



Roger Schank

From *On the Self-Renewal of Teachers*: J Vet Med Education, 2011

Roger Schank's radical thesis is that intelligence is story telling and story understanding—the ability to make the right-time response to someone else's utterance. Right time, right context. This demands a slew of skills that are likely underemphasized in today's classrooms: listening, contextual acumen, metaphor. To Schank, an expert in artificial intelligence, becoming a clever indexer is the mark of intelligence. Indexing is the way you successfully access your own experience. To access your previous experiences is to own them. And, as every actor or opera singer knows, owning your material is essential for peak performance. Schank would also teach us how to increase the odds that our new ideas—our discoveries—will stick. It is not sufficient to simply put forward your naked new idea or invention. You must also creatively change the lens through which others will view your new and shiny thing. Otherwise, the cataract of previous belief will prevent the brilliance of your new idea from being seen. Instead of flourishing, your idea will be stomped upon, rejected.

Are you in need of some heady battle tactics to make your own creative ideas win? Should you invest more effort in developing yourself as a skilled storyteller?

Suggested Readings:

1. Schank R. The creative attitude. New York: Macmillan; 1988.
2. Schank RC. Tell me a story. New York: Macmillan; 1990.
3. Schank RC. Making minds less well educated than our own. New York: Routledge; 2004.

Learn More about Schank:

<http://www.rogerschank.com>