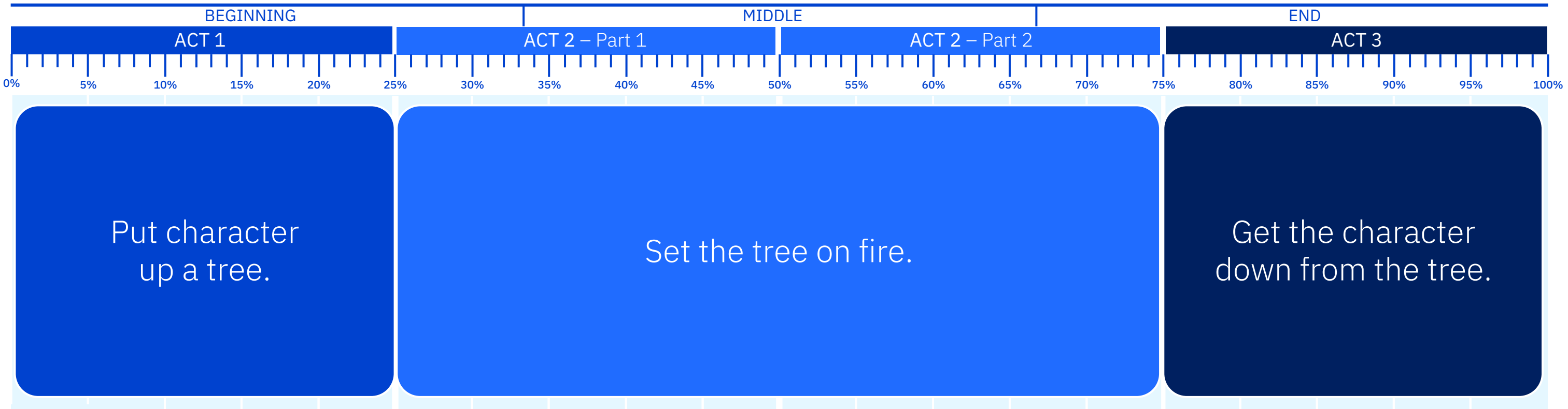


Billy Wilder's Story Structure



Context:

Billy Wilder was a six-time Oscar winning Hollywood film director who made such classics as *Sunset Boulevard* and Marilyn's *Some Like It Hot*. His films were known for their tight plots and memorable dialogue. Wilder believed that no matter how talented the actor, the result would be better if you bent the script to their personality, rather than force a performance beyond their limitations.

Business Application:

Great business leaders are not always great communicators. The way that Wilder bent his stories to suit the skills of the talent, is a good lesson we could apply in business. Why not take more notice of the personality type of the presenter, and re-purpose the script to help them make it their own? When asked for storytelling advice, Wilder often just said, "Don't be boring".

Billy Wilder's Storytelling Tips:

1. The audience is fickle.
2. Grab 'em by the throat and never let 'em go.
3. Develop a clean line of action for your leading character.
4. Know where you're going.
5. The more subtle and elegant you are in hiding your plot points, the better you are as a writer.
6. If you have a problem with the third act, the real problem is in the first act.
7. A tip from Lubitsch: Let the audience add up two plus two. They'll love you forever.
8. In doing voice-overs, be careful not to describe what the audience already sees. Add to what they're seeing.
9. The event that occurs at the second act curtain triggers the end of the movie.
10. The third act must build, build, build in tempo and action until the last event, and then—that's it. Don't hang around.

From Conversations with Wilder by Cameron Crowe.

Learn More:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJCdmP7amQc>