



Day Five: Communicating—Part 5: The Story

Time Allowed

30 Minutes

Teaching Format

Troop presentation (ideally led by an experienced presenter)

Learning Objectives

As a result of this session, participants will be able to do the following:

1. Understand that storytelling is a key element of effective communication and thus is also critical to effective leadership.
2. Understand the components of good storytelling.
3. Develop a story using the components and effectively communicate it.

Materials Needed

- Visual aid(s) developed by the presenter
- Computer
- LCD projector and screen
- Appropriate sound system for presentation venue
- Handout: Storytelling Components Worksheet (one per patrol)

Recommended Presenter

NYLT staff member and troop guides

Recommended Location

Troop assembly area

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

Note: Before this session, troop guides should fully understand what is expected and be prepared to guide this first activity. The troop guide should NOT give them a topic and should NOT let the patrol choose a topic before starting. This is an improvisation exercise.

A recommended technique for the Staff Example is to prepare this ahead of time and rehearse it during staff development.

Opening Activity: One-word Story (5 min)

Have each patrol stand in a circle with their troop guide, who explains that the patrol members will all contribute to telling a story about a topic that will reveal itself in the course of the exercise. The troop guide should start the exercise, and then each participant will

speak only one word per turn. For example, the troop guide might say “once.” The second participant says “upon,” the third person says “a,” the fourth says “time,” and so on. Continue going at a brisk pace until time is called.

Once the troop returns to their seats, the instructor explains that they just participated in an improvisation exercise. Each patrol was trying to build one story, although not necessarily certain which direction the members might be going while listening carefully and trying to think on their feet. Improv is a form of group storytelling that teaches you to adapt, develops both confidence and creativity, and strengthens your speaking and listening skills.

Storytelling Components (5 min)

Note: Guide participants to locate the Participant Notes sheet for this session in the Participant Notebook. Encourage them to be taking note of key words, key points, and their top three takeaways from the session.

As leaders, you must do more than demand different behavior from those you lead. Effective leaders shift mindsets and try to get people to think and act differently. Storytelling is a great way for a leader to help change the way their team thinks. Storytelling is a natural form of communication that is used in every culture. It is an age-old tradition passed down for generations to help others understand backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences. It’s about conveying a message clearly and simply while connecting with your audience at the human level (feelings, emotions, values) by building enthusiasm and influencing attitudes.

Effective storytelling helps leaders create a unified vision around desired beliefs and actions. The ability to tell stories that inform, persuade, or inspire can get a team excited, aligned, and rallied around the same goal.

Here are some components of good storytelling:

1. **Understand your audience.** Knowing who you are speaking to as well as what they value and don’t value can help you tell the right story and achieve the best effects with your audience.
2. **Know your message.** Be sure to understand what you are trying to convey to the audience and how your story relates to the action you want them to take.
3. **Have a structure.** Consider the amount of time your story should take and that it contains a beginning (set-up), a middle (contrast or conflict), and an end (resolution and key takeaways).
4. **Be authentic, and consider your tone.** Storytelling should not be fictional. If the audience can relate to a real-life story, you are making a connection and building trust. Use a conversational tone and common words to help your audience relate to you.

Staff Example (3 min)

Have youth staff members deliver a story that was developed and rehearsed ahead of time. During this demonstration, the staff’s story should model the skills of effective communication and the components of good storytelling.



Reinforcing Patrol Activity (15 min)

Note: Troop guides should be nearby and available to enable the patrols' success during this activity. They will more than likely need to guide their patrol as this is a new and possibly difficult concept for them to understand.

Following the staff demonstration, explain that each patrol will develop a three-minute story using the skills of effective communication and the components of good storytelling. The theme of their story should be reasons why someone should attend NYLT, based on your experiences thus far. Have them use the Storytelling Components Worksheet.

Give the patrols 10 minutes to develop their stories. Have two to three staff members, both youth and adult, observe each patrol as they share their stories among themselves in the final five minutes of the session. As time permits, have a couple patrols share their stories with the entire troop.

Conclusion (2 min)

In their own words, the presenter briefly summarizes why storytelling is such an important part of effective communication (i.e., connect with the team at the human level) and thus a critical skill for effective leadership. End the session by challenging the participants to become effective storytellers.

Remind participants to take a moment to ensure they have noted their top three takeaways in their Participant Notes for this session.



Storytelling Components Worksheet

Understand your audience. Knowing who you are speaking to as well as what they value and don't value can help you tell the right story and achieve the best effects with your audience.

Describe your audience:

Know your message. Be sure to understand what you are trying to convey to the audience and how your story relates to the action you want them to take.

Outline your message:

Have a structure. Consider the amount of time your story should take and that it contains a beginning (set-up), a middle (contrast or conflict), and an end (resolution and key takeaways).

Determine your structure:

Be authentic, and consider your tone. Storytelling should not be fictional. If the audience can relate to a real-life story, you are making a connection and building trust. Use a conversational tone and common words to help your audience relate to you.

Identify how you will be authentic and use an appropriate tone: