

Taking Your Nonprofit Stories From Boring to Brilliant



Presenter: Lori L. Jacobwith
www.LoriJacobwith.com

We'll start today's session shortly!



Taking Your Nonprofit Stories From Boring To Brilliant



Slides & bonus materials for today's session can be found here:
<http://bit.ly/BrilliantNonprofitStories>



Who is Lori?



LJacobwith



LJacobwith



- 25+ years as a communication strategist & fundraising coach
- Measurable: Since 2001 I've helped organizations raise **\$200 million** from individual donors. And counting.
- I've provided coaching to more than 3000 nonprofits.



What we will cover



What we will cover

- What is storytelling?
- Where do you share stories now?
- Why tell stories? What donors want.
- Where to find a good nonprofit story.
- How to engage staff & board to help you identify stories.
- How to take a tiny “mission moment” and turn it into a compelling, engaging story.



What we will cover

AND...

- How to tell a powerful 2-minute story.
- How to create and utilize six word stories.
- How to change your story for writing vs. telling a story.
- Stories: Boring and Brilliant.



Storytelling



*A narrative account of real
or imagined events.*

~ Source: National Storytelling Association



Storytelling



*At its core, storytelling is
the art of using language,
vocalization, and/or
physical movement and
gesture to reveal the
elements and images of a
story to a specific, live
audience.*

~ Source: National Storytelling Association



Why are stories so important?



Check out Lisa Cron's *Wired for Story*



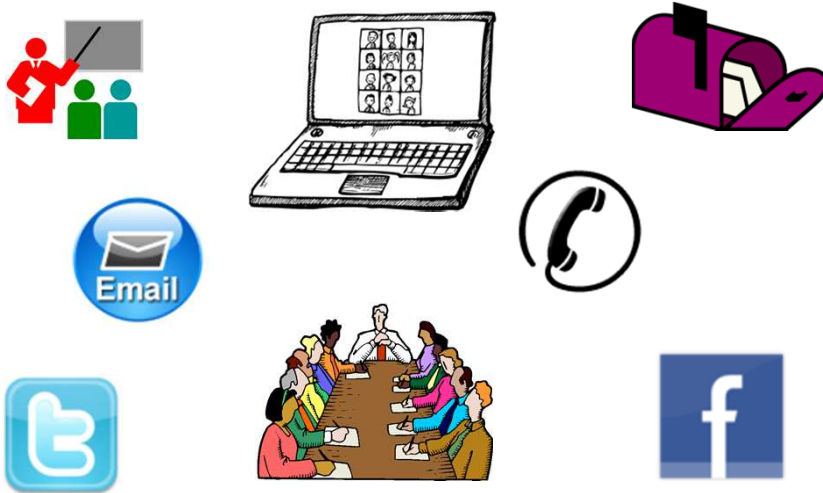
Stories from Boring to Brilliant



*Where do you
currently
share stories?*



Where to share?



Development:

The total process by which an organization increases public understanding of its mission and acquires financial support for its programs.

The Secret to Raising Money: Use Clear, Bold Communication

- Telling Your Story - *Intro*
- Asking – *Take Action*
- Maximize Relationships
– *Stay Relevant*
- Managing Data



Support of all kinds moves toward boldness & clarity of communication



Great Gaping Disconnect

What people want when they support a cause:

To make a difference

To feel personally connected to something greater than themselves

To feel useful

To get the warm glow of giving

~ Katya Andresen, Network for Good



Great Gaping Disconnect

What people get when they support a cause:

A tax receipt

Statistics, facts & figures

A newsletter...sometimes

An appeal to give (more) money

There needs to be more of what people want in their experience with us.



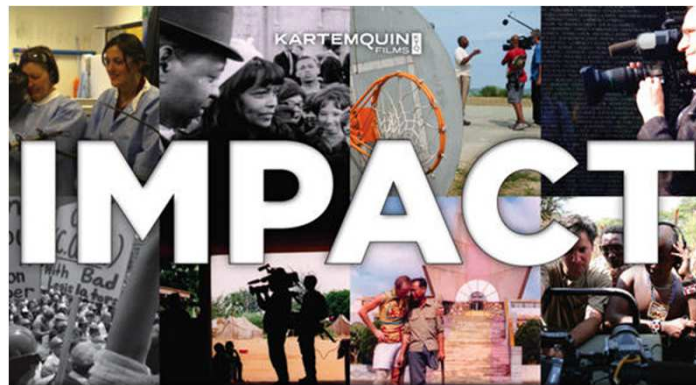


***“Feeling good is what
nonprofits sell.”***

~ Seth Godin, Author & Marketing guru



Conveying your impact



Real people examples



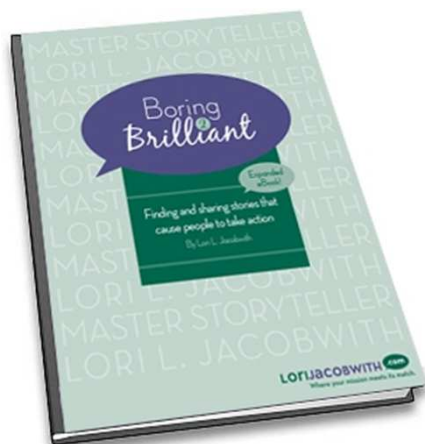


***...In the presence of a true story, we say,
“Yes, this is how it feels; this is how it would
happen; this is what one might think.”***

~ Daniel Taylor, in The Power of Personal Storytelling



Storytelling



Where to find stories?



Important factors:

1. What questions you ask
2. Who & where you ask the questions



What questions to ask

About the questions:



- Open-ended
- Ask questions that gets “at” a story but doesn’t feel like you are putting the person on the spot.
- The responsibility to “find” the story is on you. Ask more questions to glean the “nuggets” to the story



What questions to ask

- Who did you turn away?
- Who stands out for you...?
- Favorite or best thing about this child, family, river, law...
- Add your own...



Who to ask

- People you serve & their family
- Board & former board members
- Donors. First-time, long-time...
- Other staff
- Event sponsors, foundations...



Where to ask questions



Where to ask questions





Mission Moments

<http://bit.ly/RTwVVE>



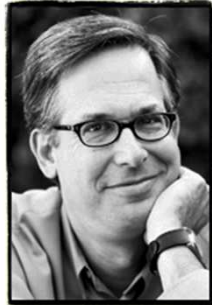
Storytelling: Primary way of learning



Create an unforgettable emotional connection



Storytelling



Andy Goodman

Andy is best known for his speeches and workshops on storytelling, presenting, design and strategic communications.



Storytelling



***The Role of Family & Community in Mentoring
Alienated Youth in the American Midwest...***



**NEED exists when
something is missing**



Communication



What's Missing?

- **Together we will...**
- **More resources allow...**
- **The demand for our services has grown faster than our annual fundraising...**
- **It will take ____ to ____**



Lori's Storytelling Criteria

- Tell a story about **an actual person** using name/age/descriptors so your listener can visualize.
- Use **words that emotionally connect** the listener to your work and the person you're speaking about. No jargon.
- **Shares specific examples of YOUR work** and how it makes a difference in the life of a real person.
- The story must be short – **2 minutes or less.**



Storytelling: So how do I do this?



Lori's 5-Step Process

1. Identify one person.



Lori's 5-Step Process

2. Learn & jot down as much about them as you can.
3. Write down all of the exact results.



Lori's 5-Step Process



4. Make a list of *transformations* due to your involvement and their results.



Lori's 5-Step Process

5. Circle the words that stand out and are emotionally connecting.



Next step

Now fit the story into the framework & practice telling your story.

Often.



Phrases to convey emotion

- Abandoned
- Blessed
- Emotionally bruised
- Emotionally & physically broken
- Weary...



Words & phrases that evoke emotion

There are many, many words that will do a good job of evoking emotion. This list was created to help get you started crafting your story and to spark more words. Notice words throughout your day that cause you to feel something and incorporate those into the stories you share.

Remember though, the placement of these words and phrases, is key to creating a powerful story.

A place to call my own	Healthy
Abandoned	Joy
Ashamed	Kind
Awkward	Leathery hands/skin
Blessed	Lifeline
Bright	Overcome
Catapult	Passionate
Delight	Precious
Emotionally bruised	Ravenous
Empower	Revitalize
Erupt in anger	Safe
Even out the odds	Surrender
Explosive anger	Thrive
Exuberant	Tired eyes
Eyes pooled with tears	Uncomfortably shy
Fleeting feelings of _____	Unrestrained excitement
Gentle	Vibrant
Glowing smile	Weary
Gnarly hands	Weathered face



Lori L. Jacobwith

www.lorijacobwith.com

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Taking Your Nonprofit Stories From Boring To Brilliant for Charity How To

Simple template for moving your story from boring to brilliant

Let me tell you about


(Fill in their name, age, and some descriptive details about them.)

His/her life was

(Share specific details about how they felt about their choices, unasked for situation, health issue, etc. You get the idea.)
Special note: Stay away from jargon and words that are "grant-writer" speak.

_____ (name) made her way to us because

(Share how the person found you or your programs. Be specific. It's not like a helicopter dropped them off. Maybe ten other homeless shelters turned them down or their doctor or landlord referred them to you.)

 **CharityHowTo**
Where Nonprofits Learn

 **LORI JACOBWITH .com**
Where your mission meets its match.

Four parts of a great story

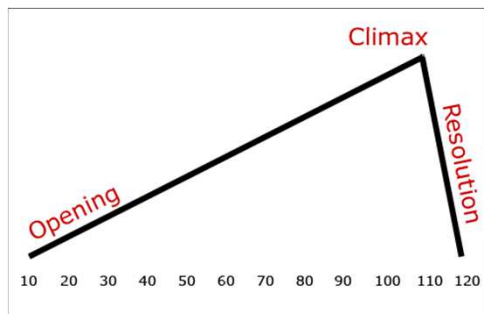
- A relatable protagonist
- Lots of conflict
- A loathsome villain
- Telling details



**Mark Rovner, Founder &
CEO Sea Change Strategies**

http://www.nonprofitmarketingblog.com/comments/the_4_parts_of_a_great_story/

Storytelling Format



- What was life like before...
 - **What happened?**
- What is life like now?



Written

- Varying lengths work.
- More time to build the emotional crescendo and flesh out the character(s).
- Use photos & short sentences, even bullets.



Written: How To

1. Enlist your team



<http://bit.ly/ToinyI>



Written: How To

1. Enlist your team
2. Keep stories focused & relevant



<http://bit.ly/ToinyI>



Written: How To

1. Enlist your team
2. Keep stories focused & relevant
3. Keep stories light



<http://bit.ly/ToinyI>



Written: How To

1. Enlist your team
2. Keep stories focused & relevant
3. Keep stories light
4. Bring characters to life



<http://bit.ly/ToinyI>



Written: How To

5. Don't forget quotes

“ ”

<http://bit.ly/ToinyI>



Written: How To

5. Don't forget quotes

6. Deliver multiple perspectives



<http://bit.ly/ToinyI>

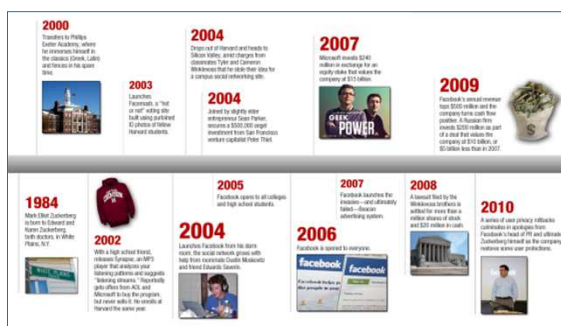


Written: How To

5. Don't forget quotes

6. Deliver multiple perspectives

7. Tell your story over time



Written: How To

5. Don't forget quotes

6. Deliver multiple perspectives

7. Tell your story over time

8. A picture's worth...



<http://bit.ly/ToinyI>





Real Stories

There's a reason these people have been disappointed before. The need is universal, the terrain is an infrastructure headache, and past efforts have simply failed to focus long or hard enough to make a difference.

But now the government has made clean water a top priority. Local officials, communities, and Water for People have collaborated on plans for realistic, sustainable development. charity: water and all of our September Campaign supporters are going to provide the funding needed to get clean water flowing – this time, for everyone. Even the residents of tiny hilltop Nyakubo, Ryan Oratio.

I hope he is still wearing his wristband. I'm still wearing mine. And I'm going to keep my promise.

A story and photographs by Natalie Ingle



Get campaign updates and notifications when new stories are released.



Spoken



- Ditch the notes/text
- Use pauses and voice inflection.
- Practice. Practice. Practice.
- Paint a picture with your words.



Sondra's Story



Sondra's Story



Fundraising is deep, profound relatedness

~ Lynne Twist, *The Soul of Money*



Six Word Stories



Six Word Story Framework

1. Emotional connection to a real person
 2. Compelling fact
- Bonus: Call to action



Storytelling: Less is More

Lori's:

Lori tells stories that raise millions.

Community service org helping vets:

War damaged Jim. We restored him.

Inspired by Hemmingway:

Baby shoes. Never worn. For sale.

Yours?



Homework

**Create & tell a
six word story**



Six Word Stories



Lot,

You've seen Genesis Works in action. Maybe you've supported our work in the past, or maybe you're hearing about our efforts to eradicate the global gap for the first time.

Whatever your experience, we're looking to learn more about the impact Genesis Works has had on your life. Here, our accomplished Missionaries share in its words who they support Genesis Works.

When you're ready to add your voice, submit your photo via email or on Twitter with #MyGenesisWorks. We'll share your submissions here and at our annual Breaking Through Ceremony in October.

Thanks, and enjoy!

[CLICK HERE](#)

View the six word stories and submit your own.



“People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel.”
~ Maya Angelou



Real Stories

Find people who encapsulate what your core objective is all about – and convey their stories with power, genuineness, passion and humility.

~ JD Lasica



<http://www.ecohealthalliance.org/>



Damian



My name is Damian and I'm here to tell you about my life, which I titled "Once a Lighthouse Kid; Now a Lighthouse Man..."



Real Stories

600,000

The number of adults in Minnesota who need Adult Basic Education and literacy programs.

Zero

The number of children's books found in 61% of low-income families' homes in the U.S.

88

The percentage of Minnesota adults who don't get the literacy help they need due to limited program resources.



Adults in the Twin Cities attend free classes at 5 Minnesota Literacy Council (MLC) Learning Centers in Minneapolis and St. Paul to build English and work-readiness skills and prepare for the GED and citizenship tests. The Adult Literacy Hotline (1-800-222-1990 or www.themlc.org/hotline) refers Minnesotans to nearly 400 literacy programs across the state.



Children & Families gain the tools they need to develop successful young learners. The Early Literacy and Families program inspires parents to be their children's first and most important teacher. National Service members help children improve their reading fluency through the Minnesota Reading Corps and Summer Reads VISTA programs.



Literacy Programs in Minnesota are strengthened through the Minnesota Literacy Council's Educational Technology, Volunteer Tutor Training and Management and Adult Basic Education Advisory support. Across the state, 40 National Service members provide capacity-building support to literacy programs through the VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) program.

"Illiteracy is the greatest solvable social issue of our time."

Eric Neuhaim,
Executive Director

AT A GLANCE:

MLC employees 51
National Service members 665
Organizations supported 700
Literacy volunteers trained 2,600
Children served 22,000
Adults served 72,000



BUDGET:
84% Program Services
15% General and Administrative
1% Fundraising



Sharing the power of learning through education, community building and advocacy.



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Real Stories




<http://mnliteracy.org/volunteers/blog>




Real Stories

Jessie F. Hallett Memorial Library
Home of the JFHM Friends Foundation and Backstreet Books



Our JULY Library Stories are by brother & sister Ben & Paige Westin, Ironton:




I have always enjoyed going to the Library because they have all the resources I need to learn new things. Whether it's for school or just something I am interested in, I know that the library will have what I need. The best part is they will even order new books for me sometimes! The staff is always friendly and willing to help if I need anything. I know that I will always enjoy going to the Library.

Ben Westin
Age 15
Ironton

The Library has changed my life by helping me and giving me the chance to read more. I love going to the Library because it is so quiet and has one of my favorite things, books. I love to read! I read all the time. When I want a book to read, I know where to go. The library always has the book or books I want.

Paige Westin
Age 10
Ironton


Librarian's note: It has been fun to watch Ben & Paige grow up before our eyes at the Library! Ben has always enjoyed books about trapping, hunting, nature lore and the great outdoors. Paige is now devouring our extensive Trxie Belden series.



Where Nonprofits Learn

Where your mission meets its match.


Real Stories



charity: water

Embed not displaying correctly? See it here »

On Monday, one year after Rachel's death, her family visited her wells in Ethiopia. [Watch the video »](#)



Nine-year-old Rachel Beckwith had a wish - to raise \$300 for charity: water by giving up birthday presents. A month later, she was killed in a tragic car accident. People all around the world heard the story and donated more than \$1.2 million in her honor. Watch the video, as Rachel's mom and grandparents met some of the 60,000 people whose lives Rachel changed.

We continue to be inspired by Rachel's heart, and by the generosity of the people who gave to this campaign.

Storytelling



“Give people a fact or an idea and you enlighten their minds; tell them a story and you touch their souls.”

~ Hasidic Proverb



Moving Forward



Share:

One thing you learned

One thing you'll do differently



Resources



How to Create Fresh Stories for your Nonprofit

<http://bit.ly/Nw0ET0>

Why Storytelling is Essential for Business Leaders

<http://bit.ly/QKp7yI>

The Rise of the Corporate Transmedia Storyteller

<http://onforb.es/OmNhiL>

3 Lessons in storytelling from Ken Burns

<http://bit.ly/QnwYHu>

Transitioning from the Written to the Spoken Story

<http://bit.ly/Qv9QqS>

Digital Storytelling From Soup to Nuts

<http://bit.ly/Opp8M0>



Staying Connected

**BLOG: WITHISMS
FROM LORI:**

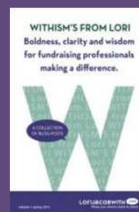
Boldness, clarity and wisdom
for fundraising professionals
making a difference



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Available at:
Amazon.com



Download on Free
Resources page:
LoriJacobwith.com



Questions?



Lori's Upcoming Charity How To Webinars:

Wednesday, May 8

How to Engage Your Board in Fundraising

Wednesday, May 22

How to Make Your Nonprofit Donors Feel
Like Superheros So They Give More

To see Lori's sessions:

<http://bit.ly/LoriJacobwithWebinars>

