

## Summary

### **Disappointed in-Person Meeting, AI Feature on Zoom**

Matthew and Brian expressed their disappointment at not being able to meet in person. They agreed to set a new meeting date for mid-November and discussed the AI feature on Zoom, which Matthew explained as an assistant that listens and responds to their conversation. Brian showed interest in meeting Matthew mid-November and they also shared personal experiences and work updates. Park and Brian had a brief conversation about their mutual acquaintance and current life situations. They also planned for Park to visit a resort designed and built by his daughter and her business partner in San Diego. Randy and Matthew prepared for a session of the Abt framework course with guests Park and Brian and touched upon the concept of working circles, encouraging more participation in these weekly discussions.

### **Improving Science Communication: Randy Olson's Advocacy**

Randy stressed the importance of involving non-science voices in communication to address the communication issues in the scientific world. He emphasized that scientists need to collaborate with experts from different fields to reach broader audiences and highlighted his new book, "Don't Be Such A Scientist," which advocates for improving communication skills. Randy also mentioned a project with the Gates Foundation to develop diagnostics for tuberculosis, where inner circle scientists are working with outer circle communications experts. He focused on the importance of listening and explained its significance in science, business, and acting. Randy also discussed the consequences of failing to listen, sharing two real-world instances demonstrating the impacts of ignoring narrative dynamics. The discussion was to be continued in a subsequent meeting.

### **Failed 2014 North Dakota Ballot Initiative: Lessons Learned**

Randy discussed the failure of the 2014 ballot initiative in North Dakota, known as Measure 5, which aimed to channel 5% of the state's oil and gas revenues into conservation issues. Despite support from environmentalists and organizations like The Nature Conservancy, the initiative was poorly campaigned, with three hired PR firms failing to connect with local voters and focusing their efforts on the wrong areas. This resulted in an 80% 'No' vote and 20% 'Yes' vote. Randy also highlighted two case studies, one in North Dakota and the other in Australia, where public perspectives were not understood, leading to initiative failures. He emphasized that these examples reflect wider communication issues, particularly in the context of the pandemic.

### **Problem Identification and Trust Rebuilding in Business**

Randy discussed the significance of identifying problems before proposing solutions, a concept advocated by Christopher Lockhead. He emphasized the need for the CDC to rebuild trust, suggesting that branding strategies from the business world could be leveraged for this purpose. Randy also highlighted his collaboration with Park Howell, who helped contextualize the narrative gym for the business world and co-authored the narrative gym for business book with him. They also discussed the "Business, of Story" Podcast, which Park has produced 430 weekly episodes of, with episode 436 scheduled for Monday. Randy confirmed his frequent guest appearances, attributing it to their shared synergies. They then decided to delve into two case studies that encapsulated many of Park's discussions. Park stressed the importance of storytelling in the business world, noting it's a common issue when people tend to promote their products or services.

### **Audience-Centric Promotion and Sales Strategies**

Park and Randy discussed the importance of focusing on the audience when promoting a product or idea. They emphasized the need to place the audience at the center of the story and to understand what they want relative to the offering. The conversation also highlighted the role of sales as helping others get what they want and the significance of identifying voters' problems and convincing them of the consequences if their issues are not addressed. Towards the end, they introduced the three-step model of 'find the hurt', 'amplify the pain', and 'heal the wound'. Brian Palermo, a trained actor and instructor, was mentioned as a friend of Randy with experience working with scientists.

### **Science Communication: Listening and Adapting**

Randy and Brian discussed the importance of listening in communication, particularly in the context of science communication. Brian emphasized the need to establish and maintain a connection with the audience, and to listen to understand their needs, concerns, and interests. He stressed that effective communication involves being an active listener and using cognitive flexibility to adapt the message to the audience's needs. Brian also highlighted the importance of improv techniques in science communication, which involve responding spontaneously and collaboratively to the audience's cues.

### **Improving Listening and Communication Skills**

Brian led a discussion focused on improving listening and communication skills through an exercise called "Last Letter." The group, which included Lisa, BK, Allison, Seyma, Tarun, Denise, and ken, practiced the exercise. The goal was to highlight the importance of staying present, listening to the partner, and avoiding premature planning of the response. Following this, Brian introduced a storytelling exercise where participants had to continue a story using sentences that started with the last letter of the previous speaker's word. The topic was about Tucker going to the beach. The team also discussed the significance of listening and emotional expression in communication. Park and Matthew shared their techniques for keeping their audience engaged, and Brian suggested the use of genuine emotional expression. The team wrapped up the meeting with a reminder of the upcoming tenth and final session of the Abt framework Course from Randy.

### **Next Steps**

Matthew will send out the calendar invites for the working circles later today and post the link.