Strategic Storytelling

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Disclaimer

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The Storytelling Animal

“When we are absorbed in a story, we drop our intellectual guard. We are moved emotionally, and this seems to leave us defenseless.”

- Jonathan Gottschall
Overview

• What is Strategic Storytelling?
• What Kind of Stories Can We Tell?
• The Storyteller’s Toolbox
• Write and Practice Your Story
What Stories Do
Why Stories Matter

• Shine a light on a problem
• Build credibility
• Open audiences to new ways of thinking
Why Stories Matter

Anthony Wright endured two trials and 25 years in prison before a jury found him not guilty of the 1991 rape and murder of an elderly woman in Philadelphia. On Aug. 23, 2016, he became the 344th DNA exoneree in the nation.
Stories Create an Emotional Connection
You tell stories all the time... in life.
Your Turn

Think of...
• A time you were successful at work;
• How you decided to do this kind of work; or
• A time you learned an important lesson through your work.

Two minutes
Turn to your neighbor and tell them your story.
In work, not so much.
What is Strategic Storytelling?
What is your objective?
Who is your audience?
Your Turn

Write down:
• Objective
• Target Audience
What Kind of Stories Can We Tell?
Types of Stories

- Nature of Our Challenge
"I never thought it would be ok to be me."
Types of Stories

- Nature of Our Challenge
- How We Got Started
114 Years of History

For more than a century, Big Brothers Big Sisters has been helping change kids’ perspectives and giving them the opportunity to reach their potential. And we have more than a century of volunteers, donors, and advocates just like you to thank.

It all started in 1904, when a young New York City court clerk named Ernest Coulter was seeing more and more boys come through his courtroom. He recognized that caring adults could help many of these kids stay out of trouble, and he set out to find volunteers. That marked the beginning of the Big Brothers movement.

At around the same time, the members of a group called Ladies of Charity were befriending girls who had come through the New York Children’s Court. That group would later become Catholic Big Sisters.

Both groups continued to work independently until 1977, when Big Brothers Association and Big Sisters International joined forces and became Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

More than 100 years later, Big Brothers Big Sisters remains true to our founders’ vision of bringing caring role models into the lives of children. And, today, Big Brothers Big Sisters currently operates in all 50 states—and in 12 countries around the world.

Here is a look at our history, from the start:
Types of Stories

- Nature of Our Challenge
- How We Got Started
- Performance
Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO)
Types of Stories

- Nature of Our Challenge
- How We Got Started
- Performance
- Where We’re Going
Types of Stories

- Nature of Our Challenge
- How We Got Started
- Performance
- Where We’re Going
- Emblematic Success
Saving a Misunderstood Plant

The more time our network’s trained biologists can spend outside tracking rare species and taking inventory of what is out there, the more likely they will find new populations of endangered species. And that is good news for everyone!

In the case of one resilient little plant in Virginia, the shale barren rock cress, the Virginia Natural Heritage Program’s discovery of new plant sites has resulted in a revelation: the plant’s listing as an endangered species is no longer needed.

Chris Ludwig, Chief Biologist for the Virginia Natural Heritage Program, walks along a protected site in Virginia.
Types of Stories

- Nature of Our Challenge
- How We Got Started
- Performance
- Where We’re Going
- Emblematic Success
- Striving to Improve
Questions?
The Storyteller’s Toolbox
Character
Conflict
Show, don’t tell
Have a call to action.
Beware of the black box.
Have a central point.
Questions?
Story Structure

- **Beginning**
  - "Once upon a time"

- **Conflict**
  - What happened?

- **Resolution**
  - The moment of truth

- **Central Lesson**
  - So what?
Your Turn

1. Work session
2. Share stories
Tell your story!
How you use stories
Using Your Stories

• Storybook
• One-pagers
• Website
• Earned media
• Spokespeople
• Video
• Social media
Questions?
ONE FINAL THOUGHT!
Thank You!
Want more information or support?

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