Storytelling Workshop

2018 Interagency Flood Risk Management Community of Practice Training
May 4, 2018
Indianapolis
Today’s Focus

▸ Understand the power of a story to inform and persuade

▸ Learn how to build compelling stories that drive community action

▸ Gain experience with four different story frameworks to captivate audiences
How Do We Change People’s Thinking?
Just the facts, ma'am.
Why We’re Here

▸ To harness the power of storytelling to strengthen communication with communities and drive mitigation action

▸ To begin developing stories that are:
  • More memorable
  • More powerful
  • More persuasive
  • More effective
“Thought flows in terms of stories—stories about events, stories about people, and stories about intentions and achievements...

The brain is a story-seeking, story-creating instrument.”

Frank Smith in “To Think”
“Emotion, feeling, and biological regulation all play a role in human reason… We are not thinking machines. We are feeling machines that think.”
“Emotion, feeling, and biological regulation all play a role in human reason… **We are not thinking machines. We are feeling machines that think.**

*Without our emotions, we are unable to reason.*
Emotion Drives Stronger Results

Source: IPA / Datamine analysis of 880 winners of Advertising Effectiveness Awards
Emotions play an important role in decision making.

Our efforts to persuade or explain need to include emotion-triggering narratives.

Feelings > Reason
The End of Reason

The Political Brain

THE ROLE OF EMOTION IN DECIDING THE FATE OF THE NATION

DREW WESTEN
The End of Reason
“We did not see any increased activation of the parts of the brain normally engaged during reasoning...

What we saw instead was a network of emotion circuits lighting up, including circuits hypothesized to be involved in regulating emotion, and circuits known to be involved in resolving conflicts.”
Which is Most Compelling?

▸ Food shortages in Malawi are affecting more than 3 million children.

▸ In Zambia, severe rainfall deficits have resulted in a 42% drop in maize production from 2000. An estimated 4 million Zambians face hunger.

▸ Four million Angolans — one third of the population—have been forced to flee their homes.

▸ More than 11 million Ethiopians need immediate food assistance.
Meet Rokia, a 7-year-old girl from Mali.

Rokia is desperately poor and faces a threat of severe hunger or even starvation.

Her life will be forever changed for the better thanks to your generous gift in her name.
Facts do not change minds—and can even backfire.

We are wired to reject facts that are contrary to our beliefs.

Everyone is biased.

Being wrong literally hurts.

Beliefs > Facts
Everyone has biases; it's part of being human. It's important not to be ashamed of this basic fact.

YOU are biased.

(So am I.)

It matters.
## 240+ Social Biases | The Most Common 14

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WE ALL HAVE A STORY TO TELL
PRESENTATION FACTS

AFTER A PRESENTATION

63% OF ATTENDEES REMEMBER STORIES.

ONLY 5% REMEMBER STATISTICS.

Source: Chip Heath / Dan Heath
Design: PresentationsLoad.com
Four Types of Stories

1. The Overcomer
2. Rags to Riches
3. David vs. Goliath
4. A Quest
Story Arc

Exposition or Stasis

Rising Action

Climax

Falling Action

Resolution
The three little pigs

by Andrea Petrlik
Rising Action
- Wolf can't destroy brick house
- Wolf destroys stick house
- Wolf destroys straw house
- Brick house built
- Stick house built
- Straw house built

Exposition
- Pigs move out of their mother's house

Climax
- Wolf gets toasted climbing down the chimney

Falling Action
- Pigs clean up the chimney
- Pigs have the best supper ever and live happily ever after

resilience action partners
A joint venture of
COURT PUBLIC RELATIONS
&
MICHAEL BAKER INTERNATIONAL
How to tell GREAT Stories

Concise:
Less is more. 60 seconds – 2 minutes.

Connect:
Link the story to your message.

Pause:
The spaces between the words matter as much as the words.

Facial Expressions:
Your face communicates 1,000 words.

Prepare:
Great stories are planned out, yet sound spontaneous.
What's your story?
It takes a thousand voices to tell a single story.

Native American Proverb