

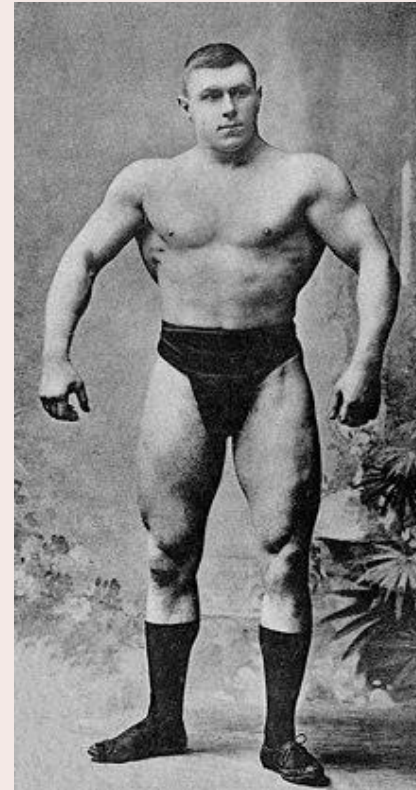
A black and white photograph of two professional wrestlers. On the left, a wrestler with dark, curly hair is shown in profile, looking towards the right. On the right, another wrestler with long, light-colored hair is shown from the back, looking towards the left. They are both shirtless and wearing wrestling singlets. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights their muscular physiques. A white rectangular border is overlaid on the image, containing text.

THE UNSTOPPABLE FORCE
MEETS THE IMMOVABLE OBJECT:

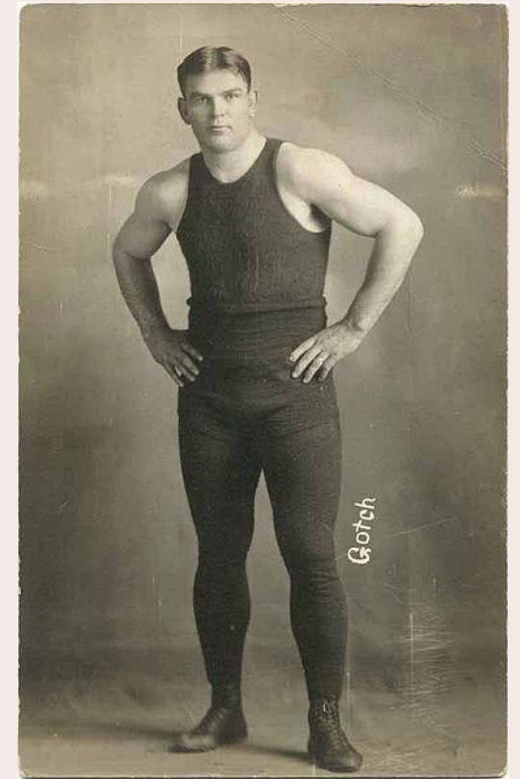
WHAT PRO
WRESTLING CAN
TEACH US ABOUT
CONTENT STRATEGY

HISTORY OF PRO WRESTLING

- Most popular spectator sport at the beginning of the 20th Century.
- Wrestling was seen as more scientific, more dignified than boxing.
- Matches did not have time limits, often leading to bouts lasting upwards of four hours.
- The legitimacy of the sport would come into question following two World Heavyweight Title matches between George Hackenschmidt, of Estonia, and Frank Gotch, of the United States.
- By the 1920s, professional wrestling's damaged reputation led to the sport being relegated to the carnival circuit.



George Hackenschmidt



Frank Gotch

4,000 YEARS

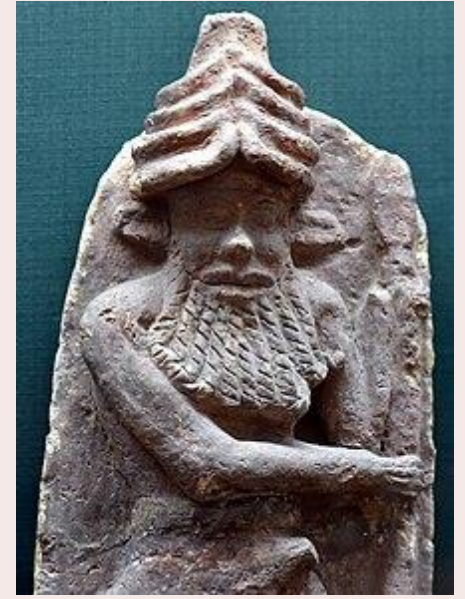
EARLIER

THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH



Gilgamesh

- Oldest narrative in recorded history, with tablets dating back to 2,100 BC.
- Mentions wrestling 51 times.
- First half of the story centers on King Gilgamesh and the wild man Enkidu's conflict and subsequent friendship.



Enkidu

- Arrogance and Hubris
- Strength and Power
- Leadership and Authority
- Womanizer

- Humility and Natural Connection
- Bravery and Loyalty
- Transformation and Redemption
- Chivalrous

HEROES AND VILLAINS



Ric Flair

- Arrogance and Bravado
- Dominance and Conquest
- Charismatic Leadership
- Womanizer



Dusty Rhodes

- Humility and Relatability
- Courage and Compassion
- Transformation and Redemption
- Chivalrous

BABYFACES

- Term originated in 1930s wrestling.
- Often a promoter would use wholesome, good-looking athletes to be their hero characters.

TRAITS

- Virtuous
- Courageous
- Morally Upright
- Designed to Be Cheered by the Audience



Bianca Belair

HEELS

- Term is an allusion to the Biblical story of Jacob, who was delivered from the womb holding his brother Esau's heel.
- Jacob would deceive his father to receive the birthright promised to his brother.
- Jacob would wrestle with God and afterwards was named Israel, which literally means "he who struggles (or wrestles) with God."

Rhea Ripley



TRAITS

- Arrogant
- Disregard for the Rules
- Underhanded Tactics
- Designed to Be Boomed by the Audience

FRAMING NARRATIVES USING THE BABYFACE/HEEL ARCHETYPES

HIGHER ED BABYFACES

- Students
- Faculty
- Staff
- Alumni
- Community Partners

HIGHER ED HEELS

- Financial Barriers
- Lack of Academic Preparation
- Family Obligations
- Lack of Information
- Geographic Barriers
- Psychological Barriers
- Cultural and Social Factors



THE PSYCHOLOGY OF NARRATIVE IN WRESTLING

Jim Cornette

**“Personal issues
draw money.”**

- Jerry Jarrett,

Memphis Territory Promoter

WRESTLING VIEWERSHIP



ALL ELITE WRESTLING

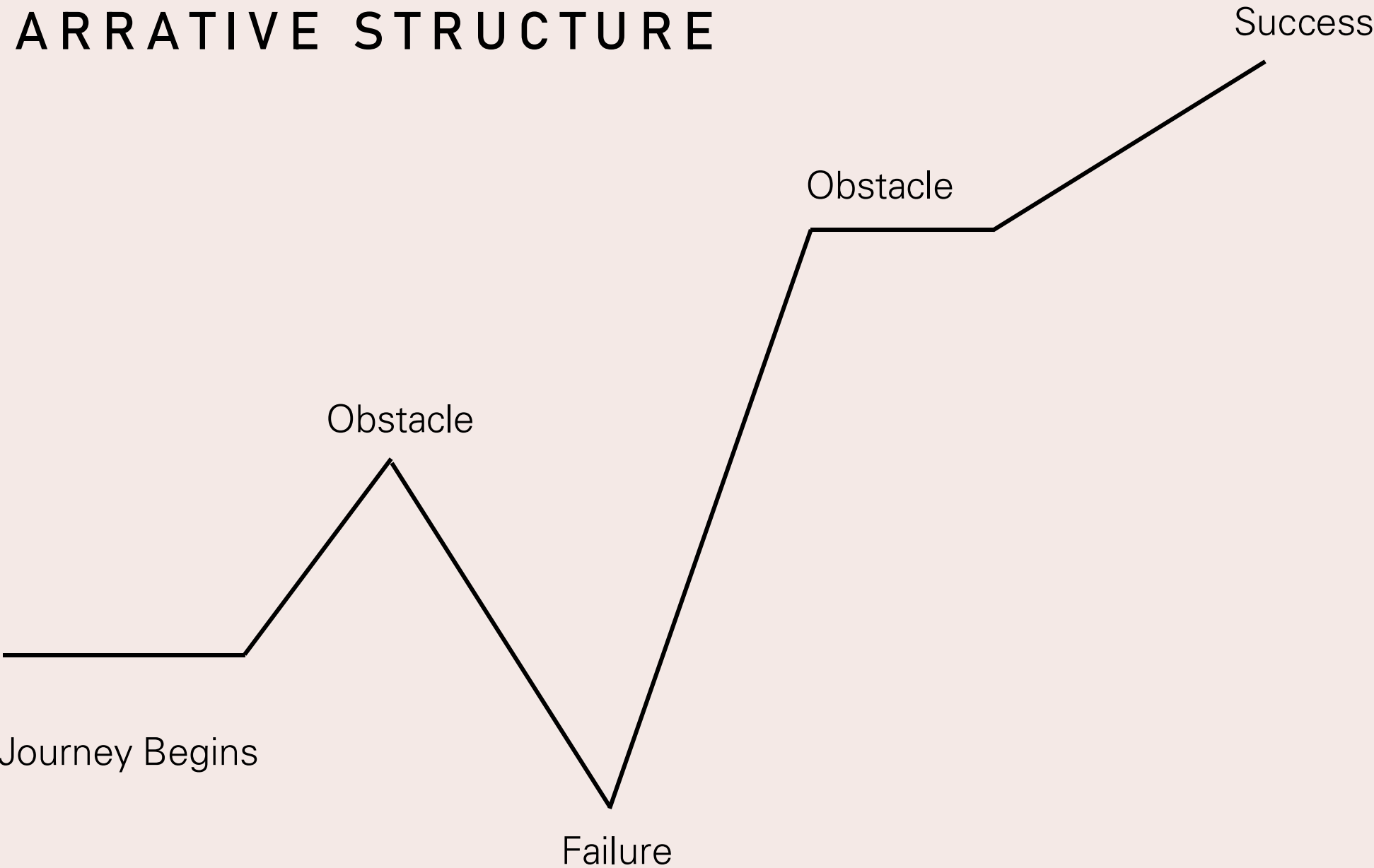
- Average Viewership:
 - **0.6 to 0.9 million viewers** per episode in 2023-2024.
 - 18-49 Key Demo Ratings: Ratings for AEW Dynamite in the 18-49 demographic ranged from **0.14 to 0.33**.



WORLD WRESTLING ENTERTAINMENT

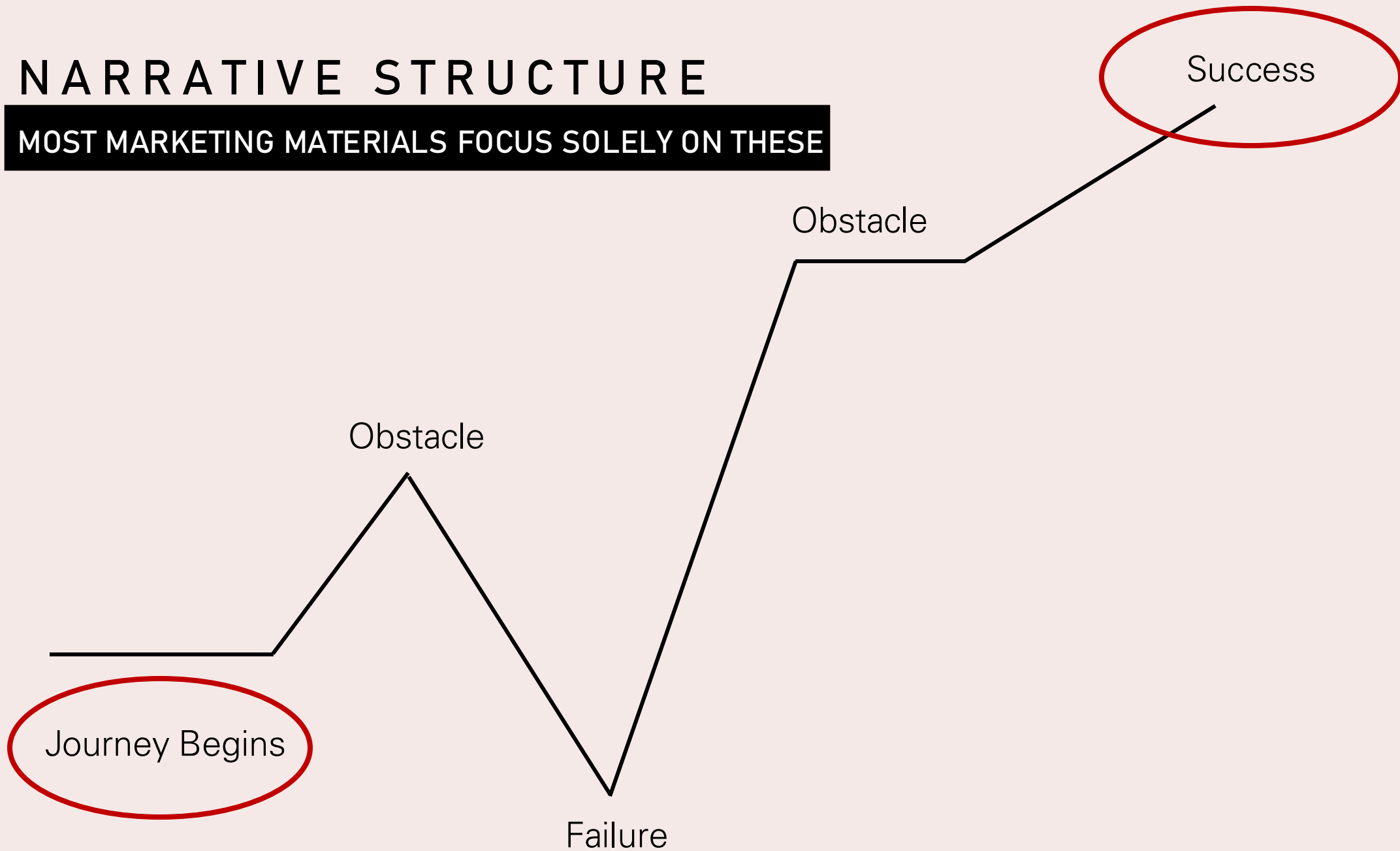
- WWE Raw Ratings Average Viewership:
 - **1.5 to 2.2 million viewers** per episode in 2023-2024.
 - 18-49 Key Demo Ratings: The ratings in this critical advertising demographic ranged from **0.36 to 0.61**.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE



NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

MOST MARKETING MATERIALS FOCUS SOLELY ON THESE

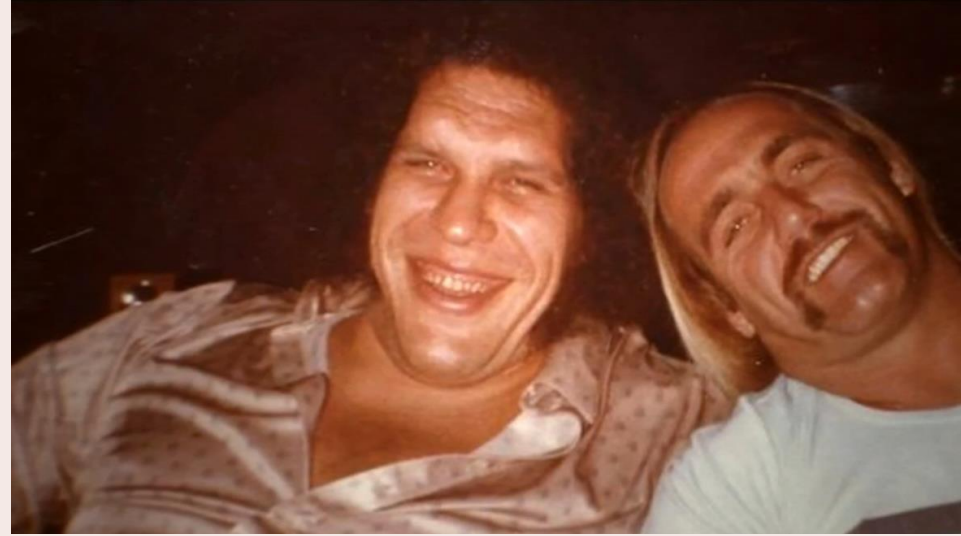


THREE QUESTIONS TO ASK IN EVERY INTERVIEW

1. What has been your biggest challenge?
2. How did (name of your institution) help you overcome that challenge?
3. What was the result?

WRESTLEMANIA III CASE STUDY

TIMELINE OF EVENTS



Jan. 1987

Andre, a longtime babyface begins to show heelish behavior.

Feb. 7, 1987

Andre turns heel, challenges Hogan for the title.

Feb. 21, 1987

Hogan confronts Andre and accepts challenge.

March 27, 1987

The two compete in the main event of Wrestlemania III.

RESULTS

WrestleMania III had approximately **400,000 pay-per-view buys**. It was claimed that the attendance was 93,000 (but this is wrestling and that number is exaggerated). The actual number would have been around **80,000**.



SUBSCRIBE

THE PRIMARY ADVERTISING APPEALS OF WRESTLING

1. Logical
2. Emotional
3. Spiritual
4. Historical

THE PRIMARY ADVERTISING APPEALS OF HIGHER ED

1. Logical
2. Emotional
3. Spiritual
4. Historical

CONTENT STRATEGY EXAMPLE

Fall Semester

August – Historical Appeal

- Create content that highlights your institution's legacy. In that content, highlight a specific degree program.

September – Spiritual Appeal

- Speak with program director and/or students about specific degree. Talk about a community partner that the program works with.

October – Emotional Appeal

- Highlight your community partnership. Focus on how volunteer opportunities for students make them better citizens.

CONTENT STRATEGY EXAMPLE

Fall Semester

November – Logical Appeal

- Focus on a student testimonial.
Illustrate how they overcame challenges, feature factoids/value propositions within the testimonial.

Nov – Dec. – Everything, All at Once

- Use all the content you have made alongside short form content for a strong marketing push as you head into the spring semester.



QUESTIONS

CONTACT INFORMATION

Josh Hutton

Director of Communications, Seminole State College

Email: j.Hutton@sscock.edu

Phone: 405-382-9283