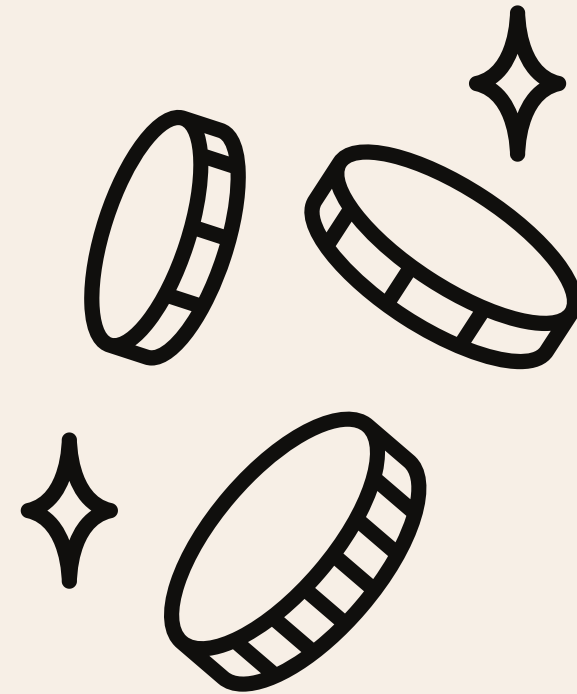
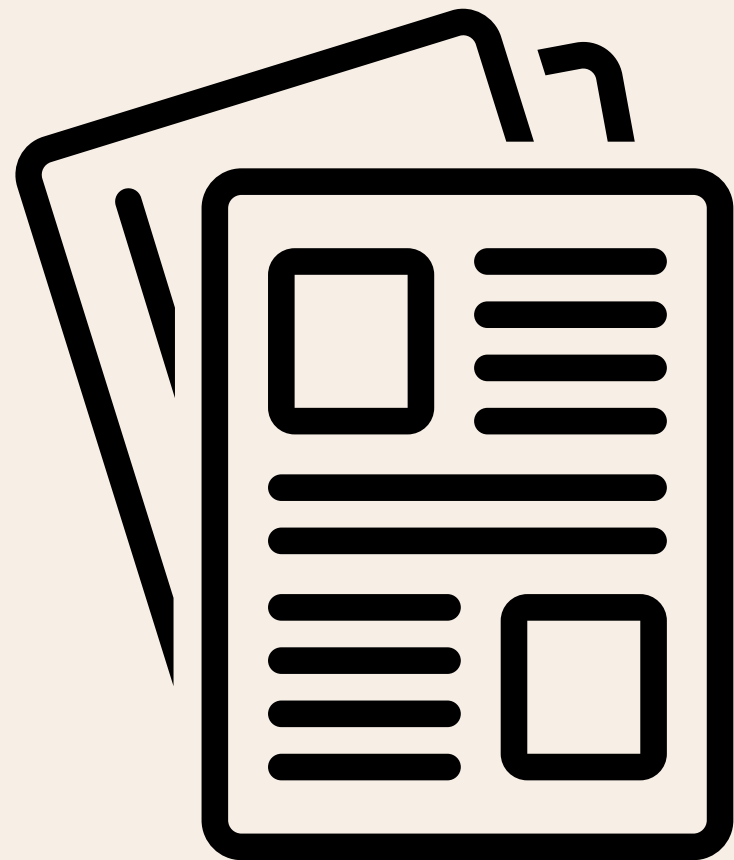
**Career Booster**

**3**

**Responsibility in Society**

1

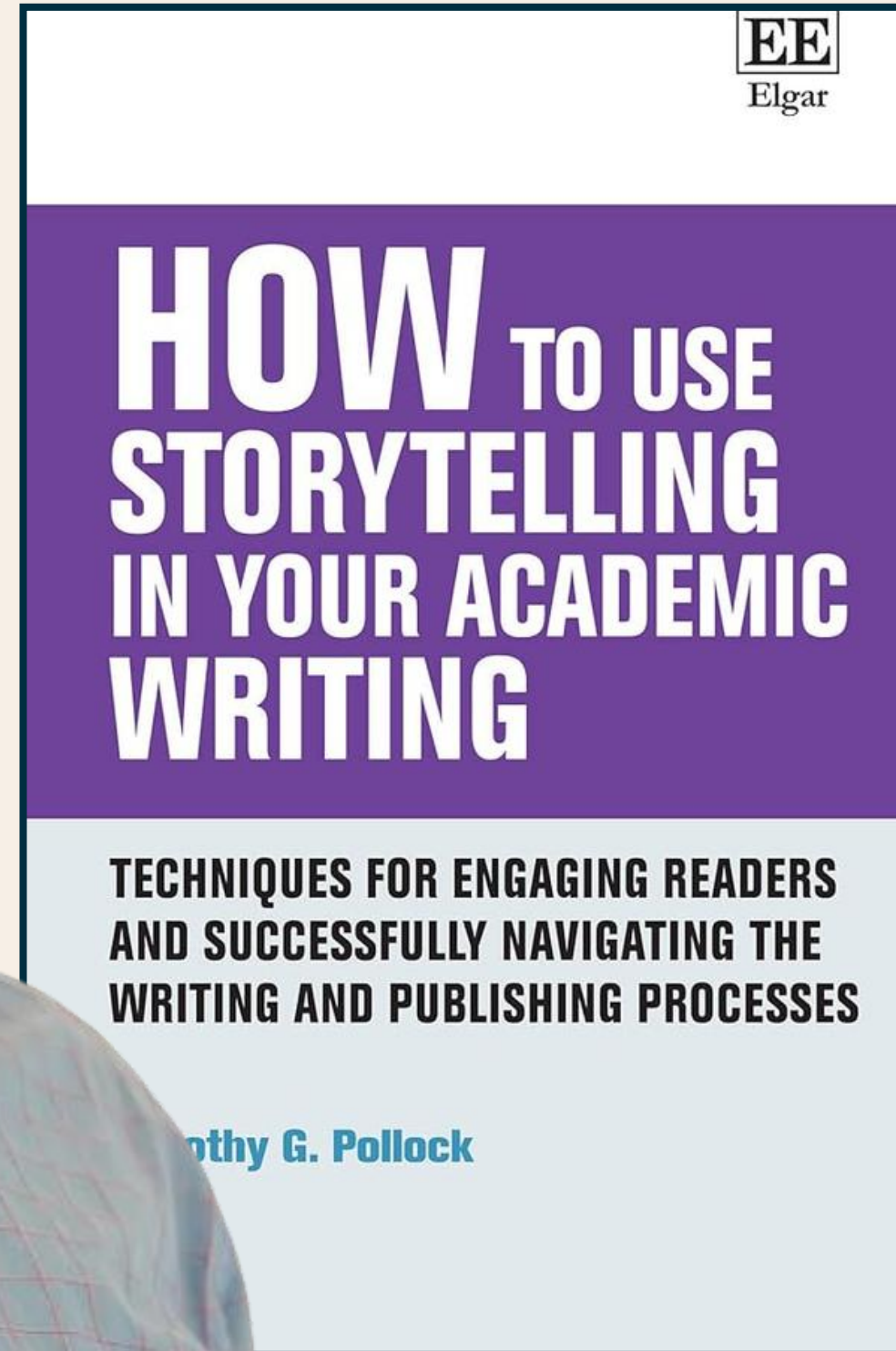
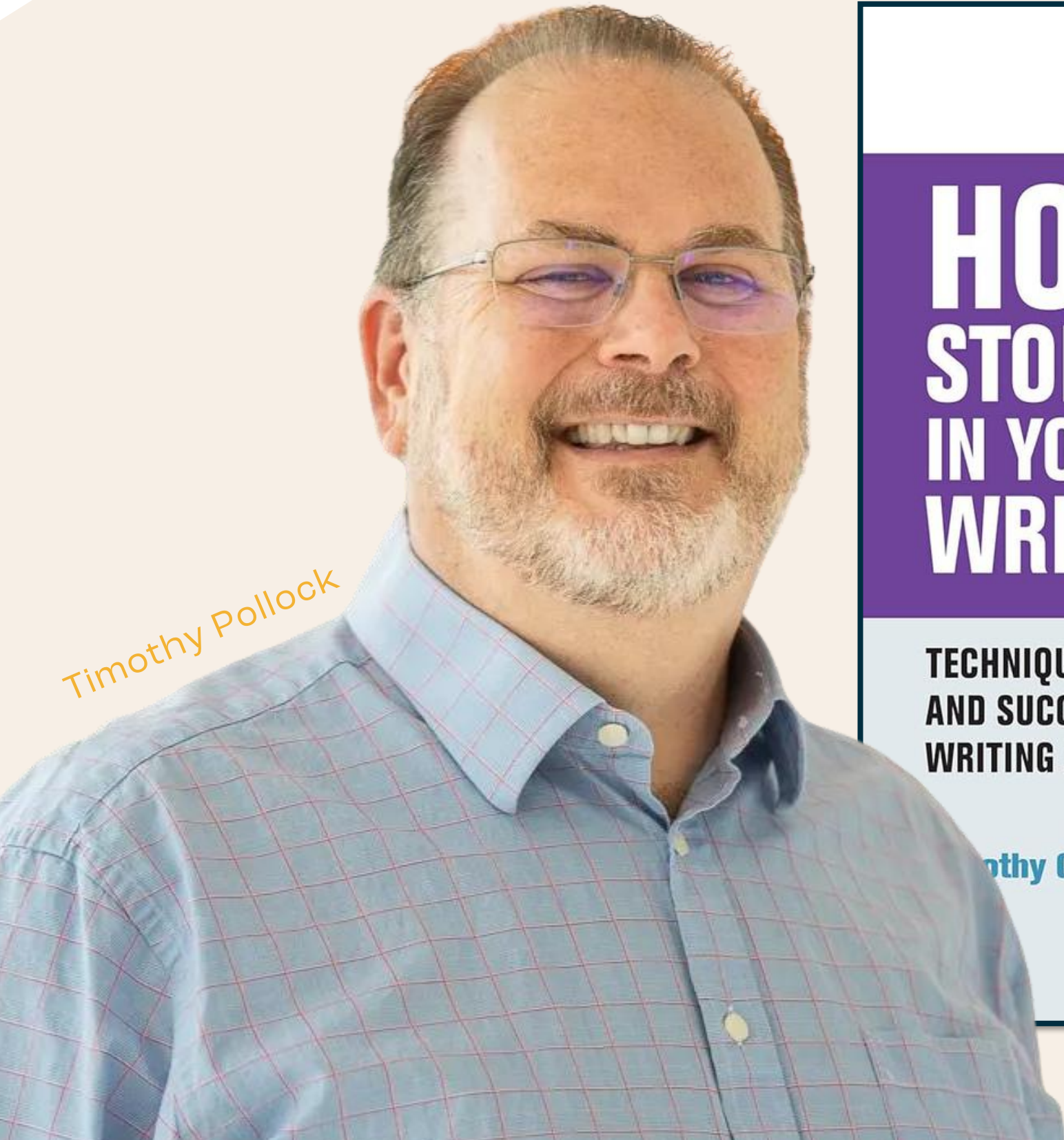
# Practice of Research



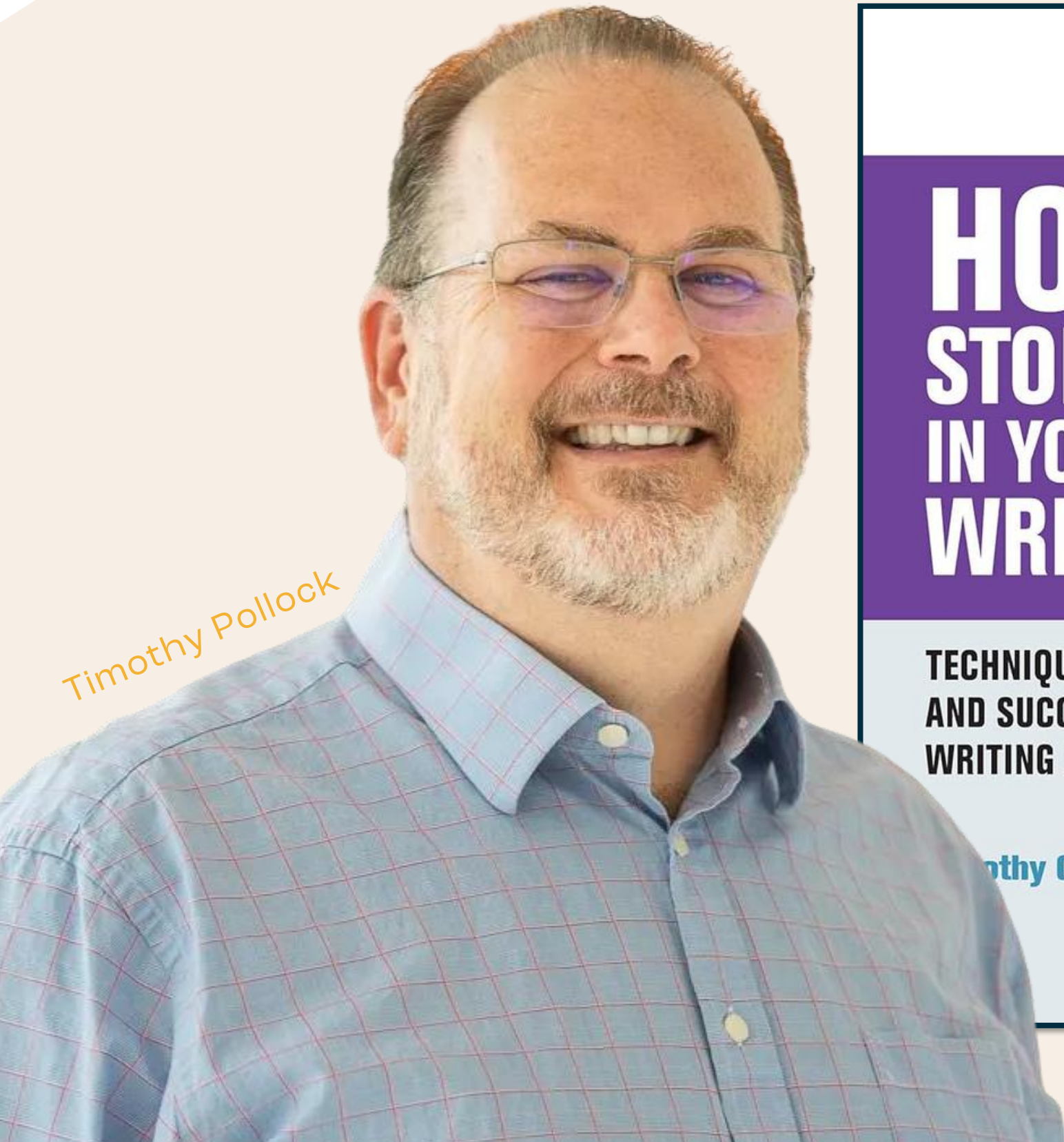
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# Practice of Research

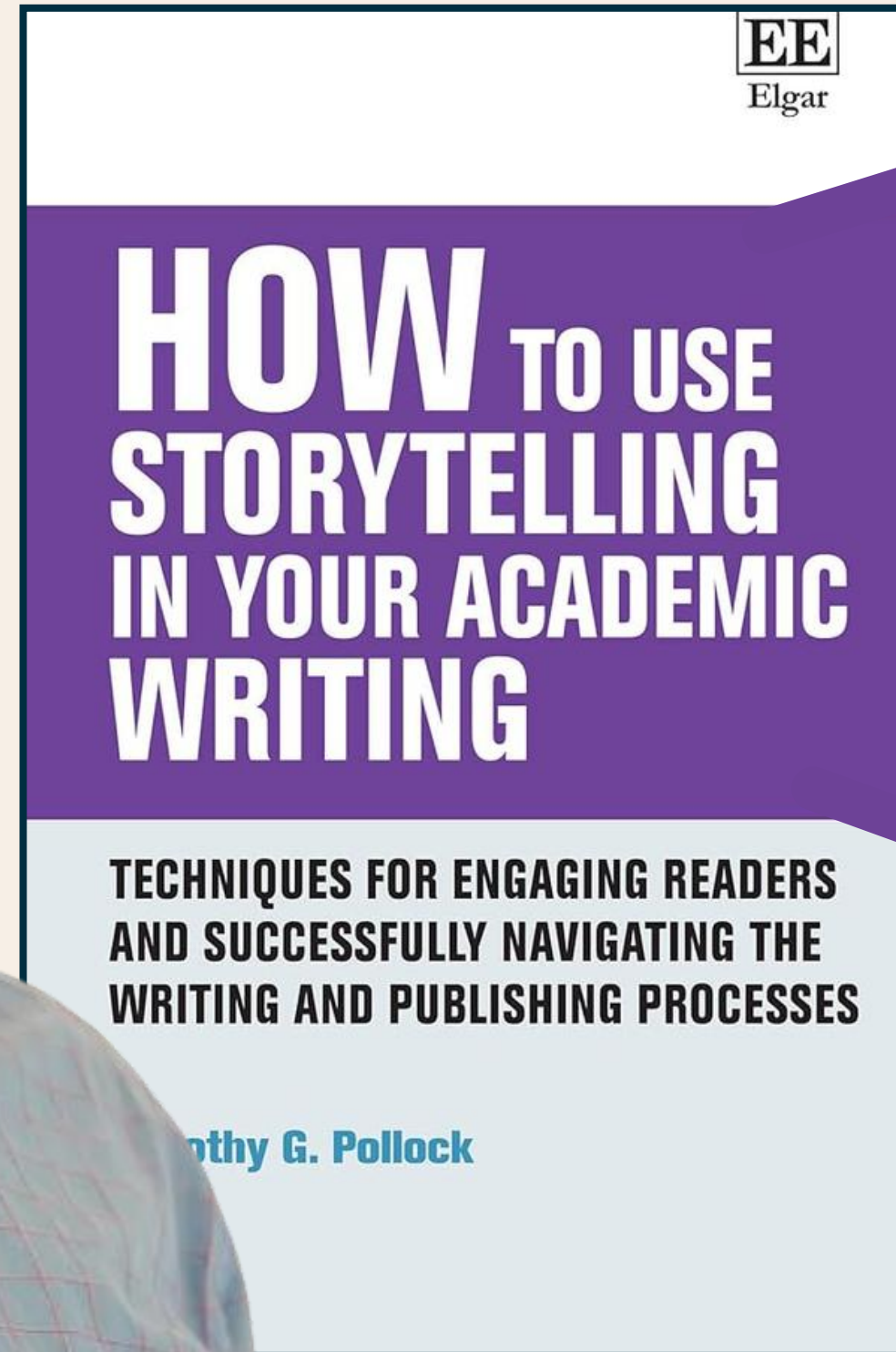
Timothy Pollock



## Practice of Research



Timothy Pollock



EE  
Elgar

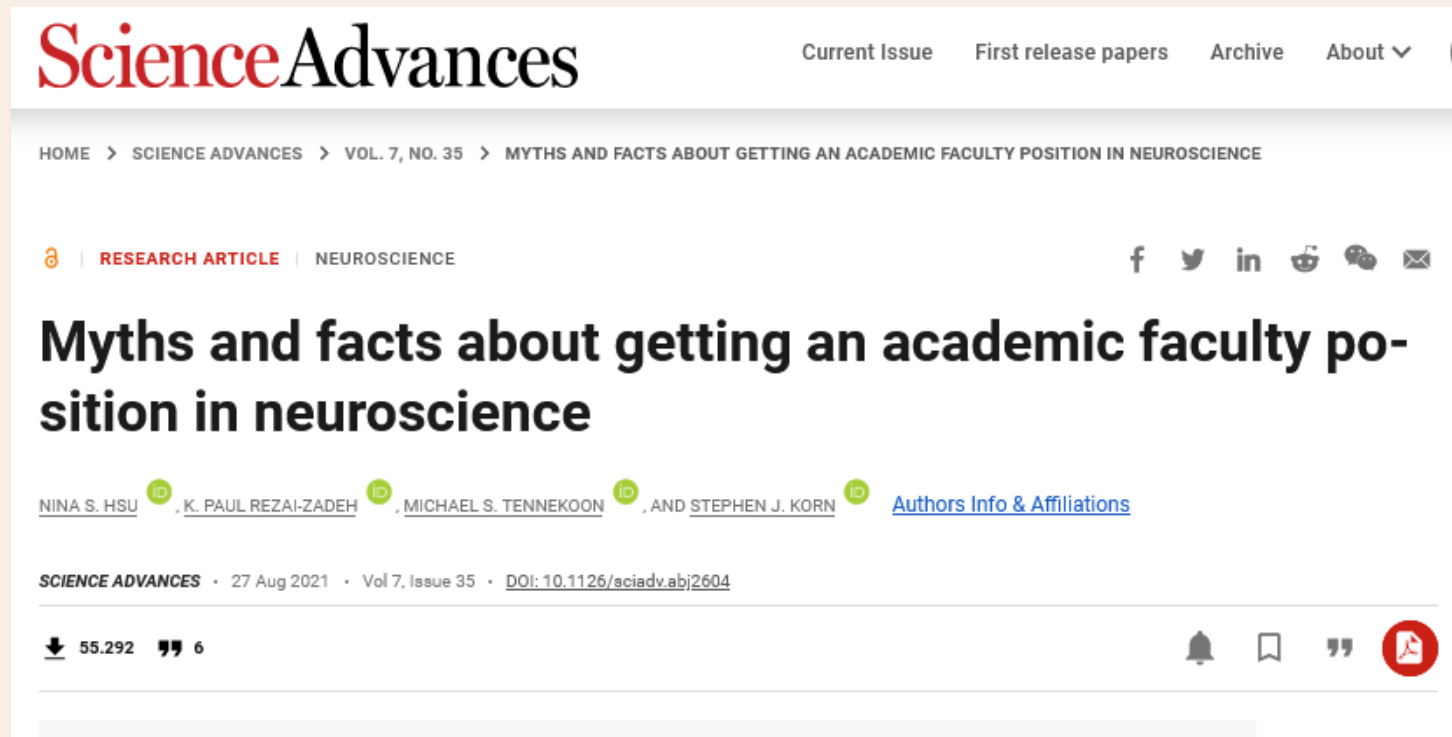
# HOW TO USE STORYTELLING IN YOUR ACADEMIC WRITING

TECHNIQUES FOR ENGAGING READERS  
AND SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING THE  
WRITING AND PUBLISHING PROCESSES

Timothy G. Pollock

Good writing skills and storytelling tools are critical for successfully exposing your ideas and insights to the world. Scholars have argued (Ashford, 2013; Daft, 1985; Podsakoff, Podsakoff, Mishra & Escue, 2018) and found (Judge, Cable, Colbert & Rynes, 2007) that clearly written articles are cited more frequently and are more likely to become high-impact “home runs.” As a former Associate Editor for the *Academy of Management Journal* and reviewer of hundreds of manuscripts for *AMJ* and other journals, I have seen how bad writing inhibits otherwise promising ideas from reaching the public because the papers fail to make it through the review process. Even published articles can have limited influence if their core ideas are inaccessible and they make readers think about taking a nap five minutes after they begin reading. My goal with this book is to help you improve your writing and increase the chances your insights are read and understood.

# Practice of Research



<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.abj2604>

During the hiring process, we ask the committee to come up with their top 6-10 applicants and then we **look at their research statement. What is their vision for what they want to do? How would they fit in the department?** We are interested in looking for the very best scientists and people who have the best vision and ideas, who can clearly articulate what they want to do, and why they want to do it. It is a subjective evaluation, but **if somebody can write a really compelling vision in their research statement, that puts them way ahead.**

**The vision for their research is really critical.** They need to prove that they have a real idea of what they want to do and that it is going to excite a group of 4-5 people, including people who aren't experts in their area.

## Practice of Research



Renate Sachse

1) Find a research topic or project that represents you, and your research vision, and that you are convinced of. Only then can you be authentic – and that shows in your application. 2) Use each application document to represent you as a person: What drives you and your research, what is your vision, and how do you want to implement this? Make each document tell your story. 3) Get feedback from mentors and peers because they can tell you whether the reviewers will get your ideas.

# Audience: Reviewer

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## Vision

I aim to advance our understanding of chemical complexity in the interstellar medium by uncovering how complex organic molecules form, evolve, and distribute across galactic environments. This matters because it addresses a fundamental question: whether the building blocks of life emerge universally under the conditions found across the galaxy.

## Contribution

My work develops and applies advanced spectral analysis approaches to detect and characterize complex organic molecules such as ethyl formate in interstellar gas clouds. By addressing signal ambiguity and noise in crowded spectral regions, I contribute to more robust molecular identification and quantification in observational astrophysics.

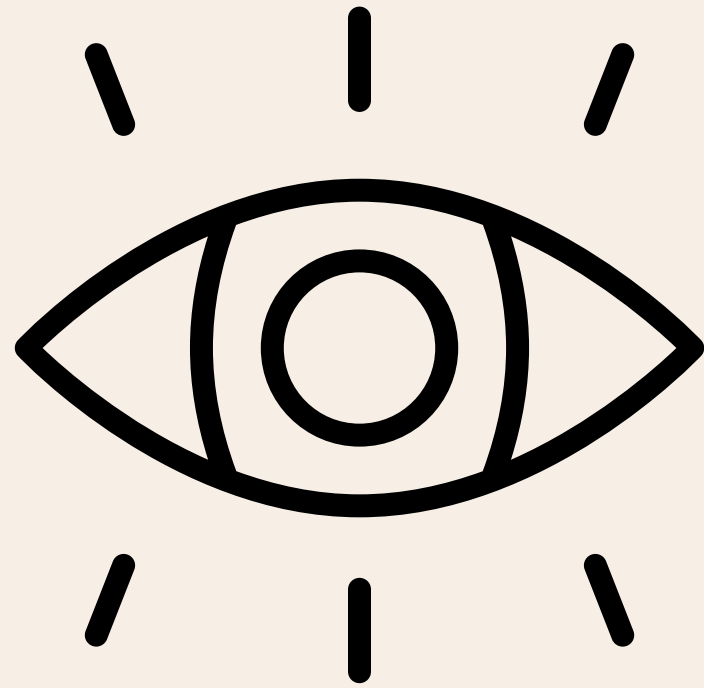
## Objectives

- Enhance detection limits for weak and overlapping spectral signatures
- Resolve competing chemical formation pathways in different astrophysical environments
- Integrate observational data with astrochemical modeling frameworks
- Establish a more systematic understanding of the distribution of prebiotic-relevant molecules in the Milky Way

2

# Career Booster

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## Career Booster

Oya Cingöz

Be **proactive and direct**: Say what you want to achieve, articulate what you need.

**Reach out** to people and find (multiple) mentors – those can be informal connections, for instance colleagues or people higher up the career ladder who read your proposals and applications and give you “deadly honest” feedback, who help you prepare for interviews, who introduce you to someone important, who you can go to if you have a problem or need advice.

Be open and friendly. **Make connections** – be interested in others and remember “The best networking happens when people meet for reasons other than networking” (Adam Grant).

## **Audience: Expert at a conference**

---

**Start where they are, not where you are – make it about them**  
(anchor in shared field, not your niche details)

**Make the gap explicit**  
(that's what creates interest)

**Don't oversell, but be precise**  
(credibility > excitement)

**End with a bridge, not a conclusion**  
→ invite connection, don't "close" the story

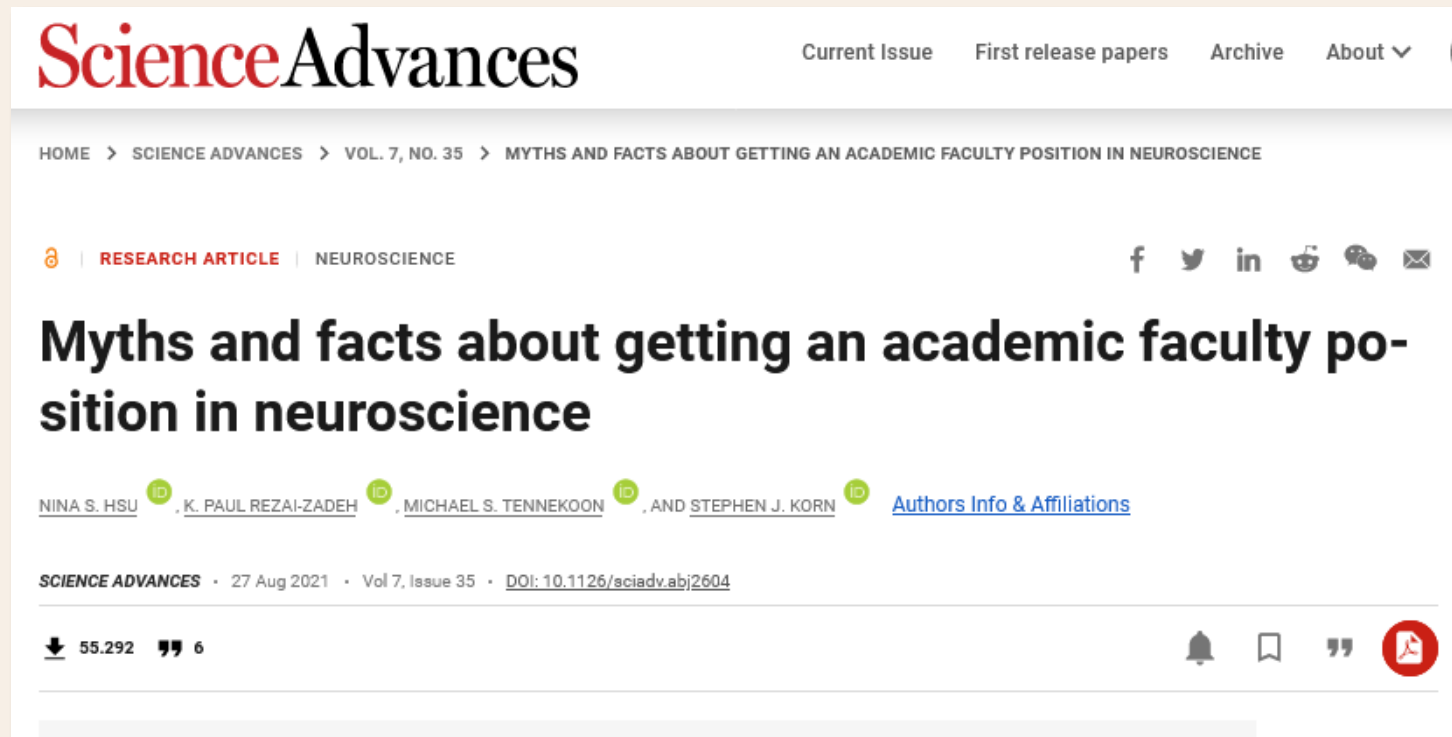
## Audience: Expert at a conference

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*I read your recent paper on [topic] – especially your point about [specific aspect].*

*In my work on [your topic], I'm seeing a related challenge: [gap].  
So I'm using [approach] to look at this from [angle].*

*What we find is [key insight].  
I'd be curious how that connects to your work.*



<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.abj2604>

We are looking at how well they communicated in their talk—it's a diverse audience—undergrads, grad students, lots of people that aren't in their field. **They have to be able to communicate well.** The buzz in the hallway after a job talk takes on a life of its own. Then, we do a chalk talk. We also want to make sure that the applicant is conscientious about teaching.

Communication matters. **The 5-minute pitch, the ability to respond to questions without panicking is important.** They have to be able to give a good talk that will not only engage neuroscientists but biologists, psychologists, biochemists, physicists, etc. I would say, though, that the chalk talk is the major separator. **Some people give beautiful presentations but go down in flames during the chalk talk.**

## Audience: Selection Committee

---

*We know that complex organic molecules are present in the interstellar medium, but we still lack reliable ways to detect and differentiate them in noisy and crowded spectral data.*

*This limits our ability to test astrochemical models and to understand how chemical complexity emerges in different galactic environments.*

*In my work, I **address this** by developing methods to improve the detection and attribution of weak molecular signals.*

*Drawing on my **experience** in spectral analysis and data interpretation, I was able to more reliably identify molecules such as ethyl formate and distinguish between competing formation pathways.*

*Going forward, I **aim to** systematically link observational data with astrochemical models to better understand how prebiotic-relevant molecules form and distribute across the galaxy.*

*I see a **strong fit with your research environment**, particularly [group/institute focus], which provides an ideal context to further develop and apply this approach.”*

2

# Career Booster

Silicate weathering has been removing CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere for over 4 billion years.  
Let's use it to slow down global warming!



**Dr. Maria-Elena Vorrath** · 1st  
Your expert on enhanced rock weathering & biochar.  
Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany · [Contact info](#)



**Hot, hotter, Klimakrise – Warum wir heute über das Morgen entscheiden**  
Keynote SECON 2023

Dr. Maria-Elena Vorrath  
Marine Geochemikerin

© A. Hartmann



**KEYNOTE**

## A bio-geo-love story



## Audience: Company Representatives

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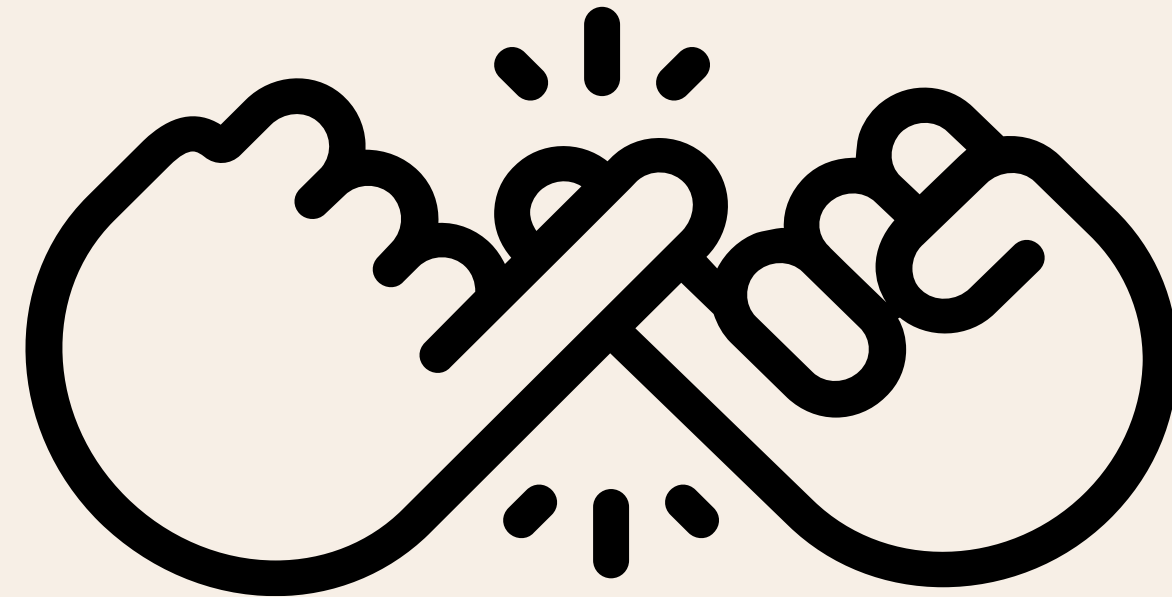
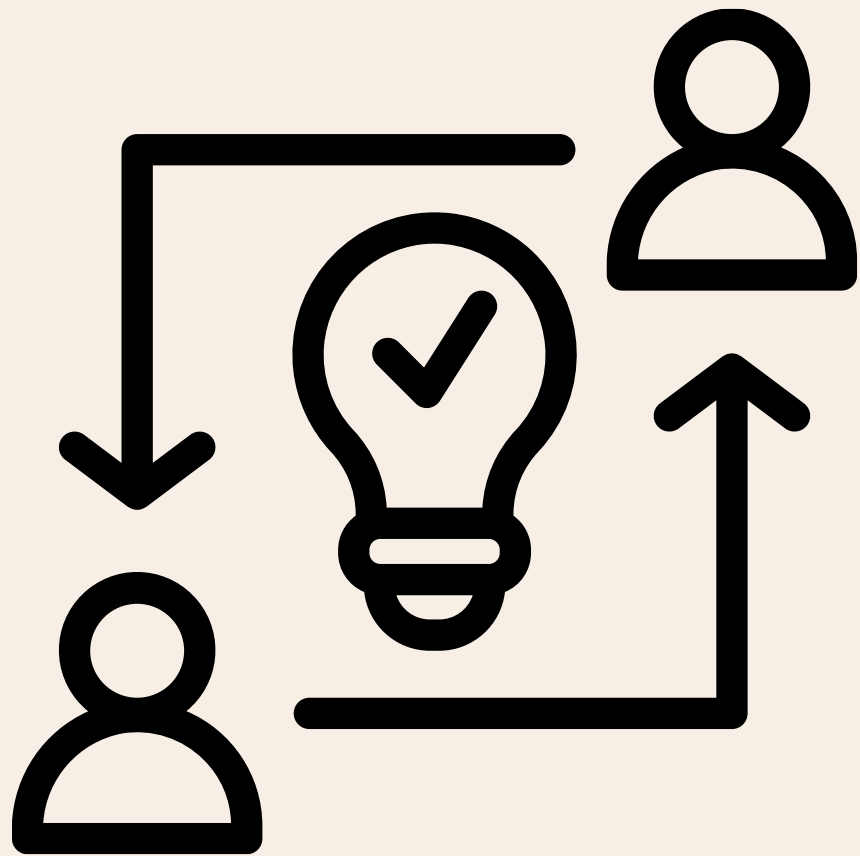
*I work on detecting very weak signals in extremely noisy environments.*

*In my research, that's spectral data from space — but the core challenge is separating meaningful signals from background noise. I develop methods to improve detection sensitivity and reduce ambiguity.*

*This kind of approach could be relevant anywhere you deal with complex data, for example in imaging or sensor systems. I'd be curious if you see similar challenges in your work.”*

3

# Responsibility in Society



## Responsibility in Society



Lorenz Adlung

**Know your audience** – is it other scientists? Companies? Investors? A school class? Your family?

**Tailor your activities to your audience** – this can range from a scientific talk to a **science slam**, rap music, or even a comedy show (all things Elena & Lorenz have done).

**Being visible** is always a good idea – no matter if you do it for your career, because you feel you need to give back to the taxpayer, or just because it's fun!

# Audience: Visitors at the Long Night of Science

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**1. Start with tension, irritation, or something relatable**

**2. Define your “main character”**

What are we following?

(system, question, problem)

**3. Show the thinking, not just the methods**

Make decisions and uncertainty visible

*“We first tried... then realized...”*

**4. Cut to the core**

1 idea | 1 approach | 1 key result

Clarity > completeness

**5. Use one strong anchor**

Connect to something familiar (but don't overload with metaphors)

**6. Separate result and relevance**

What did you find?

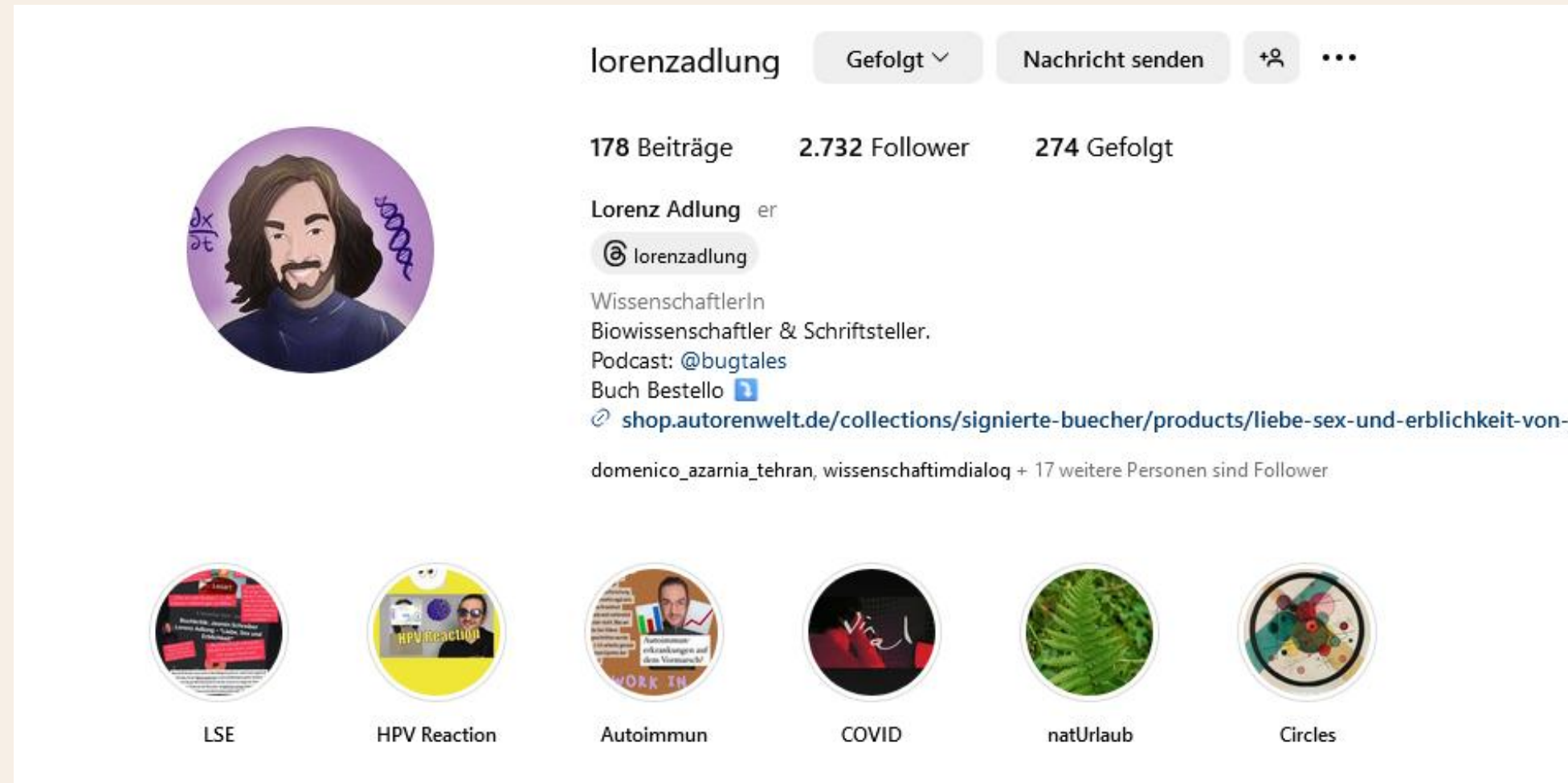
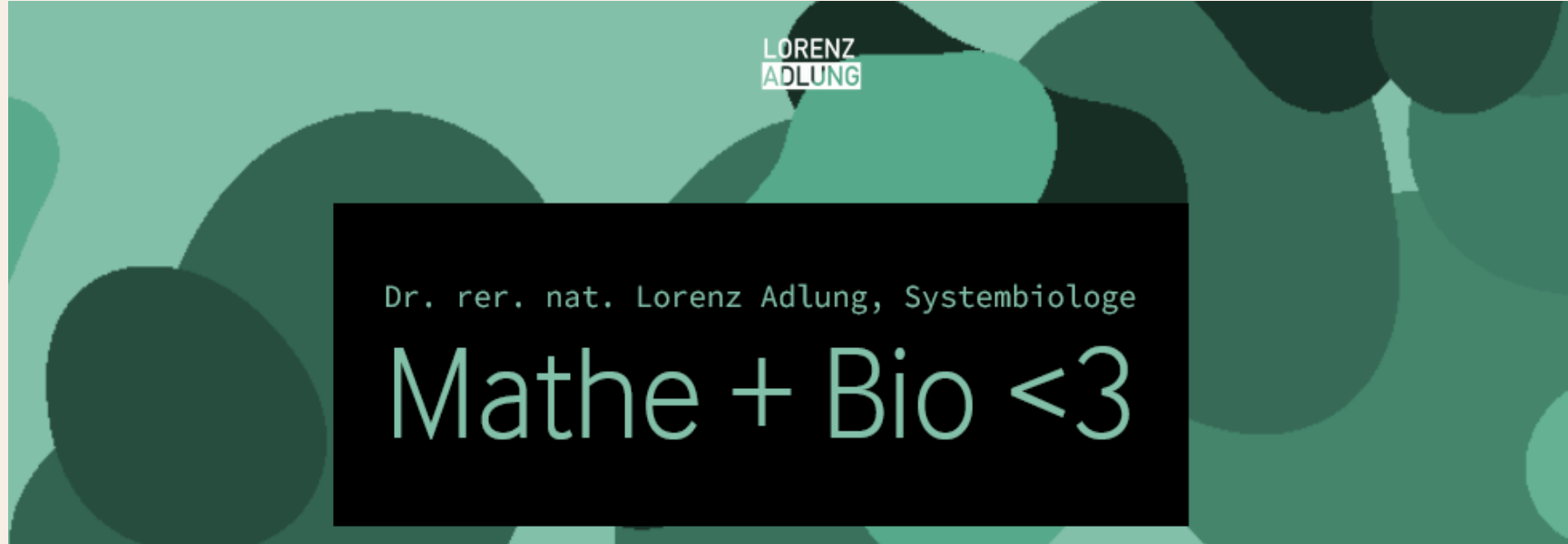
Why does it matter?

**7. End with what's next and tie to start**

New question, application, or implication, emotional, funny ending

3

# Responsibility in Society



3

# Responsibility in Society



3

# Responsibility in Society

Marcel Pawlowski



Nausikaä El-Mecky

## Audience: Visitors at the Long Night of Science

---

Does the Milky Way smell like raspberries?

Imagine drifting through space... would you smell anything?

Maybe not. But here's the twist: parts of our galaxy might, in a way, smell like raspberries.

Astronomers can't smell space, of course. Instead, they analyze light from distant gas clouds, decoding the chemical "fingerprints" hidden in it. And in one of those clouds, they found a familiar pattern.

The molecule? **Ethyl formate** - one of the compounds that gives raspberries their fruity aroma.

So no, the Milky Way doesn't literally smell like raspberries. But it does contain some of the same chemistry.

Next time you eat raspberries, remember: there's a little bit of space in them, too.



Let me tell you a story.

# Write a brief draft for one of these audiences

---

**1**

**Reviewer**

**2**

**Expert at a conference**

**3**

**Company Representative**

**4**

**Visitor at the Long Night of Science**